



SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY



CHECKLIST FOR HIRING GRADUATE STUDENT STAFF

Please direct questions to the Human Resources (HR) Partner at extension 5431.

A full description of [employment procedures](#) and [downloadable forms](#) are available on the HR website.

Step 1 The Budget Unit/Department Head must ensure that there is an existing position (line item in the budget) for a graduate assistant. If not, a position must be created through the budget request process. If approved, the Budget Unit/Department Head and Dean/Division Head will be notified in writing by the Provost and the Vice President for Administration and Finance with a copy to HR. The HR Partner will work with the HR Specialist to secure a position number and add the position to PeopleAdmin. The position will appear in the budget for the new fiscal year.

Categories of Appointment – Graduate assistants shall be designated in one of the following categories, according to the type of duties performed. For example, if an assistant spends 60 percent of his/her time assisting in laboratory sections and 40 percent conducting research; he/she shall be designated as a Teaching Assistant.

Administrative Assistant (AA) – The AA performs assignments primarily of a clerical nature or supervisory nature, although he/she may be assigned other duties.

Note: *According to the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), if a teaching assistant or an administrative assistant is purposely misclassified by their supervisor as a research assistant in an attempt to circumvent the FLSA and if the University is audited and found to be in violation, the supervisor responsible will be personally liable for the fines and penalties. The university will also be responsible for damages and back wages. These fines could be up to \$10,000 for each violation. A second violation can result in imprisonment. Willful violations are also subject to civil money penalties of up to \$1,000 for each violation.*

Teaching Assistant (TA) – The TA usually assists a faculty member in teaching his/her course; however, the faculty member remains responsible for and serves as the Instructor of Record for this course. In some departments, the TA may be assigned to assist a faculty member with taking roll, grading papers, conducting help sessions, etc.; whereas, in other departments, the TA may serve a period of apprenticeship under the supervision of a faculty member.

Note: *Refer to the same note as above for the Administrative Assistant.*

Professional Service Assistant (PSA) – The PSA performs jobs or tasks in a department directly related to his/her graduate training program or discipline.

Note: *Departments, units, or offices offering this type of assistantship will be required to have specific position descriptions and verify, upon initial hire and randomly thereafter, that the student is being hired in an identical or appropriately related department as to what he/she is pursuing a graduate degree. Approval by the Dean for Research and Graduate Studies is required.*

Research Assistant (RA) – The RA primarily performs research assignments for a faculty member. Often the RA works together with a faculty member in conducting a research project.

Note: *The United States Department of Labor (DOL) has clarified that it will not assert that an employee-employer relationship exists between graduate research assistants and a higher education institution:*

“In some cases graduate students in colleges and universities are engaged in research in the course of obtaining advanced degrees and the research is performed under the supervision of a member of the faculty in a research environment provided by the institution under a grant or contract. Normally the graduate students involved in these programs are simultaneously

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performing research under the grants or contracts and fulfilling the requirements of an advanced degree. Under such circumstances, Wage and Hour will not assert an employee-employer relationship between the students and the school, or between the student and the grantor or contracting agency, even though the student receives a stipend for their services under the grant or contract. Where no employment relationship exists, there is no application of the minimum wage and overtime pay provisions of the FLSA.”

Graduate Teaching Fellows (GTF) – The GTF teaches a course(s) and has full responsibility for the course(s). He/she is the Instructor of Record for the course(s) and must meet SACS criteria. SACS criteria are listed on the HR web site at <http://www2.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/sacscriteria.htm>

Note: *If there are any questions regarding whether a candidate meets SACS criteria, the Budget Unit/Department Head should consult with the University SACS liaison officer.*

Step 2 When the department is ready to fill a new or existing position, the Budget Unit/Department Head or GA Coordinator will verify with the HR Partner that a current position description is active in PeopleAdmin.

Step 3 Each semester, the Budget Unit/Department Head or GA Coordinator will send an email to the HR Partner requesting an internal waiver for the position to be filled. The HR Partner will post the position and send the Budget Unit/Department Head or GA Coordinator the URL link to be given to the applicant(s). The applicant(s) will apply for the position in PeopleAdmin using the provided link.

OR

If the Budget Unit/Department Head or GA Coordinator does not know of a qualified individual who is available, he/she will send a memo or email to the HR Partner requesting to advertise the position. The HR Partner will advertise the vacancy notice on the Southeastern HR website.

Note: *Applicants must possess the minimum qualifications for the position based on the category (see Step 1).*

Note: *For an applicant to be considered a qualified applicant, he/she must meet all of the minimum qualification requirements posted at the time of application and must submit a complete application packet. The application packet must include an electronic application through PeopleAdmin that includes the names and contact information of at least one reference.*

Note: *More than one applicant can be hired using the same internal waiver/posting. For example, a department can complete hiring proposals for all graduate staff using one internal waiver/posting per category; however, each applicant must be hired using a different position number.*

Step 4 Once a job offer is made and accepted, the department must change the candidate's status in PeopleAdmin to "Recommend for Hire." Once the candidate's status is changed to "Recommend for Hire," a link will appear to "Begin Hiring Proposal."

Note: *After the conditional job offer is made and accepted, it is the responsibility of the new employee to ensure that all documents for which he/she is responsible have been submitted to HR and that all required paperwork has been completed. A new employee will not be added to the payroll system unless all steps have been completed. The Budget Unit/Department Head or GA Coordinator must inform the prospective employee of this.*

Step 5 The new employee must attend the scheduled orientation session. The employee will sign all needed paperwork at orientation. The new employee will need to bring his/her social security card, driver's license, birth certificate, and/or passport for the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service requirements; international students must also bring the original and a copy of their Visa, I-94, I-20, and work permit. He/she should also bring either a voided check to be used for direct deposit into a checking account or a direct deposit authorization from the financial institution for direct deposit into a savings account. All new employees are required to enroll in direct deposit for their payroll checks.

Step 6 The HR Partner will then set up the employee in the payroll system.

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