



GeorgiaState  
University

HONORS  
COLLEGE

UNIVERSITY ASSISTANTSHIP PROGRAM  
STUDENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

## Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	Program Overview.....	2
<b>II.</b>	Eligibility .....	2
<b>III.</b>	Application and Funding Cycle .....	2
<b>IV.</b>	Requirements .....	2
<b>V.</b>	Scholarly Productivity.....	3
<b>VI.</b>	Compensation .....	3
<b>VII.</b>	Start Date.....	3
<b>VIII.</b>	Performance Evaluations.....	4
<b>IX.</b>	Renewal and Termination.....	4
<b>X.</b>	Student and Faculty Expectations .....	4
<b>XI.</b>	Administrative Procedures.....	5
	A. Mandatory Orientation .....	5
	B. Non-compliant grade point average.....	5
	C. Change of Major .....	5
	D. Request to Change Placement.....	5
	E. Probationary Status .....	5
	F. Termination due to Performance .....	6
	G. Deferment .....	6
	H. Graduating University Assistant.....	6
<b>XII.</b>	Contact Information .....	6
<b>XIII.</b>	University Assistantship Program Timeline.....	7

## University Assistantship Program Student Policy and Procedures

### I. Program Overview

The purpose of the University Assistantship Program (UAP) is to foster engagement in faculty-mentored research, creative work, or other activities that further a student's professional development. 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. Also, upperclassmen are selected periodically throughout the year. Selected students are matched with a faculty member in a department, institute or another unit. In some cases, students are matched with administrators or staff. Students in the Program typically work eight hours per week for each fall and spring semester.

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 are eligible for full funding through the UAP and may apply for a university assistantship position
2. Incoming freshmen accepted into the Honors College may apply for a University Assistantship position
3. Faculty or staff may nominate active upper-class Honors College students with a GPA of 3.5 for a University Assistantship position. UAP recommendations can be completed on the Honors College web page.

### III. Application and Funding Cycle

An invitation to apply is sent to eligible incoming freshmen each June. Funds are dispersed to the department in the fall of each academic year. Upperclassmen must be recommended through the online recommendation form by the faculty or staff member who will serve as their project supervisor. Call for nominations do not follow a set schedule and is dependent on available funding.

### IV. Requirements

*Departments, research centers or administrative units:*

- Ability to provide matching funds (\$1,000 per University assistant)
- 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
- For academic departments, a designated faculty member to serve as liaison to the Program. The faculty liaison is responsible for matching applicants to faculty mentors

- Faculty or staff 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
- For administrative units, faculty members or administrators should mentor students toward relevant career goals or specific student development goals
- Accurate 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 semesters
- 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 survey to validate participation will be available on iCollege.
- Participation in evaluation of the UAP

## **V. Scholarly Productivity**

One of the main goals of the Program is to involve students in scholarly activities that lead to an independent project. Departments are highly encouraged to work with their university assistants to develop independent projects that the university assistant can present at a conference or publish in a research journal. Also, university assistants are highly encouraged to discuss project ideas with their faculty or staff mentor. The Honors Colleges provides multiple opportunities to develop an independent project including the GSURC, Honors Thesis Project, DISCOVERY (the Honors College Undergraduate Research Journal), and Honors College Research Skills Workshops and Certification. Additionally, the Honors College provides research and travel grants to fund these experiences.

## **VI. 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 supports 100 percent of the UAP awards for the Presidential, Goizueta, Berner, Coca-Cola, and Hawks Scholars, of these assistantships. 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.

## **VII. 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 (<http://employees.hr.gsu.edu/>) to complete a New Hire Packet (via the "Payroll Setup" 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.

### **VIII. Performance Evaluations**

The Honors College will send university assistants and departments separate evaluations. The October survey is for students only. The April survey is for both university assistants and departments. The evaluations are used to collect data on the effectiveness of placements to enhance the Program. The completion of the assessments is not required but completion is highly encouraged to help continuously enhance the Program.

### **IX. 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 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.

### **X. Student and Faculty Expectations**

The expectations below should supplement expectations expressed verbally and 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*

- Attend 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 mentor's time
- Seek feedback from your faculty 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

## XI. Administrative Procedures

### A. Mandatory Orientation

University Assistants will be required to complete an orientation session on iCollege before 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 can 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 a 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. The UAP coordinator will send correspondence 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. Probationary Status

Students may be placed on probation for not complying with any of the University Assistantship Program policies. The probationary status will last for one semester. Students can continue work in their position for the duration

of said semester. Hours may be reduced in consultation with the host department. A student is only allowed two probationary semesters, excluding consecutive semesters.

F. Termination due to Performance

Students may also be terminated due to poor job performance. Mentors should provide students with written expectations before 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.

G. 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.

H. 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 significantly impacts student funding.

## **XII. Contact Information**

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# University Assistantship Program -Timeline

\*Honors College responsibilities

\*\*Departmental responsibilities

\*\*\*Student responsibilities

