Minutes Approved at the 616th Meeting – May 5, 2014

GRADUATE COUNCIL MINUTES
615th Meeting
April 7, 2014

MEMBERS PRESENT: Abdel-Motaleb, Arado, Bond, Chown, Garver, Hathaway, Holm, L’Allier, Levin, Morris, Osorio, Porter, Qin, Schraufnagel, Stoddard, Zhou

MEMBERS ABSENT: Autry, Balkanoff, Gowen, Lukaszuk, Maligireddy, Sido, Sims, Van Laarhoven, Walker, Wilkins

OTHERS PRESENT: Hughes (Secretary), Johnson (Special and Early Education), Smith (Catalog Editor/Curriculum Coordinator)

Bond called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Levin moved approval of the March 3, 2014, minutes; Garver seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Committee Reports

Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee: Bond reviewed the report of the March 4, 2014, Dissertation Completion Fellowship Committee meeting. The committee met to evaluate twenty-one applications for full-time fellowships and five applications for part-time fellowships. Six full-time awards were made to students in the following programs: Biological Sciences; Chemistry and Biochemistry; Economics; History; Physics; and Psychology. Five part-time awards were made to students in these programs: Counseling, Adult and Higher Education; History; Literacy Education; and Political Science. Part-time recipients receive a tuition waiver. Bond thanked members of the Graduate Council who served on the committee: Garver, Stoddard, and Wilkins.

University Fellowship Committee: Bond reviewed the report of the March 6, 2014, University Fellowship Committee meeting. The committee met to review thirty-six applications. Bond noted that there was a strong pool of applicants. Six awards were made to students in the following programs: Accountancy; Anthropology; Art; Biological Sciences; Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences; and Music. Bond thanked members of the Graduate Council who served on the University Fellowship Committee: Autry, Sims, and Osorio.

Curriculum Committee: Chown presented the March 17, 2014, minutes for approval. He reported that Economics and Finance were unable to come to an agreement regarding the course requirements and name of the proposed concentration in Financial Economics. Zhou stated that Finance felt that economics students should have a background in
finance and accounting for this concentration and recommended adding 2-hour course requirements in both of those areas. Chown noted that Economics felt that the concentration led to a different career path and expressed concern about problems with students getting into accounting and finance courses. He stated that the committee voted 4-1 to approve the concentration in Financial Economics as proposed.

Chown also reported that the committee approved a change to the number of thesis hours required for the M.S. degree in Electrical Engineering, which prompted the committee to also change the hours for 699A, Master’s Thesis, from “1-9” to “1-6.” Abdel-Motaleb expressed concern about the change in thesis hours. He noted that, even though only 6 hours will be counted toward the degree, it would be a problem for international students, especially, because of the number of enrollment hours required of them.

Schraufnagel made a motion to extract the change in thesis hours for Electrical Engineering for further discussion and to approve all other curriculum changes as proposed. Hathaway seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

Colloquium Committee: Porter reported on the April 4, 2014, Colloquium Committee meeting. There were 48 proposals from 25 departments and centers. Four departments were asked to revise and resubmit. Since the committee just met on Friday, Porter stated that she would provide a more official report at the next Graduate Council meeting.

Standards Committee: Bond reviewed proposed changes to the Graduate Catalog. He stated that the “Conflict of Interest Policy for All University Employees” needed to be updated to reflect current processes. In addition, the proposed “Leave of Absence” policy statement reflects current practices and needs to be included in the Graduate Catalog. Chown moved approval of the changes; Porter seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (See attached document.)

Bond reviewed numerous changes to Section IV, “Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures,” of the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual. He stated that he worked with Human Resource Services to update the document to reflect current processing procedures. The revisions provide clarification and bring the document into compliance with state and federal regulations. Bond noted that the document clarifies a simplified process for the termination of graduate assistants who are poor-performing or non-performing, yet still protects students from arbitrary treatment. For clarification, Levin suggested changing Section IV.1.28, first sentence (page 4), to read, “…may rescind an accepted appointment provided that he/she does not accept an assistantship…” Arado noted that the Law School needed to be included in Section IV.3.1, second paragraph (page 8), to read: “…prior to a student’s admission to the Graduate or Law School.” Levin moved approval of the document with the two amendments; Chown seconded the motion, which carried unanimously. (See attached document.)

