

## REQUIRED GRADUATE ASSISTANT TRAINING

Each August, before classes begin, the university's Program for Instructional Innovation conducts a campus-wide TA (Teaching Assistant) Training Program. This program is **mandatory** for all new Graduate Assistants at the University of Oklahoma who will have contact with students. For more information on this program, go to <http://www.ou.edu/pii/>.

### *NON-QUALIFYING VS QUALIFYING GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS*

Graduate assistants at the University of Oklahoma are temporary, part-time employees of the university and their part-time status is measured and described as a fraction of "Full Time Equivalent" or FTE status, with 1.0 FTE understood as full-time employment or 40 hours per week.

While the university allows appointments of graduate assistants at levels of less than .50 FTE, the Graduate College provides tuition waiver assistance and subsidized, single health insurance **only** to those graduate assistants appointed to at least .50 FTE positions for a minimum of one full 16-week semester. The Graduate College refers to such assistants as *Qualifying Graduate Assistants*.

Further, the Graduate College defines any graduate assistant with less than a .50 FTE appointment or any graduate assistant whose term of appointment is less than one full 16-week semester as a *Non-Qualifying Graduate Assistant*. While *Non-Qualifying Graduate Assistants* do receive a stipend from their appointing department proportional to their level of appointment, they are not eligible for any tuition waiver or subsidized health insurance.

Although the School of Music makes every effort to make assistantship offers that meet the Graduate College's criteria for *Qualifying Graduate Assistantships*, we cannot guarantee that all offers of assistantship will be for .50 FTE positions. Further, applicants should be aware that, because some individual assignments require less than 20 hours per week of service, in order to make an offer of a *Qualifying Graduate Assistantship*, we often combine two or even three assignments.

### *SPECIFICS OF A NON-QUALIFYING GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP*

**STIPENDS:** As of August 2007, *Non-Qualifying Graduate Assistants* appointed to 9-month contracts (16 August through 15 May) receive the following stipends:

.25 FTE.....	\$4,698.81
.375 FTE.....	\$7,048.26

**SERVICE REQUIREMENTS:** A .25 FTE appointment requires an average of 10 hours per week of service appropriate to the assignment(s). A .375 FTE appointment requires an average of 15 hours per week of service appropriate to the assignment(s).

In addition, *Non-Qualifying Graduate Assistants* will be expected to participate in the activities of the School of Music, including but not limited to recruiting activities, public performances, and other activities for the benefit of the School of Music as directed by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

Please note that the School of Music reserves the right to alter any specific assignment.

**ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT:** All graduate assistants must be enrolled as full-time students each semester of their appointments. For *Non-Qualifying Graduate Assistants*, full-time status is defined as enrollment in a minimum of 9 credit hours per regular 16-week semester.

### **SPECIFICS OF A QUALIFYING GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP**

**STIPEND:** As of August 2007, *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* at the .50 FTE level receive a total stipend of \$9,397.62 for the 9-month appointment (16 August through 15 May).

**SERVICE REQUIREMENTS:** A .50 FTE *Qualifying Graduate Assistantship* requires an average of 20 hours per week of service appropriate to the assignment(s).

In addition, *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* will be expected to participate in the activities of the School of Music, including but not limited to recruiting activities, public performances, and other activities for the benefit of the School of Music as directed by the Coordinator of Graduate Studies.

Please note that the School of Music reserves the right to alter any specific assignment.

**ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT:** All graduate assistants must be enrolled as full-time students each semester of their appointments. For *Qualifying Graduate Assistants*, full-time status is defined as enrollment in a minimum of 6 credit hours per regular 16-week semester.

**TUITION WAIVER:** As of August 2007, *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* receive a waiver of seven hours of resident tuition each regular 16-week semester of their appointment. Non-residents of Oklahoma also receive an additional waiver of nine hours of non-resident tuition each regular semester. Those non-residents who hold a *Qualifying Graduate Assistantship* for the full Spring semester are eligible for four hours of non-resident tuition waiver in the Summer semester immediately following.

**REGARDING FEES AND OTHER COSTS:** *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* are responsible for the remaining tuition and for all fees associated with enrollment and study. Depending upon how many hours a *Qualifying Graduate Assistant* enrolls for and the nature of the particular courses taken, the cost for fees and unwaived tuition will usually range between \$1,200 and \$1,800 per semester.<sup>1</sup>

**HEALTH INSURANCE:** *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* receive subsidized single health insurance coverage through the Student Health Plan as a benefit of employment. Additional coverage and dependant coverage are available for purchase. Questions about the health insurance should be directed to the Student Health Plan office at (405) 325-9196.

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<sup>1</sup> As of Fall 2007, graduate resident tuition is \$143.80 per hour. Non-Oklahoma residents pay that amount plus the non-resident tuition of \$374.20 per hour. If a non-resident *Qualifying Graduate Assistant* enrolls in seven hours, he/she won't pay any tuition, but will pay all fees. If that same student enrolls in nine hours, he/she will pay for 2 hours at the resident tuition rate plus all fees. If he/she enrolls in ten hours, he/she will pay for 3 hours at the resident tuition rate and one hour at the non-resident rate plus all fees.

