



UNIVERSITY *of*  
DENVER

---

MORGRIDGE COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

---

# GRADUATE ASSISTANT HANDBOOK

2023-24

---

---

## CONTENTS

---

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GTA/GRA APPOINTMENT.....	3
Your Supervisor/PI will:.....	3
NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST FOR GA: .....	3
Strategies to Ensure Success.....	3
MCE GRADUATE ASSISTANT POLICY OVERVIEW .....	4
Types of Graduate Assistants .....	4
Goals for GA positions.....	4
Time Commitments .....	4
How to Apply for a GTA/GRA? .....	5
GTA/GRA CONTRACT .....	5
Eligibility .....	5
Satisfactory Academic Progress .....	6
Financial Details.....	7
Professional Conduct Expectations.....	8
• Dress .....	8
• Work Schedules.....	8
• Communication by Email .....	9
• Drug and/or Alcohol Use.....	9
Conflict Resolution.....	9
JOB SPECIFIC RESOURCES.....	10
Katherine A. Ruffato Hall.....	10
Tech Support for MCE.....	10
Copy Codes and Office Supplies.....	10
Work Locations .....	10
Computer Login Info .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Office of Graduate Studies Resources .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>

---

## WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU RECEIVE A GTA/GRA APPOINTMENT

---

**Congratulations!** You have been awarded a unique professional opportunity related to your educational and professional goals and one that will contribute greatly to your professional and academic credentials.

---

### YOUR SUPERVISOR/PI WILL:

---

- Notify MCE Director of Financial Aid of your appointment and request that the hiring process begin.
- Discuss the details of your GTA/GRA position at the time of your appointment (i.e. full-time, half-time or quarter-time).
- You will receive an email from the MCE Budget and Finance with instructions on how to complete the background check.

---

### NEXT STEPS CHECKLIST FOR GA:

---

1. \_\_\_ Familiarize yourself with the GA Handbook.
2. \_\_\_ Review and sign the GA Contract, appointment form and eligibility form if necessary.
3. \_\_\_ Complete the necessary steps to secure the background check.
4. \_\_\_ Complete the required I-9 and W-4 Human Resources paperwork. Every attempt will be made to allow the completion of these documents at the Orientation in early September.
5. \_\_\_ Attend the training session required by your Supervisor or PI that will provide specific position or grant-related training (IRB, SBER) and further details on your particular job duties.
6. \_\_\_ Familiarize yourself with the process to resolve issues.
7. \_\_\_ Discuss work schedules with your PI or supervisor.

---

### STRATEGIES TO ENSURE SUCCESS

---

1. **Adhere to commitments** – Live up to commitments every time or contact a project director immediately to make other arrangements.
2. **Realize the sensitivity of the work that you represent** – Make sure to maintain the confidentiality of all data and use it only for position-related work.
3. **Treat everyone with respect** – including directors, peers, administrative staff, and the person on the phone, or anyone who enters any of the workspaces.
4. **Value the time and effort spent by others** – Do not take other members of the team for granted. Be on time to meetings and meet expected deadlines.
5. **Always maintain ethical conduct** – Be honest and refrain from deceitful practices.
6. **Keep personal issues at home** – Refrain from using work time for personal issues.
7. **Demonstrate the core values of professionalism** – appropriate attire, etiquette, punctuality, organization, and dedication to your job, just to name a few.

# MCE GRADUATE ASSISTANT POLICY OVERVIEW

---

## TYPES OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS

---

**The Morgridge College of Education has two types of graduate assistants (GA)**

Graduate Research Assistants – GRA (Positions funded by research projects.)

Graduate Teaching Assistants – GTA (Positions funded by the college.)

## GOALS FOR GA POSITIONS

---

Graduate assistantships enable the Morgridge College of Education (MCE) to provide financial support for graduate students while advancing the research, teaching and service mission of the college. Although the tasks involved in each position differ, the values remain consistent across positions:

- To enhance the student experience
- To accomplish a task or complete a project
- To expand the skill set of the student
- To enhance the resume of the student

## TIME AND ENROLLMENT COMMITMENTS

---

<b>MCE GXA Work Hours and Enrollment Requirements</b>					
<b><u>GXA</u></b> <b><u>Appointment</u></b>	<b><u>Tuition Waiver</u></b> <b><u>Credits/Quarter</u></b>	<b><u>Minimum</u></b> <b><u>Enrollment</u></b> <b><u>each Quarter</u></b>	<b><u>Approximate</u></b> <b><u>Hours</u></b> <b><u>Worked/Week</u></b>	<b><u>Total Annual</u></b> <b><u>Hours</u></b>	<b><u>Total Quarterly</u></b> <b><u>Hours</u></b>
<b>Full time</b>	8	8	20	600	200
<b>.50</b>	4	4	10	300	100
<b>0.25</b>	2	2	5	150	50

GA positions traditionally span the 9-month academic year, effective September 1 through May 31. GAs are expected to be available to work on site, depending on their award, any day that the university is open which may include but is not limited to Interterm between autumn and winter quarters. Specific work schedules are determined by the faculty/staff supervisor and should be discussed prior to formal acceptance by the student.

