



Guidelines for CEHD Graduate Students on Assistantship Contracts or Fellowships—2024-2025

Congratulations on your offer of an assistantship. Please read the following information carefully so that you will be aware of policies related to your contract. For conciseness, the term “assistant” is used for all three classifications of assistantships—graduate assistant, research assistant, or teaching assistant.

Funding for Ph.D. Students

As stated in initial offer letters to Ph.D. students, our funding package includes financial support for four years, provided students remain a full-time student (9 credit hours per semester), remain in good academic standing each semester (a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and pass all required exams), accept the teaching, research or practice assistantship we offer, meet assistantship expectations, and complete a criminal background check. The commitment to Ph.D. students lasts until the end of spring semester of the student’s fourth year. For students in good standing, it is possible to apply for funding beyond the fourth year. For more information, see the relevant program policy statement: [Ph.D. in Education program policy document](#); [Ph.D. in ESRM program policy document](#); [Ph.D. in HDFS Handbook](#). During the academic year, funding will be in the form of a research assistantship, teaching assistantship, graduate assistantship, or fellowship. Assistantships provide Ph.D. students with learning opportunities to conduct research alongside UD’s scholars, learn how to design and teach/assist teaching a university course, and/or engage with other research and practice activities. Accepting summer funding from UD is optional as sometimes students pursue external internships and other opportunities.

Funding for Ed.D. and Master’s Students

The priority in CEHD is to award available research and teaching assistantships to Ph.D. students. Full-time Ed.D. and master’s students may be awarded graduate assistantships if available from CEHD centers and other units on campus such as in Student Life. All students on assistantships are required to remain a full-time student (9 credit hours per semester), remain in good academic standing each semester (a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and pass all required exams), and complete a criminal background check. Assistantships to master’s students do not typically include tuition support, unless provided by the grant or project.

Minimum Credit Registration

Although the University requires students on contract to be registered for a minimum of 6 graduate credits, the **College of Education requires research/teaching/graduate assistants and those on fellowships to be registered in a minimum of 9 graduate credits for the fall and spring semesters unless an exception is granted.**



Tuition Scholarship Coverage

Tuition coverage is indicated in the contract webform, Student Graduate Contract Responsibility (GSCRF). If the assistantship covers tuition, the tuition scholarship associated with assistantships and fellowships offered by CEHD only covers fall and spring semesters and does not cover winter session.

Students who are **on contract** for the summer months are provided with a tuition scholarship because the University requires registration in at least 3 credits during the 7.5-week summer session for students on a summer contract. It is permissible to register for more than 3 credits if the additional course(s) are *in the same 7.5-week summer session*. If summer tuition is covered it will be noted in the summer contract.

Graduate students who are supported by the University as research assistants during the summer months are required to be registered in at least three credits or in sustaining (if eligible) during the 7.5-week summer session. Summer registration options for those on contract include:

- 868 Research (graded on the A-F grading scale),
- 887 Summer Research (graded on the P/F grading scale)
- 869 Thesis
- 964 Pre-candidacy Study
- 969 Dissertation
- 864 Internship
- 866 Special Problem (Independent Study)
- 999 Sustaining
- A regular course offered in the 7.5 week summer session (min. 3 credits)

Students who *do not* have tuition coverage and register for summer or winter courses must pay the tuition unless granted an exception prior to registration for a required course.

In the case of students on assistantships and who *do not* have tuition coverage, it is university policy to bill graduate assistants for a minimum of 9 graduate credits per fall and spring semester, so if a student is enrolled in fewer than 9 credits, they will be billed for the full 9 credits.

Hours of Service, Reporting Sites, and Holidays

Students holding assistantships are required to provide an average of 20 hours of service per week, including winter session and spring break. As with any professional appointment, the amount of service may vary from week to week, but the average should be no more than 20 hours per week.

Students holding assistantships are expected to work on campus or at the assistantship site as directed by their assistantship supervisor. Deviations from these working arrangements must be discussed with and approved by the assistantship supervisor in advance.



There are periods when University offices are open but there are no classes scheduled, i.e., fall break and spring break, and the end of the term. When University offices are open, those hours are included in the weekly reporting requirement. When University *offices are officially closed*, such as for holidays, students are excused from their assistantship duties but should prorate their hours for that week. Students should develop their schedule in consultation with their assistantship supervisor.

For example, classes are suspended during the week of Thanksgiving break from November 25 to 29, 2024. However only Thursday, November 28, and Friday, November 29 are holidays during which University offices are closed. Therefore, assistants may prorate their hours that week and work 3/5 of their 20 contracted hours, or 12 hours. Schedules for additional University holidays should be adjusted in a similar manner following the example above.

Students with assistantships will *not* be obligated to work when the University of Delaware is closed for the winter holiday break. Holiday breaks are announced on the administrative calendar found at <http://events.udel.edu>.