Graduate Faculty Membership Committee: Bond presented the following recommendations from the March 24, 2014, meeting for Council approval:

Accountancy: Eight full members were renewed. Nine faculty members were reviewed and promoted to senior status last semester, so they did not require another review. The
committee approved the recommendations. An updated version of the department’s criteria was submitted, but there were no significant revisions.

**Anthropology:** Eight full and six senior members were renewed. The committee approved the recommendations. The department also submitted revised criteria to reflect an eight-year review cycle, which was approved by the committee.

**Finance:** Four full and two senior members were renewed. One faculty member who resigned will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. The committee approved the recommendations. The department also submitted revised criteria to reflect an eight-year review cycle, which was approved.

**Family, Consumer and Nutrition Sciences:** Six full and eleven senior members were renewed. Two senior members did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. Three faculty members have either retired or resigned and will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. One faculty member was recently reviewed and promoted to senior status, so did not require another review. The committee approved the recommendations. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Management:** Two full and two senior members were renewed. Three faculty members were changed from full to senior members. Two full members did not meet the criteria and will have provisional status beginning this summer. One faculty member who resigned will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. The committee approved the recommendations. The department also submitted revised criteria to reflect an eight-year review cycle, which was approved by the committee.

**Marketing:** Six full and two senior members were renewed. Two senior members did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. One faculty member who resigned will be removed from the department’s graduate faculty list. The committee approved the recommendations. The department also submitted revised criteria to reflect an eight-year review cycle, which was approved.

**Operations Management and Information Systems:** One senior and ten full members were renewed. The committee approved the recommendations. There were no proposed revisions to the department’s criteria.

**Sociology:** Two senior and twelve full members were renewed. One senior member did not meet the criteria and will have full status beginning this summer. One full member did not meet the criteria and will have provisional status beginning this summer. The committee approved the recommendations. An updated version of the department’s criteria was submitted, but there were no significant revisions.

**Geography:** The committee reviewed the department’s revised criteria. The department added a new paragraph to address graduate faculty membership and scholarly expectations for faculty in administrative roles. The committee suggested one revision to the document for clarification purposes. The department accepted the suggestion and revised the document accordingly. The committee approved the revised criteria.
**Geology and Environmental Geosciences:** The committee discussed the department’s proposed revisions. The department made a few minor changes to update the document, but did not change the content. The committee approved the revised criteria.

**University Libraries:** The committee reviewed the proposed revisions to the University Libraries criteria. The document was rewritten since it had not been updated since 1997. The criteria were revised to reflect current Libraries and University policies for graduate faculty membership, including the new graduate faculty scholar category. In addition, criteria for membership were changed to reflect tenure status and rank. Senior members must be tenured, full professors. Full members must be tenured with a minimum of four years at the rank of associate professor. The committee approved the revised criteria.

Bond thanked members of the Graduate Council who served on the Graduate Faculty Membership Committee: Levin, Morris, Schraufnagel, Sido, and Van Laarhoven. Hathaway moved approval of the recommendations; Garver seconded the motion, which carried unanimously.

**Announcements**

**Petunia Genome Project:** Bond took the opportunity to point out the recent *NIU Today* article highlighting Tom Sims’ efforts as the lead on the international Petunia Genome Project. Unfortunately, Sims was not in attendance to further discuss the project.

**Reunion for English Ph.D. Graduates:** Levin informed members that the Department of English recently held a reunion for its Ph.D. graduates. She stated that this was the first time the department had scheduled such an event, which turned out to be a huge success. Levin indicated that there were students from all eras, including the 1970s, who attended and met up with current and retired faculty. She stated that the reunion was timed to coincide with the department's annual conference, so that alumni had the option of submitting a paper and receiving funding from their departments to attend. Levin informed members that the event included dinner in the Chandelier Room, packets including giveaway items and donor forms, and Bond as a guest speaker. Bond indicated that it was a fun event and good for program review.

