



## 2025-2026 Graduate Assistantship Agreement (GTA, GPI, GA, GRA)

This agreement, provided to departments by the Graduate School, may not be amended or changed without written approval of the Graduate School.

Please read this document carefully. Your signature indicates you, the student, have read, accepted and will abide by the terms and conditions listed in this agreement.

This agreement is made between

and

Student's Name and Bear ID (Last 4)

Unit or Department

We are pleased to confirm you have been awarded the following assistantship at the University of Northern Colorado (please check all that apply)

GTA Graduate Teaching Assistant (Teaches **only** undergraduate courses **under supervision** - may be instructor of record; may assist in graduate courses under direct faculty supervision)

GPI Graduate Part-time Instructor (Qualifies as instructor of record under HLC guidelines without the need for supervision - not course coordinator or supervisor for teaching assistants)

GA-A Graduate Assistant

GRA Graduate Research Assistant

The assistantship appointment is      **Academic Year**      **Fiscal Year**      **Semester**

**Start Date:**

**End Date:**

This appointment is for      hours of work per week, for which you will be paid a gross stipend of \$      (enter amount). For the purposes of the tuition waiver, the student is classified as eligible for tuition and partial fee waiver for up to      credits per semester based on enrollment in 3-10 graduate credits.

Students: Please read this contract carefully. **Your signature indicates that you understand and accept the rate of stipend and tuition waiver specified.** Stipend amounts should conform to the university stipend chart and appointment term (Semester, AY or FY). Academic units have flexibility in determining tuition waiver, but units must be consistent in the amount of tuition waiver offered for the number of hours contracted per week. Although administrative units are encouraged to use the master's and doctoral rates, these units are permitted to budget all positions at the master's stipend rate. Students are financially responsible for all tuition and remaining fees not covered by their tuition and partial fee waiver.

# Important Terms and Conditions

## Terms of Employment and Student Classification

- Congratulations on receiving an assistantship. Please be aware that the funding outlined in your assistantship agreement offsets the cost of your graduate program at UNC **but will not be sufficient to cover all related costs, such as books, some university fees, health insurance and living expenses.**
- An individual must be admitted to the Graduate School and a graduate degree program at UNC **before** being contracted for an assistantship position.
- Graduate students who receive assistantships, including GPI, GTA, GA-A and GRA, are classified by the university as **students** and not as UNC faculty or administrative employees.
- If there is any variance or conflicting language between an offer letter from a student's school/department and this agreement, the agreement takes precedence.
- **Graduate part-time instructors may not be hired to teach graduate-level courses.** A student holding a GPI may teach only undergraduate students as the instructor of record. A GTA may teach undergraduate courses under the supervision of a faculty member and may be listed as the instructor of record. Students with GTA appointments may support graduate faculty in graduate classes but are not to be solely responsible for class instruction or grading. They must be supervised directly by faculty. Failure to comply with this policy may result in termination of the assistantship agreement.
- All GPIs, GTAs and GAs must receive annual training in Title IX and resources for managing difficult and/or distressed students. Graduate assistants should attend the Graduate Assistants' Conference in August. While attending the entire conference is strongly recommended, attendance at the Title IX and student support resources workshop is mandatory. The Graduate Assistants' Conference is scheduled August 18, 2025, on Zoom. Please register here: [Graduate Assistants' Conference](#).
- Graduate teaching assistants classified as GPI or GTA **must attend a mandatory graduate student teaching conference each fall and complete the full range of follow-up workshops offered during the academic year or forfeit a portion of their stipend.** A schedule of teaching workshops will be available by August 16, 2025. The Fall 2025 Graduate Teaching Conference is scheduled **August 18, 2025**. Some required asynchronous training materials will be posted in Canvas before the conference. All GPIs and GTAs are encouraged to pursue the certificate in college teaching, offered through the Center for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning and the Graduate School. Please register for the [Graduate Teaching Conference](#).
- By signing this agreement, you agree not to:
  - Accept an assistantship from any other graduate programs or administrative units without first notifying the director/chair/supervisor of the initial appointing unit of such an offer and receiving a written release from this agreement issued by the director/chair/supervisor.
  - Accept a second assistantship appointment when the combination of appointments exceeds 20 hours per week.
  - Accept other positions for stipend at the university in addition to a full-time assistantship. A full-time graduate assistant may hold a student hourly position. A student holding a half-time graduate assistantship may secure other positions for stipend and/or tuition waiver at the university. In any case, the combination of assistantship and hourly on-campus work positions shall not exceed 20 hours per week.
- Graduate assistants are responsible for informing the Graduate School of changes to their contact information.
- Students on assistantship support must complete all duties assigned by the appointing unit(s) in a satisfactory manner and in compliance with the UNC Code of Conduct. Failure to complete assistantship responsibilities will result in remediation (improvement plan) or possible termination of the position. Any violation of the UNC Code of Conduct/Community Standards may result in immediate dismissal from an assistantship position and withdrawal of the tuition waiver.
- Students on assistantships must comply with all other university and federal policies in the conduct of their courses, including FERPA, Americans with Disabilities Act and Title IX. **Students on assistantship are prohibited from having or attempting to have any form of romantic/amorous relationships with students in their courses or administrative**