For the most current information available on tuition and fees at the University of Oklahoma, go to <http://www.ou.edu/bursar/>.

### **SPECIAL NOTES TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

#### **REGARDING THE UNIVERSITY'S REQUIREMENT FOR PROOF OF ADEQUATE FINANCIAL SUPPORT:**

While our compensation package for *Qualifying Graduate Assistants* is substantial and competitive, international students should be aware that it alone will not meet the minimum funding required by law before an international student will be admitted to the university and granted a visa. A single international student with no dependents who is offered a *Qualifying Graduate Assistantship* by the School of Music should be prepared to show the university's Office of Admissions proof of access to **additional** funding of about \$7,000.00. International students with dependents will be expected to show proof of access to considerably more additional funding.

**ADDITIONAL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS:** Before any International student can be appointed to any Graduate Assistantship entailing contact with undergraduate students, he/she will be required to pass a series of English tests administered by the English Assessment Office. Please be aware that to pass these tests requires spoken and written language skills considerably more advanced than those required for admission to the university.

See the English Assessment Program website at <http://gradweb.ou.edu/EAP/index.htm> for more detailed information.

**U.S. SOCIAL SECURITY CARD:** Before anyone can be appointed to any graduate assistantship position, he/she must have a valid U. S. Social Security Card. It is the student's responsibility to apply for and obtain this card. Since the process of obtaining this card can take 6 weeks or more, we strongly suggest that any student who needs to apply for this card arrive in Norman 6 to 8 weeks before the first day of the contract.

#### **TERMS OF APPOINTMENT, RENEWAL, AND STANDARDS OF CARE**

As with all university appointments, graduate assistantships, both *Qualifying* and *Non-Qualifying*, are awarded pending admission to the University, approval by the Dean, Provost, and Board of Regents and allocation of sufficient funds by the Oklahoma Legislature. Graduate assistant stipends are subject to federal and state income tax.

Typically, Graduate Assistant appointments are made for both Fall and Spring semesters. (The term of a typical 9-month appointment is 16 August through 15 May.) Only rarely are new assistants appointed for the Spring semester. For this reason, applications for assistantships must be received in the Graduate Music Office by March 1 for the following Fall semester. Assuming they have completed all application requirements and a recommendation to admit has been made to the Graduate College, applicants are usually notified by April 15 if they have been offered an appointment for the next academic year.

Graduate Assistant appointments are made annually and current assistants wishing to be considered for re-appointment must re-apply each year.

Master's students may hold an assistantship for two years upon the recommendation of the faculty or staff supervisor of the particular assistantship position. A third year is permissible only under extreme circumstances and only if a faculty or staff supervisor successfully petitions the Graduate Studies Committee of the School of Music for permission to appoint the student to a specific position.

Students who complete their master's degree at the University of Oklahoma and begin doctoral study here are eligible for assistantship consideration upon the recommendation of the faculty or staff supervisor of the particular assistantship position; however, the total number of years a student may serve as a graduate assistant is four years. A fifth year is permissible only under extreme circumstances and only if a faculty or staff supervisor successfully petitions the Graduate Studies Committee of the School of Music for permission to appoint the student to a specific position.

New doctoral students may hold an assistantship for three years upon the recommendation of the faculty or staff supervisor of the particular assistantship position. A fourth year is permissible only under extreme circumstances and only if a faculty or staff supervisor successfully petitions the Graduate Studies Committee of the School of Music for permission to appoint the student to a specific position.

### **DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS THROUGH THE ALUMNI FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM**

The Alumni Fellowship Program is a cooperative effort among the Graduate College, the College of Fine Arts, and the School of Music and is intended to help the School of Music recruit the very best doctoral students with the greatest potential for success in their fields. Each of these three entities provides a portion of the support for the Fellows, to-wit:

- The School of Music provides a *Qualifying Graduate Assistantship*.
- The Graduate College provides:
  - an additional \$5,000.00 per year to be added to the total stipend
  - full tuition waiver up to the number of hours required for the degree
  - \$300 per year in travel/research assistance
  - basic health insurance through the Student Health Plan
- The College of Fine Arts provides funds to allow each Fellow .25 FTE release time in the semester the Fellow takes the General Exam and up to \$200 per year in travel/research assistance.

As of this writing, we will be able to offer fellowships to two new doctoral students in Fall 2008.<sup>2</sup> The fellowships will be offered to the two doctoral applicants deemed by the Graduate Studies Committee to show the most promise for outstanding careers in their individual areas. At their March 2008 meeting, the Graduate Studies Committee will select the Fellows from those doctoral applicants whose Fall 2008 admission has been approved as of that date.

The fellowships will be renewable for a maximum of 4 consecutive years.

The Graduate College expects Fellows to complete their degrees in a timely manner, preferably within the term of their fellowship and in residence on the Norman campus.

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<sup>2</sup> Subject to continued approval and funding of the Alumni Fellowship program by the Graduate College, the College of Fine Arts, and the School of Music.