**Committee on Resources, Space and Budgets:** Bond distributed copies of the “Statement of Budget Priorities – Spring 2014.” He directed members to the section on page 3 that stated, “Further, the committee encourages the Graduate School to examine the impact of graduate student fees on graduate assistantships.” Bond informed members that he would be responding to the CRSB regarding fees. He then distributed two sets of data reflecting the average stipend by department, the average stipend less general fees only (not course fees), and the average stipend less general fees and health insurance for GAs with a 9 hour course load and for GAs with a 12 hour course load. Bond informed members that the data was from Fall 2013. He indicated that he would provide the CRSB with the GA survey, as well as this information to show the impact of fees on GAs. Bond stated that health insurance was going up next academic year, which was not reflected in the spreadsheets. In addition, he suggested that in-state tuition was going up $7 per credit hour and that out-of-state tuition was going up approximately $14 per credit hour.
Retirements and Changes: Bond talked with members about the many impending retirements university-wide due to the changes in SURS and the impact they will have on programs and units. Bond informed members that the Graduate School will be reduced from 15 to 11 employees, possibly to 9 employees, effective June 1. There are four confirmed retirements: Diane Johns (reader), Susan Minas (admissions supervisor), Fred Pugh (records supervisor), and Evelyn Simpson (reception). Bond stated that there was a good possibility there could be two more retirements in the Graduate School. In addition, a member of the staff will be out on maternity leave beginning in June.

Bond stated that the loss of these employees would likely prompt other necessary changes in Graduate School procedures, such as automating the admissions process to allow for better communication and to streamline the process. In addition, readers may no longer be copyediting, which would then be the responsibility of the student and the faculty member. Bond indicated that most institutions have only one reader who does not copyedit theses and dissertations. Levin stated that the Graduate School did a copyediting workshop for English students, and it was extremely helpful. She indicated that there needed to be more training sessions. Bond indicated that Law had a plan for a pilot project that would be opened-up to the College of Engineering and Engineering Technology. Abdel-Motaleb inquired about the project. Bond indicated that it would involve the Graduate School providing training of students and faculty in CEET. He stated that the project was already in the works prior to the recent changes and assured Abdel-Motaleb that more information was forthcoming. Porter asked if deadlines for submission of theses could then be pushed back since readers would no longer be copyediting. Bond stated that was something that would definitely be negotiable.

Bond indicated that another change may include an increase in the application fee for international students in order to communicate more effectively. He informed members that the Graduate School would like to use DHL 2-day service for admissions materials, which includes important student visa/I-20 paperwork. Bond stated that as of April 6 applications have increased from 1,775 in Fall 2008 to 3,500 in Fall 2014. He indicated that he would take the issue to the Standards Committee for consideration and approval prior to bringing it to Graduate Council.

Meeting adjourned at 11:25 a.m.
Conflict of Interest Policy for All University Employees
(http://catalog.niu.edu/content.php?catoid=20&navoid=622#top)

All employees of the university must conform with the university’s ethics policies, including the “Conflict of Interest policy, which is Document” available in the Academic Policies and Procedures Manual department offices and at the Graduate School (http://www.niu.edu/provost/policies/appm/i10.shtml) (http://www.grad.niu.edu/). This document requires that All employees of the university, including students employed on a part-time basis or as graduate assistants, are subject to the policy. report on specified forms all real, potential, and apparent conflicts of interest.

Justification: This section of the catalog is out of date. Processes have changed, and this edit acknowledges those changes.

Leave of Absence (to follow Continuous Enrollment section)

A leave of absence, which relieves students from the continuous enrollment requirement, may be granted to any student who has been enrolled in a course numbered 699 or 799. Graduate students who are ineligible for a leave of absence because they have not enrolled in thesis or dissertation hours may cease to enroll for up to three terms (Fall, Spring, Summer) before their admission is revoked.

To request a leave of absence, students must complete the form available at the Graduate School website. Students may request a leave of absence for up to six terms. The request should be received and approved before the end of the first term for which the student plans not to enroll.