departments for whom they have assessment or mentoring responsibilities. Academic and administrative units can dismiss a student immediately from an assistantship for violating this policy. If you have questions about this policy, please contact the Graduate School.

### Expected Hours and Weeks of Contracted Work

- The maximum assistantship for which a student is eligible at the University of Northern Colorado is .50 FTE (20 hours per week), whether in a single appointment or any combination thereof.
- GPI, GTA, GA-A and GRA appointments of 16-20 hours per week are considered full time, and appointments of 8-15 hours are considered half time. Appointments of 3-7 hours a week provide a stipend but typically do not provide tuition and partial fee waiver. In a few exceptional cases permitted by the Graduate School, schools or departments may offer tuition waiver of no more than 3 credits to students on 3- to 7-hour-per-week agreements. Tuition waiver is calculated on a per-credit-hour basis for graduate-level courses (500s, 600s, and 700s) only.
- Academic year (AY) agreement: mid-August to mid-May, normally 34 weeks.
  - Students on AY appointments work during both fall and spring terms, beginning one week before the term start date and ending the Wednesday after May commencement ceremonies.
  - Supervisors and students are allowed some flexibility to negotiate weekly work hours and the number of working weeks as long as the student works all of the hours required in the contract (e.g., 18 hours x 17 weeks = 306 contract hours) within the time frame specified above.
  - Students cannot work or be required by supervisors to work beyond the end date of their contract. If a department or student needs an amendment to the agreement end date, please contact the Graduate School.
  - Students on GPI and GTA contracts must report no later than the week before the start of the term (fall and spring). Start dates are confirmed with the department/unit.
  - AY agreements require students to work during non-university holidays (Presidents', Indigenous Peoples', and Veterans days).
- Fiscal year (FY) agreement: July 1 - June 30.
  - The student's schedule follows the UNC calendar, including working during spring, fall, and winter breaks, unless other arrangements are agreed upon between the supervisor and student to ensure all contracted hours are met.
  - New FY agreements, beginning in July of each year, require fall enrollment to qualify for the assistantship.
- Students on semester contracts should work their contracted hours over 17 weeks. Alternative arrangements must be specific and approved by the Graduate School.
- As with any professional appointment, the amount of work time may vary slightly from week to week, yet no student should exceed 20 hours per week.

### University Breaks, Vacation and Sick Leave

- Students on FY and AY agreements are permitted one week of vacation break. Vacation should be negotiated with the supervisor. Students on GPI and GTA contracts may **not** take vacation while classes are in session. With the consent of their supervisors, students working over winter break or spring break may work on campus or from home.
- Semester contracts do not include a vacation break.
- All students holding graduate assistantships are entitled to accrue up to 48 hours of sick leave per year in keeping with **policies** for other student workers.
- Students with semester, AY or FY contracts do not accrue additional paid vacation days or sick leave days beyond what is stated in these terms.
- Students who need to take parental leave should first use their paid sick leave. Colorado residents may be eligible for statutory paid parental leave at 35-85 percent of their stipend. If a student and department wish to develop an alternative working arrangement so a student can take parental leave beyond their sick leave, please contact the Graduate School for assistance.

## Admission with Language Requirements or Academic Provisions

- A student who does not meet the language proficiency requirement for admission or who needs to enroll in any courses through the Intensive English Program (IEP) may not hold a GPI as an instructor of record or a GTA appointment teaching under faculty supervision. If the student is able to enroll in graduate courses while completing IEP, then the student may assist in undergraduate courses with direct faculty supervision or hold a GA-A or GRA appointment that does not require language proficiency. In no case will tuition waivers cover the cost of IEP courses. Departments may require additional English proficiency assessments.
- A student admitted with academic provisions because of a GPA lower than 3.0 on the last degree granted may hold an assistantship on a one-semester probationary basis. The student must earn a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 during the first semester in the graduate program to retain the assistantship.

