UNIVERSITY ASSISTANTSHIP PROGRAM
STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES
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University Assistantship Program
Student Policy and Procedures

I. Program Overview
The purpose of the University Assistantship Program (UAP) is to foster engagement in mentored research, creative work, or other activities that further a student’s career. The UAP aligns with the goals of the university and Honors College strategic plans. Each assistantship compensates one student $2,500 over the course of the fall and spring and is renewable for up to eight semesters.

Each summer, the Honors College identifies high-ability incoming freshmen to participate in the UAP. Selected students are matched with a faculty or staff member in a department, institute or other unit. Students in the assistantship program typically work eight hours per week for each fall and spring semester.

As of fall 2014, university assistants will only be placed in units (academic or administrative) with explicit, written description(s) of the UAP placement, including:

- Overview of student responsibilities
- Assistantship learning outcomes
- Mentoring plan

II. Eligibility
Three categories of students can participate in the UAP:

1. Incoming Presidential, Goizueta, Berner, Coca Cola and Hawks scholarship recipients may apply for a university assistantship position. This group is eligible for full funding.
2. Incoming freshmen accepted into the Honors College may apply for a University Assistantship position.
3. Active upper-class Honors College students with a GPA of 3.5 may be nominated by faculty or staff for a University Assistantship position. UAP recommendations can be completed on the Honors College webpage.

III. Application and Funding Cycle
An invitation to apply is sent to eligible incoming freshmen each May. Funds are dispersed to the department in the fall of each academic year. Upperclassmen must be recommended through the online recommendation form by a faculty or staff member. The recommendation form for upperclassmen will be open on the Honors College website for two weeks in May. Upperclassmen are only allowed to begin an assistantship placement during the fall semester.

IV. Requirements
Departments, research centers or administrative units:

- An ability to provide matching funds ($1,000 per university assistant)
- An ability to provide ample opportunities for students to earn their full $2,500 per year (i.e., approximately eight hours of work/research per week at a rate of $10.42/hour)
- An identified administrative staff member to coordinate human resource and payroll processes
- A designated faculty or staff member to serve as liaison to the assistantship program. The faculty or staff liaison is responsible for matching applicants to faculty or staff mentors
• Faculty members to mentor university assistants in research or creative work and who will participate in the Georgia State University Research Conference (GSURC) as a sponsor, judge, or advisory board member
• Faculty or staff should mentor students toward relevant career goals or specific student development goals
• Specific descriptions of the university assistantship positions available in the unit (including overview of student responsibilities, assistantship learning outcomes, and mentoring plan)
• Annual participation in evaluation of the university assistants in the unit and the UAP in general

For University Assistants:
• Acceptance into the Honors College
• Maintenance of 3.5 GPA
• Enroll in a minimum of 12 credit hours during each fall and spring semester of work
• Annual participation in GSURC. You can participate as a presenter, a member of the GSURC Student Planning Committee (students must apply), or as a guest. The document to validate participation will be available on D2L Brightspace.
• Participation in evaluation of the UAP

V. Compensation
Through the Provost’s Office, the Honors College provides $1500 per assistantship. Departments or other units interested in participating in the program must match the remaining $1,000 per student from departmental funds or direct funds from sponsored projects. The Provost Office funds 100 percent of the UAP awards for the Presidential, Goizueta, Berner, Coca Cola, and Hawks Scholars, of these assistantships. All of these students are paid at a $10.42/hour rate for approximately eight hours a week.

It is the joint responsibility of both the student and department to complete all required paperwork through the Georgia State University Human Resources Office to ensure that the student is compensated. The maximum hours of work during any given week for a student is 20 hours. The student cannot exceed 240 hours of work per academic year with their university assistantship position.

VI. Start Date
University assistants should begin work during the second week of the semester, pending completion of appropriate Human Resources paperwork by the student and department. Students should visit the Georgia State University Human Resources Office (located at One Park Place South, Suite 330) for more information. Students can also visit the Human Resources webpage (www.employee.hr.gsu.edu/payroll/) to complete a New Hire Packet (via the “Setting Up Payroll” section). Students who do not start during the second week of the semester will be replaced (unless they have communicated extenuating circumstances to the UAP coordinator and their mentor). Some departments may require an earlier start date. It is the student’s responsibility to gain this information from the department.

VII. Performance Evaluations
The Honors College will send university assistants and departments separate evaluations during October (for students only) and April of each academic year to collect data on the effectiveness of placements in order to enhance the program. The evaluations are required to continue participation in the UAP.

VIII. Renewal and Termination
Each assistantship compensates students $2,500 over the course of the fall and spring and is renewable for eight semesters or until funds are exhausted ($10,000 for eight semesters). Renewal is not guaranteed and is dependent upon departmental approval. The UAP coordinator will send renewal requests to departments each spring.
University assistants may be terminated for poor performance, violation of Honors College/departmental policies, and/or a non-compliant grade point average. If a student is terminated for any reason other than non-compliant grade point average, they may apply again for placement in another department. However, if the student is terminated twice from a university assistantship position then they are no longer eligible to participate in the program.

IX. Student and Faculty Expectations
The expectations below should supplement expectations expressed verbally and/or written by the department.