When a leave of absence is granted, the leave does not exempt a student from the Limitation on Time policy. (See “General Requirements section of this Catalog.)

Justification: Practices for granting a leave of absence have never been in the catalog. This policy reflects what has been practice. The two edits below simply refer students to the leave of absence policy.

Dissertation Requirements

. . . If circumstances prohibit continuing progress on the dissertation, a graduate student must request a leave of absence from the office of the dean of the Graduate School. If a student interrupts registration in course number 799 without obtaining a leave of absence then the student’s admission to the degree program will be terminated. (See the “Leave of Absence” policy located in the “General Requirements” section of this Catalog.)

Course Number 699

. . . If circumstances prohibit continuing progress on the work, a graduate student may request a leave of absence from the office of the dean of the Graduate School. If a student interrupts registration in a course numbered 699 without obtaining a leave of absence, then the student’s admission to the degree program will be terminated. (See the “Leave of Absence” policy located in the “General Requirements” section of this Catalog.)
Policies Pertaining to Graduate Assistantships

Section IV. Item 1.

Northern Illinois University employs graduate assistants in order to provide them enriched learning experiences. Through their graduate assistantships, students receive intensive mentoring, which contributes to the development of the knowledge, skills, and abilities they need to become the next generation of innovators and scholar-experts in their fields of study.

As mentored researchers and teachers, graduate assistants help the university achieve its mission. They educate undergraduates and the public, and they contribute to the achievement of the university’s mission to provide significant service to the institution and the region.

Despite the important contributions that graduate assistants make to the institutional mission, the university primarily invests in graduate assistant stipends and any tuition waiver associated with assistantships in order to enhance the education and training of graduate students.

Consequently, graduate assistants are first and foremost students. As assistants, they perform conscientiously and professionally the tasks assigned them. At the same time, their supervisors respect graduate assistants’ conjoined roles as students and mentees; they ensure that assistantship assignments provide enriched opportunities to learn and to hone their craft; and they provide appropriate training, supervision and direction to assistants.

Appointment of a Graduate Assistant

1. Graduate assistants are appointed by administrative units of the university receiving a budgetary allocation for this purpose, subject to compliance with current applicable University policies and procedures.

2. Graduate students admitted by the Graduate School to a degree-granting program on a regular or conditional basis are eligible for appointment to a graduate assistantship. Assistant appointments are contingent upon students being admitted to the Graduate School; this admission may be regular or “conditional.” Hiring units are cautioned against appointing any conditionally-admitted student to an assistantship. If a conditionally-admitted student fails to meet the conditions designated, admission to the Graduate School is subject to termination, which results also in termination of any assistantship. Non-immigrant students admitted on a conditional basis in order to pursue intensive English language training are prohibited from holding an assistantship until they are regularly-admitted to a degree-granting program. Offers tendered prior to admission to the Graduate School must carry the condition that the appointment is contingent upon admission.

3. Graduate assistants shall be graduate students in good standing on the effective dates of their appointment. Students on academic probation are ineligible to begin a graduate assistantship appointment.
4. A graduate assistantship appointment may not begin before the end of the term preceding the students' term of admission to the Graduate School. Students enrolled in the category of student at large are not eligible for appointments as graduate assistants.

5. Graduate assistants will be designated as:
   a. Teaching Assistants. Teaching Assistants aid in the instructional functions of the university. Their duties may include but are not limited to providing direct instruction in classroom, laboratory, and discussion sections, or in studio settings; tutoring students; mentoring engaged learning experiences for undergraduate students; grading tests and assignments; developing instructional materials; accompanying or coaching artistic performances; and proctoring examinations. When their duties include any form of oral instruction, assistants hired into this category must meet the requirements outlined in 35 below.
   b. Research Assistants. Research assistants apply research concepts, practices, or methods of scholarship by conducting experiments, analyzing data, presenting findings, collaborating with others in preparing publications, or conducting institutional research for an academic or administrative unit.
   c. Staff Assistants. Staff Assistants assist in roles other than teaching or research. Duties of a staff assistant may include but are not limited to serving as a resident adviser, counselor, academic adviser, secretary, receptionist, administrative assistant, office support, or library assistant.