9-month GA appointments are automatically split into three separate positions, 1 per quarter. These positions correspond to start/end dates and anticipated compensation schedule per term, outlined below:

<b>Term</b>	<b>Position Start Date</b>	<b>Position End Date</b>	<b>Anticipated Compensation Dates</b>
Fall Quarter	09/01/XX	11/30/XX	Oct 1/Nov 1/Dec 1
Winter Quarter	12/01/XX	02/28/XX	Jan 1/Feb 1/Mar 1
Spring Quarter	03/01/XX	05/31/XX	Apr 1/May 1/Jun 1

This schedule is predicated on GXA and Faculty Supervisors/PIs meeting applicable college and university deadlines as prescribed in this handbook. The above start and end dates are system defaults, set university-wide and cannot be adjusted. There are occasional access/account issues with the position changeover from term to term and it is recommended not to save time-sensitive projects for the end of a particular quarter (i.e., fall quarter deadline on 12/1). Spring GA positions will be automatically terminated on 6/1, irrespective of the academic calendar.

---

## HOW TO APPLY FOR A GTA/GRA?

---

There are University funded GTA positions that may be available each academic year and there are grant-funded GRA positions that become available as grants are secured by faculty within MCE. When positions are open, the PI or Supervisor will notify eligible students of openings.

- Job postings will be sent via email to all eligible students by the Academic Services Associates (ASA).
- When available, open GA positions will be posted on the MCE website - Financial Aid tab.
- Hiring decisions are made by the Supervisor/PI directly responsible for the position or grant.
- Job postings will include the required and preferred qualifications, and directions for how to apply.
- Most positions are open until filled and once filled, will be removed or closed on the website.
- All inquiries should be directed to the hiring authority on the job posting for further details.

---

## GTA/GRA CONTRACT

---

This section describes in detail some components of the Assistantship Contract that you will be required to sign once you are appointed to an assistantship position.

**Definition:** **GTA** is a general term that refers to Graduate Teaching Assistants. GTAs who are assigned to research or administrative duties are still considered GTAs for the purposes of the financial assistance policy.

**GRAs** are defined as those positions hired by the Principal Investigators to support sponsored research.

---

## ELIGIBILITY

---

- A. GTA recipients must be enrolled in an academic program and be in good academic standing during the quarters in which they receive their award (programs/departments may stipulate that the recipient must be enrolled as a full-time student). Only Morgridge College of Education students are eligible for GXA positions.
- B. International students who receive a GTA must demonstrate fluency in spoken English by scoring a 26 on the speaking section of the TOEFL, or an 8 on the speaking section of the IELTS and/or by passing the DU GTA English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA). International students whose native language is clearly English are exempt from the TSE.
- C. Should a GTA recipient wish to change his/her major field of study to another school/department, the award is NOT transferable to the new department.
- D. All GTA and GRA recipients must pass a background check, sign the GA Contract and GA appointment form to complete the appointment process. Student eligibility form may also be required.
- E. To receive a full-time GTA/GRA, a student must be enrolled full-time (at least 8 MCE credit hours per quarter). To receive half-time GA, a student must be enrolled at least 4 MCE credit hours per quarter. To receive quarter-time GA, a student must be enrolled in at least 2 MCE credit hours per quarter.

Programs may stipulate that the recipient be enrolled as a full-time student to receive a half-time (or less) GA position. Students may not add unnecessary credits to maintain their position. Students may not be enrolled for dissertation or independent study hours only.

- F. A graduate student may not hold more than the equivalent of one full-time assistantship at any time within the University.
- G. Students cannot hold a GTA/GRA position and a work-study position or fellowship simultaneously. However, within the same academic year a student may hold a GTA/GRA and a work-study/fellowship position, just not during the same term.
- H. If a recipient's GTA is renewed for a subsequent academic year, a new Student Acknowledgement of GTA Policy form must be signed. A PhD student may remain in a GTA position for a maximum of 3 years or 9 quarters, an EdD, EdS or master's student a maximum of 2 years or 6 quarters.
- I. Students cannot be a GTA/GRA and enrolled in the same class they would be the graduate assistant for at the same time.
- J. GTA positions are awarded for up to one year at a time and must be reapplied to continue into the next academic year.
- K. Students cannot hold more than one GTA position.
- L. Students cannot register for courses not needed to complete their degree to maintain their position.
- M. Only Morgridge College of Education courses can be funded with GXA tuition credits.