Assistants are required to work during UD's spring break unless arrangements are made in advance with the assistantship supervisor. If a student is allowed to take off during spring break, the 20 hours should be made up at another time during the contract period.

Winter session is considered a regular session and graduate and research assistants are required to perform their assistantship duties during the winter session period if the contract has been written from September 1 through May 31.

Absences

If a TA, GA, or RA becomes ill, sick leave should be supported collegially, up to 40 hours for the 12-month contract period. After four consecutive days of sick leave, the student is to provide a letter from a physician or other licensed health-care professional that is confidential and states (1) that the student can or cannot return to the appointment for health reasons; and (2) the duration of the required sick leave. This letter should be submitted to the Graduate College who will verify the approval of the leave with the student's supervisor.

In the case of a long-term illness or parental leave, students must communicate with their supervisor, consult the UD Graduate Catalog for [Leave of Absence and Parental Accommodations](#) procedures, and notify the CEHD Dean's Office by contacting Christina Johnston, cmj@udel.edu.

Graduate students on *12-month contracts* or with 12-month commitments (a 9-month academic year contract plus a 3-month summer contract) may follow the University's policy for [Graduate Student Paid](#)



[Leave](#). For students taking paid leave, leave should be recorded on the [CEHD Graduate Student Time Off Request](#) form.

Maintaining Eligibility for Funding

Students on assistantships and fellowships are required to remain in good academic standing each semester (a 3.0 cumulative grade point average is required), meet expectations of the assistantship as assigned, and make satisfactory progress in his or her academic program as defined in the program or College policies.

An offer of continuation of the appointment is contingent upon satisfactory performance of assigned duties each semester, continued academic eligibility in each semester (minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0), compliance with the University's Code of Conduct, availability of funds, and stated policies of the program as to the number of semesters that a student is eligible to receive fellowships or assistantships.

Students will be informed in writing about performance issues and be given an opportunity to address these issues through mid and/or end-of-semester performance evaluations. Funding in subsequent years is contingent on satisfactory performance of assistantship duties. The appointment is for the period indicated on the contract form and the unit does not need to report non-renewal to the student.

To remain eligible for assistantships, students must be available to report to work on the Newark campus or alternative reporting site, if indicated in the contract or directed by the assistantship supervisor.

Students should not expect to continue assistantships if they move out of the commuting area or obtain full-time employment. Tuition-only scholarships are not typically awarded.

The intention of the assistantship is for students to give full-time attention to academic program studies, research and professional training. Additional paid work or work outside the University is permitted only under certain conditions. Please see the Graduate Contract Additional Work Policy in the "Students on Contract" section of the [Graduate College policy webpage](#) for more information.

Grades of incomplete (I) revert to F grades if the required coursework is not successfully completed by the deadline the following semester and can potentially put assistantship eligibility in jeopardy. Please consult the Registrar's [academic calendar](#) for relevant dates.

Students who withdraw or are dismissed from the University during the time of the contract appointment will become responsible for the tuition in that semester.

Payroll—Academic Year



During the contract period, assistants follow the semi-monthly payroll schedule. Semi-monthly payroll is deposited on the 15th and last day of the month. If the 15th or last day of the month falls on the weekend, payment is usually made the Friday prior. For contracts spanning September 1 through May 31, students who meet the deadlines for providing materials during the Human Resources “onboarding” processes to become established in the UD payroll system will have the first paycheck of the contract period directly deposited to their designated bank account on September 15. The last paycheck will be on May 31. The semi-monthly payroll schedule can be found on the [UD Payroll Department](#) website. During the *contract period*, hours do *not* need to be logged into UDWorkforce to be paid but individual supervisors may have other methods of tracking assistantship hours served such as entering hours in a spreadsheet.

Federal and state taxes, if applicable, will be withheld from the stipend check. Tuition scholarships are not taxed.

Summer Employment

If a student is employed at UD during the summer period and not on contract, they are paid as hourly employees and must enter their time through UDWorkforce and their supervisor or designee must approve the time each pay period. Please note this is a change from how payroll is handled during the academic year, and hourly payroll happens on a different schedule. The schedule can be found on the [UD Payroll Department](#) website. The change-over to a different payrolls system means that students will miss a paycheck they normally receive on June 15. In addition, if students are not enrolled in courses, their tax status will change and taxes may be withheld at a different rate than during the assistantship contract period and when registered for courses. Students who do not have assistantship contracts that cover the summer months should make budgetary plans for this change. Finally, if the hours are not entered and approved by each bi-weekly payroll deadline, students will not be paid on time in the summer.

Students whose contracts span through the summer months *do not* need to enter their hours in UDWorkforce and are paid on the same schedule as the academic year.

Pay Stubs

Students can view a record of their payroll, taxes, and other deductions at the [UD Payroll Department Website](#) under the “My Pay Stub” icon. Students can also access W-2 forms for taxes at the end of the calendar year and update tax withholdings if needed through the W-4 form.