6. The Dean of the Graduate School shall be responsible for approving the designation of each graduate assistant based on the duties assigned.

7. Each year the Graduate Council will determine and announce the maximum and the minimum monthly assistantship stipends for the following year (August 16 - August 15). The minimum will be half the maximum. Stipends outside of this range may be approved, in special cases, by the Dean of the Graduate School.

8. Students accept assistantship appointments for the specific time period specified in the offering letter and should not expect routine renewal or extension of appointments.

9. Appointments shall be full (20 hours)-, three-quarter (15 hours)-, or half-time (10 hours). It shall be the prerogative of the university hiring unit to determine the appropriate duties of graduate assistants. Assistants holding a full-time appointment will be expected to render no more than 20 hours of service per week; those on three-fourths appointment not more than 15 hours per week; and those on half-time appointment not more than 10 hours per week.

10. A student may hold two graduate assistantships for which the terms of appointment overlap, only if each of the assistantships is half-time during the period of overlap and if together the hours of the appointment do not exceed 20 per week.

11. Graduate assistants will be required to perform duties during periods of their appointment when the university faculty is regularly on duty. Requirements for performance of duties during university academic recess periods or other specific times must be agreed upon in advance in writing, preferably at the time of the appointment, between the graduate assistant and the employing university unit.

12. A graduate assistant may not accept additional employment in any capacity with Northern Illinois University except by permission of the chair of the major department, the student's academic adviser, the head of the unit in which the graduate assistantship is held, and the office of the Dean of the Graduate School. Hiring units must not permit
graduate assistants should not begin working outside their assistantship assignment without first securing permission from the Graduate School. Non-immigrant graduate students are strictly prohibited by federal regulations from working more than 20 hours per week while classes are in session.

Tuition Waivers, Fees, Student Health Insurance, and Parking

13. Full-, three-quarter- and half-time graduate assistants receive a full tuition waiver during the period of their appointment; however, all fees due are to be paid by the student. If an assistantship does not extend over an entire academic term, the student is liable for the payment of in-state or out-of-state tuition, depending upon his or her residency, for the remainder of the term.

14. A graduate assistant holding an assistantship for eight full weeks (or multiple appointments for a combination of 8 full weeks) between the date of spring semester graduation exercises and August 15 is eligible for a tuition waiver during the summer term. If an assistantship appointment(s) does not extend over any eight weeks during that time, the student is liable for a portion of in-state and/or out-of-state tuition in the summer as described above.

15. In addition, graduate assistants on appointment during a spring semester may receive a tuition waiver for the summer session adjacent to immediately following their term of appointment (either the preceding or the following summer), provided they are enrolled graduate students during that summer.

16. Tuition waivers cannot be used for international study-abroad courses and are not applicable to some contract courses.

17. Graduate student fees automatically include student health insurance coverage only if the student is enrolled for at least 9 semester hours of course work in a semester or summer session. Other students may elect to purchase health insurance by contacting the Student Insurance Office prior to the start of the academic term. The University provides no life insurance coverage for graduate assistants.

18. No student holding a faculty, administrative, or civil service position at Northern Illinois University may concurrently hold a graduate assistantship.

19. Appointment as a graduate assistant does not give faculty status; an assistant's status is that of a graduate student. As such, the assistant is expected to abide by regulations pertaining to such students.

20. Graduate assistants are eligible to purchase parking permits, allowing them to park in lots designated for graduate assistants.

21. Graduate assistants are eligible to apply for a Holmes Student Center Bookstore credit card and are eligible for a discount on books purchased at that bookstore.

Enrollment Requirements for Graduate Assistants

22. Graduate students holding assistantships during a fall or spring semester are expected to enroll in 9 semester hours of course work no later than the close of business on the first day of classes. In the summer session, graduate assistants are expected to enroll for 6
semester hours no later than the close of business on the first day of classes. Failure to register as described or failure to remain enrolled for the prescribed number of hours may result in immediate termination of the appointment by the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment.