---

### SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

---

In order to remain eligible to receive an assistantship, you must maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress. The University of Denver measures Satisfactory Academic Progress by monitoring the Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA), the Cumulative Completion Rate (CCR) and the Maximum Time Frame Limit (MTFL) to complete degree requirements. Graduate students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better. In order to graduate within the maximum time frame (MTF) limit, students must complete and pass a minimum of 66.6% of all courses attempted. Successful completion of a course requires a grade of "C" or above. Students are required to complete all degree requirements within 150% of the minimum credits required to graduate. Ex: A student may attempt a maximum of 135 credits in order to complete a degree that requires 90 credits (90 credits x 150% = 135).

Students on academic probation or suspension are not eligible for a GTA/GRA position until that status is resolved. After two consecutive terms below 3.0 GPA a student is not eligible for a GTA/GRA position until the GPA is raised to a 3.0 or better.

## FINANCIAL DETAILS

- A. GTA and GRA positions receive both a tuition waiver and monthly stipend. Tuition waiver can apply to Morgridge tuition charges only. **For MA/EdS students who are beginning in the 23-24 year, please contact the MCE Director of Financial Aid for the tuition waiver dollar value.**
- B. If you are receiving an MCE Dean's Scholarship award and you receive a GTA, GRA or Fellowship, the Dean's Scholarship award will be reduced by the amount of the assistantship tuition waiver. **EXAMPLE:** You have been awarded \$8,000 in Dean's Scholarship and then you receive a 0.25 GTA position.

ORIGINAL AWARD		ADJUSTED FOR GTA	
Dean's Scholarship	\$8,000	Dean's Scholarship	\$ 806
GTA Waiver		GTA Waiver	\$ 7,194
GTA Stipend		GTA Stipend	\$ 3,625
<b>TOTAL RECEIVED</b>	<b>\$8,000</b>	<b>TOTAL RECEIVED</b>	<b>\$ 11,625</b>

**Dean's Scholarship reduced by amount of Assistantship tuition waiver**

- C. GTA tuition waivers awarded for the academic year are spread evenly over three quarters.
- D. Stipends are paid once per month on the first of the month following your GXA appointment if all required Human Resources paperwork (I-9, W4, background check) has been completed and the online hiring deadline is met. Your supervisor is responsible for notifying MCE Budget and Planning staff of GXA appointments. The GXA is responsible for completing the required documentation for the background check, I-9 and W4 documents and returning the signed contract by the deadline.
- E. Stipend payment schedule:

Academic Term	Action Required of Units	Payroll System Automatically Pays
Fall	GXA positions hired online & all hiring paperwork complete by Aug 20 <sup>th</sup>	pays Oct 1st, Nov 1st, & Dec 1st
Winter	GXA positions hired online & all hiring paperwork complete by Nov 20 <sup>th</sup>	pays Jan 1st, Feb 1st, & Mar 1st
Spring	GXA positions hired online & all hiring paperwork complete by Feb 20 <sup>th</sup>	pays Apr 1st, May 1st, & Jun 1st
Summer	GXA positions hired online & all hiring paperwork complete by May 20 <sup>th</sup>	pays Jul 1st, Aug 1st, & Sep 1st

- F. The combination of all tuition waivers and scholarships cannot exceed tuition (prior to assessed fees). Waivers cannot be awarded in cash and will only be applied towards tuition charges.
- G. Full-time GTAs are eligible for the GTA/GRA Health Insurance Scholarship which covers the cost of the University of Denver Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) and the Health & Counseling Fee (HCF). Eligibility is determined one time per year, in the fall and is managed by the Office of Graduate Studies. Further details can be found in the Graduate Policy Manual.
- H. If all necessary paperwork for your appointment is completed after the 20<sup>th</sup> of the first month of the academic term, your first payment will be delayed to the next month following completion of your

paperwork. Ex: Your appointment paperwork is not completed until August 25<sup>th</sup> for the fall term. You will NOT receive a stipend payment on October 1<sup>st</sup> but will receive your first stipend payment on November 1<sup>st</sup>.