Fees

The assistantship contract does not provide for payment of the student fees that are charged by the University each semester unless so noted as part of the contract. Information about graduate student fees can be found at: <https://catalog.udel.edu/content.php?catoid=91&navoid=28463>. All full-time graduate students on contract are responsible for mandatory fees—the Student Center Fee, the Student



Health Service Fee, and the Graduate Recreation Fee as well as a Mandatory Medical Insurance fee (if it is not waived). International Students must pay an additional International Student Fee.

Payroll Deduction

Students on assistantship contracts may elect to have fees deducted from their stipend through payroll deduction, rather than pay the balance at the beginning of the semester. Students can arrange to have these fees paid incrementally through a stipend reduction over the course of 4 pay periods by completing the Pay General Deduction form at <https://grad.udel.edu/graduate-community-portal/students/payroll-deduction/>. Payroll deduction for UD parking permits is also possible and students should elect that payment option through the online parking permit process. The payroll deduction form must be completed each semester and the form is not typically available until after the first pay date of the contract period (e.g., September 15 for contracts starting September 1). See the additional document at the end for further instructions.

For Teaching Assistants with Teaching Obligations

Attendance at the Teaching Assistant Orientation (TAO) workshop is required for all first time TAs. International TAs must also attend the ELI ITA training program offered during the summer and meet the SPEAK/UDIA score requirements to be eligible for a TA appointment.

Policy Exceptions or Questions

Any requests for exceptions to the policies stated must be presented in writing to Christina Johnston, Assistant Dean for Graduate Student Services, who will forward it to the Graduate College for consideration and action.

Ms. Christina Johnston

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Instructions for Completing Payroll Deduction for Semester Fees for Students on Assistantship or Fellowship Contracts

Graduate students have until the first day of classes to pay for their semester fees. Graduate students on contract may sign up for payroll deduction as explained below.

Graduate Payroll Deduction can be used for all fees and for the medical insurance charge. There is no fee for using the payroll deduction form. Funded graduate students receiving a stipend from UD are eligible to opt into payroll deduction, which allows their fees to be paid in installments from their stipend payment. Participation in payroll deduction is not required.

All full-time graduate students on contract will find on their bill that they have been enrolled and billed for the UD Medical Insurance Plan. Upon receipt of their bill, they need to complete the Student Enrollment Form found at https://www.universityhealthplans.com/letters/letter.cgi?group_id=278. If students want to waive the enrollment, they must complete the waiver form also found on this url.

Important notes:

- Students on contract must be registered for courses or sustaining to receive their bill.
- Newly onboarding students will not be able to submit the Payroll Deduction Form until they are on-boarded and active in the HR system as a graduate student on contract, so the payroll deduction form will not show until at least September 15 for the Fall semester. The deadline to sign up for payroll deduction in the Fall is always 09/30/XX. The deadline for Spring is always 02/28/XX.

Students wishing to enroll in the payroll deduction option should complete two steps.

1. Go to this website: <https://www.udel.edu/students/student-financial-services/manage-student-account/> and click on Payment Methods. Financially clear the SFS student account by *reporting additional credits* in My Finances and paying any remaining charges that are not payable by the payroll deduction. See instructions below for how to complete Financial Clearance.
2. Submit a [Payroll Deduction Form](#). (Remember this is only open for new RA/TA/GAs after September 15 when active in the payroll system.)

[Financial Clearance](#) (from the SFS website)

Financial clearance is how SFS defines a student account in good standing. This status protects the student account from late fees, transcript/registration holds, and potential course cancellation, and is achieved by one or more of the following actions.



- Payment in full by the payment due date
 - Installment payments made by their respective due dates
 - Recorded additional funding not yet posted to the account via the Report Additional Credits function in [My Finances](#)
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- Click the pencil icon to Report Additional Credits.
 - Select the appropriate category from the Type dropdown.
 - Enter amount.
 - Enter comment explaining source of funding.
 - Click "Save credits."
 - *In order for credits to be properly recorded, click "Submit" (if no additional payment is due) or complete the payment (if there is a remaining balance due).*

Financial aid for any term is disbursed, or paid, to the student account within two weeks of the start of that term. Aid not yet disbursed to the student account will show in [My Finances](#) as Pending Aid, and will reduce the balance due. Students should complete all requirements for disbursement (listed on the To Do List) within 45 days of the aid offer so that the aid remains on the student account.

Students expecting other funds not reflected as pending aid should report these as additional credits in [My Finances](#) to update the balance due and allow accurate payment. This involves providing the type, amount, and other important information about the award. Parent PLUS loans, 529 plans, third party sponsorships, and deferred employee benefits are common examples of additional credits reported.

After reviewing pending aid and reporting any necessary additional credits, students should complete the payment process as prompted on [My Finances](#) to ensure financial clearance.