23. Reduction of up to 3 semester hours in the course load must be approved by the assistant's major department chair with submission of an online underload petition to the Dean of the Graduate School. Reductions for up to 3 semester hours will be approved by the Graduate School, if approved by the assistant’s department chair and if the student is otherwise eligible for a reduction. (For eligibility restrictions, see 26 below).

24. Reduction of more than 3 semester hours in the course load must be approved in advance, in writing (via the online petition for underload petition for Graduate Student form), by the assistant's major department chair and the office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

25. Underloads for more than 3 semester hours will be granted only under extraordinary circumstances or as authorized in the Graduate Catalog. For example, an underload for more than 3 semester hours will be granted to a student whose assistantship duties require sustained participation in a summer field school, which because of the field school’s location precludes completion of additional coursework.

26. International graduate students on an F1 or J1 visa must enroll in 9 semester hours in the fall and spring semesters, unless receiving permission, in advance, for fewer hours from the office of the Dean of Graduate School. Such permission may be granted only in circumstances permitted by federal regulations.

Resignation and Termination

27. Northern Illinois University subscribes to the Resolution adopted by the Council of Graduate Schools, which, among other provisions, states that once an assistantship is accepted, the prospective student has until April 15 to accept an assistantship or fellowship offered by another institution. After April 15, the prospective student must secure written permission from the offering unit at NIU prior to accepting an assistantship or fellowship offered by another institution. Likewise, prospective students who have accepted another institution’s offer on or after April 15 are expected to secure a release from that institution in order to accept an assistantship or fellowship offer at NIU. In order to accept an offer of employment at another institution after April 15, prospective graduate assistants must first obtain a written release from any other institution to which a previous commitment has been made. At NIU, this release must come from the employing unit.

28. After April 15, a prospective assistant may rescind an accepted appointment provided that he/she does not accept an assistantship or fellowship at another institution. As a courtesy to the hiring unit and other prospective assistants, an individual who wishes to decline a previously-accepted appointment should first discuss the decision with the head of the hiring unit and convey the final decision in writing as soon as possible.

29. Prior to the start of an assistantship appointment, a hiring unit, the Graduate School, or Graduate Assistant Employment office may rescind an offer in writing, if the prospective assistant fails to meet academic or other expectations of the hiring unit or the Graduate School or in the case of an assistant being rehired, fails to meet performance expectations of the hiring unit or other requirements. Additionally, if the prospective assistant’s
conduct indicates that inauguration of an appointment may prove deleterious to the health or safety of others or impede or distract from achievement of the unit or institutional mission and goals, then an appointment may be rescinded. When a decision to rescind an offer is reached, the hiring unit, Graduate School, and Graduate Assistant Employment shall consult and agree to the decision before the hiring unit informs the prospective assistant.

30. After a graduate assistant begins an appointment, the assistant may with two weeks written notification, not resign that appointment. Whether the resignation is effective immediately, at some point prior to the conclusion of two weeks, or at the conclusion of two weeks shall be determined by the needs of the hiring unit as defined by the assistant’s supervisor and the head of the hiring unit. Hiring units must immediately notify the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment by email to ensure that the assistant is not overpaid. Written notification of acceptance of the resignation, which must be sent to the student and which must include the date of resignation, shall be forwarded along with a PAF and the student’s resignation letter to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment, and immediately accept another at NIU. A new appointment may commence no sooner than one month after the effective date of resignation, or the start of the academic term immediately following that date, whichever is later, unless a written release from the initial hiring unit is submitted.

31. A graduate assistant may be terminated for cause by the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment, the Graduate School, or the employing unit after (1) notice of the proposed termination and the grounds for such action are communicated to the student and (2) the student is allowed one opportunity to state why he/she should not be terminated, may terminate an assistant for cause (see Section IV). Failure to report on the announced report date, failure to register for classes and to remain appropriately registered as required, and failure to report to work for one week without first securing approval from one’s supervisor are is grounds for immediate termination of the assistantship. If an assistantship is terminated during an academic term, the student should expect there to be some tuition liability for that term. Termination of a graduate assistant position cannot be in violation of federal or state employment law and university policy prohibiting discrimination.