- I. Since the fiscal year ends prior to the summer quarter, waivers cannot be carried forward from the spring to the summer quarter. There are very limited assistantship positions that have a summer start.
- J. Waiver hours may not be used for interterm courses, non-credit courses, any other fees or fines, including continuous enrollment, certification fees, dissertation hours alone or credits above program requirements. Additionally, any courses outside of the College of Education.
- K. If the student drops courses for which his/her waiver hours have been used after or during the refund period, the waiver will not be re-awarded for future use.
- N. If a recipient of a GXA position is also eligible for University of Denver employee, spousal or dependent tuition waiver benefits, he/she cannot have both the GXA position and the employee waiver within the same term.
- L. Waiver hours are not taxable income and cannot be used in lieu of stipends as an inducement for departmental or teaching duties.
- M. All stipend money received by a GXA is taxable income. Recipients must have a W-4 form on file with Payroll. The GXA must submit an I-9 form to Human Resources within three business days of hire, re-verify the I-9 when the GXA has been absent for more than one quarter, and resubmit the I-9 after three years.
- N. If a recipient's GXA is renewed for a subsequent academic year, a new Student Acknowledgement of GXA Policy form must be signed. A doctoral student may remain in a GTA position for a maximum of 3 years or 9 quarters, an EdD, EdS or master's student a maximum of 2 years or 6 quarters.
- O. Online students are not eligible for GA positions.

---

## PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

---

- *DRESS*
  - In general, graduate student workers come to work in attire that is suitable for the work setting. This may vary slightly from office to fieldwork and exposure to the community, clients, and child-care facilities:
  - Data collection: Please dress one step above the place at which you are collecting data. For example, if you are going to a childcare and the staff wears jeans and T-shirts please wear khakis and a dressy tee, casual sweater, or casual blouse.
  - Professional meeting: Please dress business casual or nicer.
- *WORK SCHEDULES*
  - GTAs and GRAs may be required to work on site any day that the University is open. GTAs work within the academic period that coincides with the award. GRAs may work during traditional academic break periods and workflows are guided according to the grant funding schedule. You will define your work schedule for each term with your Supervisor/PI. It is expected you will make prior arrangements with them if you will not be working your agreed upon schedule for emergencies or illness.
  - Punctuality is expected.
  - If you are ill or are going to be late, please email your Supervisor BEFORE your regularly scheduled time to work.



- *COMMUNICATION BY EMAIL*
  - Please use your DU student email. If you prefer correspondence on a different email, please have your email forwarded to your DU account.
  
- *DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL USE*
  - The use of illegal drugs or alcohol during work hours is not permitted and will not be tolerated. If a GTA/GRA is suspected to be under the influence of either while working, they may be asked to leave the work environment and may be subject to immediate dismissal. Marijuana use is not allowed during work hours and even if necessary for medical reasons, you should not be under the influence when you are working in your assistantship position.

---

### CONFLICT RESOLUTION

---

Any matters of concern should be addressed with your Supervisor/PI. All attempts should be made to address issues of conflict in a mutually respectful and professional discussion with the Supervisor or PI. The following succession of conflict resolution steps assumes resolution was not reached at the previous stage.

- I. Identify and discuss concerns with Supervisor or PI.
- II. If there are still concerns after discussions with the Supervisor/PI, students should discuss the situation with their Faculty Advisor.
- III. The Faculty Advisor should provide the student with strategies and suggestions for approaching the Supervisor/PI and may offer to attend a meeting between the student and the Supervisor/PI.
- IV. If the matter has not been successfully resolved, the issue should be brought to the Department Chair.
- V. If there has not been successful resolution to the concern, the MCE Dean will be consulted.

---

## JOB SPECIFIC RESOURCES

---

### *KATHERINE A. RUFFATO HALL*

#### Building Hours:

	Public Building hours	Student swipe access
Mon - Fri	7 am - 8 pm	6:30 - 9 pm
Sat	7 am - 5 pm	8 am - 9 pm
Sun	Closed to the Public	12pm - 9 pm

*\*Students can swipe their ID cards to access the building during these additional times*

- Computer Lab hours: **Mon.-Thur.** 8 am -9 pm **Fri.** 8 am-8 pm **Sat.** 8 am-5 pm Closed on Sundays
  - Hours can change with holidays or staffing schedules. Signs will be posted indicating when there are changes.
  - Classroom Technology: each classroom has a manual with directions for utilizing technology

### *TECH SUPPORT FOR MCE*

- Phone: **(303) 871-3222** or [mce.support@du.edu](mailto:mce.support@du.edu)
- Full time tech support 7:30am – 5:00pm
- Lab monitors and minimal tech support 5:00pm – 9:00pm

### *COPY CODES AND OFFICE SUPPLIES*

All building copiers require a passcode to make photocopies. Please obtain the program or grant specific GTA/GRA copy code from your Supervisor/PI. Copy codes are to be used for job related copies only. Please no personal or school use. All office supplies will be obtained through your Supervisor/PI.

### *WORK LOCATIONS*

Generally, GTAs and GRAs will share the common cubicle workspaces located throughout the second and third floors of Katherine Ruffato Hall. Some of the departmental workstations are assigned to specific grant funded projects and others are for general departmental usage. Scheduling for these workstations is coordinated by the Supervisors/Pis and Department Chairs. Some administrative GTAs may be working in department offices.