## Enrollment and Academic Standing Requirements

- A student must enroll in a minimum of 3 credit hours of graduate classes each term to maintain the assistantship, with the exception of doctoral candidates taking only 1 credit per semester of 799. **Classes may not be repeated solely for the purpose of holding a graduate assistantship. Students who have completed all course requirements for their degree are not eligible to hold an assistantship.**
- A student enrolled in only dissertation credits should, typically, be hired as an adjunct and not contracted on an assistantship. Students may not hold an assistantship for more than four semesters of dissertation credit only enrollment.
- Students with assistantships must maintain good academic standing at UNC (at least a 3.0 grade point average), attend class on a regular basis throughout the semester, and maintain high standards of academic integrity. Should the cumulative GPA of a graduate assistant (inclusive of all categories) fall below the 3.0 standard, the assistantship will be reassigned to another student the next semester to allow the former graduate assistant to improve the GPA. If a graduate assistant (inclusive of all categories) is found responsible for a violation of academic integrity, the department/school or administrative unit should withdraw the student's assistantship agreement immediately. If a student stops attending class or is administratively withdrawn from class because of non-attendance, the Graduate School will require the immediate termination of the assistantship agreement.
- Students on fiscal year contracts are eligible for up to 6 credits of tuition waiver for one summer per contract term. Students must be registered on the first day of classes to receive the stipend, tuition, and partial fee waiver.

## Financial Terms

- Stipends, as stated in the agreement, are based on the number of hours per week that you are contracted to work.
- Consistent with federal financial aid guidelines, graduate assistantship tuition waivers are applied to only:
  - Graduate-level courses
  - Credits needed to complete the degree program
- The tuition and partial fee waiver associated with your assistantship is a student financial resource. As such, an adjustment or reduction may be necessary for other financial aid (e.g., loans or scholarships) should you exceed your maximum eligibility. Your timely response to all future agreements related to this offer and any other offers of financial assistance from UNC will ensure that funds are available to you at the beginning of your appointment.
- Stipend is deemed taxable compensation. Any tuition remission hereunder shall be in the form of financial aid, provided independently of the stipend as qualified tuition reduction given for educational purposes, and shall not be deemed taxable compensation pursuant to section 117 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. You can view your tuition information at <http://www.unco.edu/acctservices/bursar/eBills/>.
- The stipend is not a scholarship award, but rather compensation for the performance of assigned duties. Failure to fulfill assigned responsibilities, withdrawal from the university, violations of the Code of Conduct or other university, Graduate School, or departmental policies, or failure to meet the above-described conditions may be grounds for termination of this agreement, which shall terminate the stipend payable under this agreement. Such termination also shall result in forfeiture of further tuition remission and may result in repayment of the

remaining tuition waiver. Assistantship agreements are subject to university policy regarding withdrawal or cancellation charges. If payments of stipend or tuition are accepted after the date of termination, the student is responsible for repayment.

- Graduate assistants classified as full time (working 16-20 hours per week) receive tuition and partial fee waiver up to 10 credits, while enrolling in fewer than 9 credits results in tuition and partial fee waiver based on the number of graduate credits enrolled. Thus, enrollment in 4 graduate credits results in tuition and partial fee waiver for 4 credits.
- Half-time graduate assistants work 8-15 hours per week and receive tuition and partial fee waiver for up to 5 credits. For example, with enrollment in 9 graduate credits, a half-time graduate assistant receives a tuition waiver for 5 credits. Enrollment in 5 graduate credits results in tuition and partial fee waiver for 5 credits, and enrollment in 3 graduate credits results in tuition and partial fee waiver of 3 credits.
- The tuition waiver covers:
  - Up to the maximum number of credits noted in the contract
  - Course credits in the student's plan of study.
  - One 3-credit course not included in the degree requirements per calendar year. Typically, the course should provide the student with additional knowledge or skills relevant to the program or count toward a minor.
- The tuition waiver will **not** pay for:
  - More credits than needed to complete the degree program, including extra 797 or 799 credits (with the exception noted above)
  - Undergraduate credits, even if 100- to 400-level courses are recommended by or prerequisite for the student's program
- Partial fee waiver covers Student Services and LEAF fees. Graduate assistants are responsible for:
  - Other fees, such as technology and student capital fees
  - Specific course fees
  - Cost of health insurance (for assistance with affordable health insurance, contact the Office of Student Wellness.)
- Tuition and partial fee waivers post to billing accounts two to three business days after the add/drop deadlines to accommodate changes to registration. Students who add or drop credits following add/drop will see adjustments to their accounts and may incur extra charges.
- Stipends are paid via direct deposit. A student may be required to provide the university with other information necessary to allow prompt payment of the stipend.
- The tuition and partial fee waiver provided through this agreement does not extend to graduate student study abroad. Should a graduate student choose a study abroad course, the tuition waiver will cover only the customary tuition for courses in the discipline and will not cover other fees or costs associated with study abroad courses (travel, lodging, insurance, etc.).
- A student may hold a graduate assistantship or utilize the employee/dependent tuition grant, **but not both**. A part-time or full-time UNC employee cannot hold a graduate assistantship.

