

# Rights and Responsibilities of Graduate Award Holders

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## Scope: Who is Covered by this Policy?

Graduate Students

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## Policy

### Introduction

The University considers graduate award holders primarily students; that is, their first responsibility is to their own academic performance: courses, seminars, and research. However, while performing their duties as an award holder, students are expected to exercise the same degree of maturity and responsibility that is expected of a faculty member. To this end, they should receive (whenever possible) those faculty privileges that will help them satisfactorily perform their duties.

### Rights as Graduate Students

Graduate assistants and dissertation scholars have the rights and benefits common to all graduate students. They, as a graduate student have the right to:

- Instruction that encourages free and open discussion. Graduate students have the right to take exception with opinion; however, they must know the facts involved in forming that opinion.
- Professional guidance concerning their academic program or career. They also have the right to an evaluation of their academic progress. Graduate students

must meet the University and departmental requirements, while maintaining high academic standards.

- ~~• Due process as outlined in the appropriate official University publication. Graduate students must acquaint themselves with all Miami University regulations and policies.~~
- Be evaluated for admission and progress toward a degree based on their academic achievement, regardless of race, sex, religion, creed, or national origin.

## Additional Rights as Award Holders

There are additional rights unique to graduate assistants and dissertation scholars. As graduate award holders, they have the right to:

- Be informed of the general nature of the service they are to perform for the University. In turn, they also have the responsibility to perform these duties to the best of their ability.
- Participate in decision making processes related to teaching, if their duties include instructional responsibilities. At the same time, they also must abide by group decisions.
- Instructional and periodic guidance of their performance, if their duties involve teaching responsibilities. They must be open to suggestions on improving their teaching.

## Responsibilities as Award Holders

As graduate assistants or dissertation scholars, students also must fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Abide by the ethical standards of the profession that they serve.
- Hold no other employment during their term of appointment, unless recommended by the department chair and approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- Notify their department chair if they should decide to relinquish their graduate award during the year of the appointment. Students should submit a written resignation to the chair immediately after making their decision.

# Guidelines for Department Training and Supervision of Graduate Assistants with Teaching Responsibilities

Graduate assistants with teaching responsibilities play an important role in undergraduate education at Miami University, serving as lab instructors, instructors of record, and assisting faculty with teaching responsibilities. Graduate assistants (GAs) frequently work closely with undergraduates by answering questions, providing instruction and feedback, facilitating discussions, tutoring, and other teaching activities. By nature, GAs are often inexperienced teachers who are seeking to develop their teaching abilities and are frequently pursuing a teaching career of their own. Therefore Graduate Council recommends that departments provide training and supervision of GAs to facilitate their development as teachers and to insure that undergraduate education goals are being met. The following are suggestions that departments are encouraged to adapt to the specific demands and nature of their disciplines.

## Graduate Assistant Teacher Training and Supervision

- GAs should receive regular feedback on their performance and specific guidance when improvement is needed.
- Departments should have a written policy and procedure for handling GAs who do not meet performance standards and do not respond to feedback.
- Faculty are responsible for the syllabus, learning outcomes, and teaching materials. GAs should only create syllabi, learning outcomes, and select teaching materials under the careful guidance of the course supervisor or a faculty member.
- GAs should receive the syllabus, learning outcomes, and teaching materials for the class they will be teaching or assisting as far in advance as possible.
- GAs are encouraged to take part in university-wide teaching development opportunities such as participating in GSTEP (Graduate Student Teaching Enhancement Program), DUOS (Doctoral Undergraduate Opportunity Scholarships), the certificate in college teaching, attending CTE workshops, and attending the Lilly Conference.

- GAs should have a designated supervisor for teaching responsibilities who they can go to with questions and concerns.
- GAs who are the instructor of record should receive additional training and development throughout the semester to support their teaching responsibilities.

## Effective GA Teacher Training Includes the Following

- Information on effective teaching practices
- Instructional pedagogy in general and specific to the discipline
- Pedagogical content knowledge
- Cultural differences in classroom expectations and practices
- Organizing and preparing lectures and learning activities
- Grading procedures, including fair and effective grading

## GA Teacher Training Must Include the Following Topics

- Good teaching practices and student responsibilities (see “Statement of Good Teaching Practices” policy)
- Academic integrity policies (see “Academic Integrity” policy)
- Information on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (see “Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Policy”)
- Information on the policy prohibiting sexual harassment (see “Policy Prohibiting Harassment and Discrimination”)

## Implementing GA Teacher Training

Teacher training can be implemented with a variety of models. Existing models at Miami include formal courses, seminars, colloquia, brown-bag meetings, and one-on-one mentoring. Credit can be offered for the study of teaching and pedagogy, but students should not receive credit for tasks for which they are being paid. Departments are encouraged to take advantage of the week before classes start in August for conducting training. Graduate assistants are required to report to work and are paid for the week before classes start in fall semester.

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## Related Form(s)

Not Applicable.

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## Additional Resources and Procedures

Not Applicable.

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## FAQ

Not Applicable.

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## Policy Administration

### Next Review Date

7/1/2023

### Responsible Officer

### Legal Authority

Not Applicable.

### Compliance Policy

No

## Revision History

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## Reviewing Bodies

Not Applicable.