Faculty and Staff Expectations
- Provide student with clear departmental expectations
- Provide student with work that aligns with the student’s academic and career goals
- Provide constructive feedback on student performance
- Expose student to professional organizations within your discipline or profession
- Establish consistent communication with your university assistant
- Contact the UAP coordinator early if problems arise with the placement (e.g. student did not show up at all, student is not meeting expectations, student is violating policies)

Student Expectations
- Participate in mandatory orientation and individual semester meetings
- Be knowledgeable on relevant departmental policies and procedures
- Attempt assigned work with curiosity, energy and resourcefulness
- Aim for high-levels of accuracy and professionalism in all assignments
- Adhere to confidentiality agreements; if applicable
- Be respectful of faculty or staff mentor’s time
- Seek feedback from your faculty or staff mentor and accept constructive criticism
- Meet all Institutional Review Board (IRB), Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC), and Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) requirements; if applicable
- Be prompt when reporting to work. Notify department in advance in the event of absence or tardiness
- Dress in an appropriate manner (in compliance with department)
- Do not conduct personal business at work
- If you are unsure, ask questions before you act

X. Administrative Procedures

A. Mandatory Orientation
University Assistants will be required to complete an orientation session on D2L Brightspace prior to their first day of work. Students are required to take an orientation quiz and agree to UAP policies and procedures.

B. Non-compliant grade point average
Students must maintain a 3.5 grade point average (GPA) to continue in the UAP. If a student’s GPA drops below a 3.5, they have one probationary semester to improve. During this period, the student is allowed to continue work. If a student is on probation and does not receive a 3.5 GPA at the end of the semester they will be removed permanently from the UAP. If a student is on probation and receives a 3.5 GPA they will return to good standing. Please note that a student is only allowed two probationary semesters, excluding consecutive semesters of non-compliant grade point average.

Example 1:
• The Student receives a GSU grade point average of 3.32.
• The student is placed on probation.
• The student’s grade point average improves to a GSU grade point average of 3.51.
• The student will return to good standing.
• The following semester the student receives a 3.48 grade point average.
• The student is placed on probation.
• The student’s grade point average improves to a GSU grade point average of 3.50.
• The student will return to good standing.
• The following semester the student receives a GSU grade point average of 3.47.
• The student will be permanently removed from the UAP.

Example 2:
• The Student receives a GSU grade point average of 3.40.
• The student is placed on probation.
• The following semester the student receives a GSU grade point average of 3.42.
• The student will be permanently removed from the UAP.

C. Change of Major
Students are not required to be placed in the department of their chosen major and will be placed in a department where opportunities are in alignment with academic and career goals. Changing majors should have no impact on a UAP position, unless the work is not in alignment with academic and career goals. In this case, we require the student to complete the academic year in the position and consult with the UAP coordinator to secure a new placement in the fall. Locating a new placement for the student is not guaranteed and is dependent upon available openings and funding.

D. Request to Change Placement
Requests by students and departments to change student placements will be accepted during the month of February. Correspondence will be sent by the UAP coordinator to both student and department to schedule a meeting to request a change of placement. Changes will be effective fall semester. New placement for the student and department is not guaranteed and is dependent upon available applicants, openings and funding. A request will be denied if the student is on probation within the program.

E. Termination due to Performance
Students may also be terminated due to poor job performance. Mentors should provide students with written expectations prior to the student’s start date. If a student fails to meet expectations, the mentor(s) should meet with the student as soon as possible. If performance does not improve, the student will be placed on probation for one semester. Performance is reevaluated after the probationary semester. If the student’s performance improves the student returns to good standing. If improvements are not made, the student will be terminated from their current department. In the latter case, a student can be placed in another department. Locating a new placement for the student is not guaranteed and is dependent upon available openings and funding. Students who are terminated due to poor performance twice will be permanently removed from the UAP.

F. Deferment
Students may defer placement but are not guaranteed a placement at a later date. All renewal and funding rules (eight semesters, fund exhaustion, etc.) apply to students who defer placement to a later semester.

G. Graduating University Assistant
Students must be full-time undergraduates to participate in the UAP. The Honors College requests that UAs and departments inform the Honors College of anticipated graduation. Failure to do so greatly impacts student funding.
XI. Contact Information
Jacob Alan English
University Assistantship Program Coordinator
Honors College
Email: jenglish4@gsu.edu
University Assistantship Program - Timeline

*Actions completed by Honors College unless otherwise stated.
**Departmental responsibilities
***Student responsibilities

- Request for renewals AND descriptions sent to the departments
- Interviews conducted
- Honors College and departments decide placements
- Provost Office sends money to departments
- Departments initiate ePAFs
- New students complete HR paperwork
- D2L Mandatory Student Survey

- Departmental Information sessions
- GSURC

- February
- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- September
- October

- Optional in-person student meetings to discuss placement changes
- Correspondence sent to students regarding placement for the following academic year
- End of the year surveys (current departments and students)
- Current UAs receive renewal information
- UA applications open for incoming freshmen
- Recommendations accepted for upperclassmen
- Final placement list sent to departments
- Placement information sent to students
- D2L Student Orientation