### Nonresident Students and Tuition Waivers

- The Graduate School allocates assistantship budgets to the colleges. College leadership, in consultation with graduate programs, decides whether to budget positions with international or nonresident tuition waivers.
  - Programs are encouraged to provide nonresident tuition waivers to domestic nonresident students for their first year of assistantship contract only. Domestic students who wish to become residents of Colorado should check the university [Registrar's web page](#) for information on applying for residency status.

- Programs are permitted to budget positions with resident tuition waiver only, even for nonresident/international students. In such cases, the student will be responsible for paying the difference between the resident and nonresident tuition rate. Students should check their contract very carefully and understand if they are receiving a resident or nonresident tuition waiver.
- Students who qualify for WICHE Western Regional Graduate Program (WRGP) classification receive tuition charge and tuition waiver at the resident rate. A student from a WICHE state is not automatically classified as a WICHE student but must qualify through demonstrating residency of a WICHE state. Otherwise, the student will be charged tuition at the nonresident rate and will be responsible for any tuition charges not covered by the tuition waiver. For more information on WICHE/WRGP, please visit the [Western Regional Graduate Program web page](#).

### **Limits on Assistantship Funding Supported by the Graduate School**

- The Graduate School aims to provide support to students in the early stages of their programs and to relieve students of assistantship workload at proposal and dissertation stage so they can make progress toward completion of their degree. The availability of assistantship funding is always dependent on the university budget. For these reasons, the Graduate School reserves the right to place time limits on assistantship funding.
- All assistantships funded through the university are contingent upon the university budget and funding sources. No one in the university has the authority to promise multi-year assistantship funding or automatic renewal of a university funded assistantship position beyond the end date of this agreement.
- A graduate student may not be hired as an adjunct instructor and hold an assistantship in the same term.
- An assistantship is contingent on funding by the State of Colorado and/or the granting agency under which the assistantship is to be funded and approved by the University of Northern Colorado Board of Trustees. Changes to the student's stipend or maximum tuition waiver amounts will typically not be made during the term of the agreement. The Graduate School reserves the right to change stipend compensation levels and the number of credits covered by a tuition waiver in subsequent years to align with the university's budgetary requirements.
- Regardless of the funding source, the university reserves the right to cancel this agreement for any reason with 30 days' written notification to the student.

For more information about policies and procedures related to assistantships, please see the Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants.

This offer is an agreement for your services and carries with it full responsibilities as required in any agreement. **Your signature indicates that you have read all of the terms and conditions of this agreement and that you will review the Handbook for Graduate Assistants and Graduate Teaching Assistants.** We value your relationship with UNC. Your assistantship takes precedence over any other work obligation(s) you may undertake during the course of your appointment. Your assignment for the duration of this assistantship is:

The following courses will be taught as instructor of record:

Faculty supervisor:

Welcome to UNC and your program. We look forward to working with you. By typing/signing your name below, you attest that you have **read and accepted** the conditions of this offer (**pages 2-6 of this document**). If we do not hear from you by     (date)    , this offer may be withdrawn.

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Student Name

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Date

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Director

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Date

**This section to be completed by the student:**

Will you enroll in either thesis (699) or dissertation (799) credits during the current agreement term? **Y** **N**

Year in UNC graduate program? \_\_\_\_\_ Years as a GA or TA at UNC? \_\_\_\_\_ (1, 2, 3, etc.)

Are you enrolled in an Extended Campus or WRGP program? **Y** **N** Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Departments may establish a higher standard. Such standards should be communicated to the Graduate School and interested applicants.

Please complete if tuition is being paid by Department/Program

Type of Appointment				
Fund	Org	Account	Program	FTE:

Account Codes:

GTA-A 62860      GTA-B 62860      GA-A 62860      GPI 62860      GRA 62860

GRANTS ONLY (3 funds only)

OSP Signature	Date	Aid Code		Tuition