32. Notwithstanding any other statements in University policy, practice or procedure, assistants shall have their appointments terminated immediately if, during the term of their appointments, they (1) are academically dismissed, suspended, or through disciplinary action have their on-campus movement or their interactions with others restricted in such a way as to preclude performance of assigned duties; (2) are placed in a probationary status; (3) are found otherwise to be ineligible according to university policy or federal or state law, fail to achieve good standing after one academic semester, excluding summer session, in probationary status. Any deviation from termination due to probationary status shall be possible only upon request from the major department with final approval by the office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

Legal Declarations

33. The Federal Tax Reform Act of 1986 (Public Law 99-514) and relevant state laws dictate the University’s treatment of stipends and tuition waivers. Graduate assistantship
stipends are considered wages and hence must be taxed and reported as taxable income. A portion of the tuition waiver awarded a staff assistant may be subject to taxation. Prior to accepting a graduate assistantship, prospective students are urged to consult an independent tax professional about their potential tax liability.

34. The Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986 mandates that any graduate assistant employed by Northern Illinois University after November 6, 1986 must either be a U.S. citizen or possess current employment authorization from the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS). According to federal law, the assistant must present original documentation of the U.S. citizenship or employment authorization within three days of the start of duties (the reporting date) or risk cancellation of the assistantship.

35. On the basis of Illinois law, a student whose native language is not English must demonstrate competence in spoken English in order to be appointed a graduate teaching assistant engaging in oral classroom instruction (unless the language of instruction is not English). A minimum score of 50 on the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) administered at NIU or the Test of Spoken English (TSE) has been set by the university for this purpose. Alternatively, a speaking subset score of 24 on the TOEFL or 7 on the IELTS may establish competency. Departments desiring to require higher TSE scores are free to do so. Those desiring to employ in an oral classroom instructional capacity a student whose TSE score is below the minimum level must receive advance approval of the office of the Dean of the Graduate School.

36. The State of Illinois mandates that no state agency (including a state university) may initially employ or retain in employment any individual who is in default on an educational loan for a period of six months or more and in the amount of $600 or more unless a satisfactory loan repayment arrangement is made no later than six months after the start of employment. As defined in Public Act 85-827 (paragraph 3552a), an educational loan includes any student loan made possible through funding from the State of Illinois or any other loan from public funds from Illinois or elsewhere, made for the purpose of financing an individual's attendance at an institution of higher education. In order to comply with the Act, every university employee must sign a written statement declaring whether he or she is in default as described above. The statement is contained on the Personal Data Form. If in default, the student must, in order to retain the assistantship for more than six months, make a "satisfactory repayment arrangement" with the lender/guarantor. The act specifies that a "satisfactory" repayment arrangement may not exceed 20 percent of the gross monthly income of the borrower.

37. Illinois statute (Illinois School Code 5/30-17.1, "Scholarships-Draft Registration" requires students receiving state funded financial aid (i.e., tuition waiver scholarship associated with a graduate assistantship appointment) submit Selective Service Registration Compliance documentation to the university.
Applying for a Graduate Assistantship

Section IV. Item 2.

Application for Graduate Assistantship

A prospective assistant is to submit a two-sided application form, which can be found on (see the samples that follow) to the department or other unit in which the appointment is desired. Application forms are available from the Human Resource Services website or the Graduate School's website.

A student may apply for an assistantship to more than one place, but holding two appointments simultaneously is only possible as described in Policies Pertaining to Graduate Assistantships (Section IV, Item 1. number 10).

Hiring offices may require information from applicants that is in addition to that specified on the application form, and additional selection processes (e.g., personal interviews) may be used.

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992; Modified June 30, 1997; April 7, 2014
Editorial Modifications April 2004, July 2010

Last Updated: 4/7/14
Offering a Graduate Assistantship

Section IV. Item 3.

1. The Offering Letter: An offer of a graduate assistantship will be made by the administrative unit to which funds are allocated for this purpose. The student will be notified of such an offer by letter, which includes the information indicated in the Sample Offering Letter.

No offer may be tendered prior to a student’s admission to the Graduate or Law School. Offers tendered must carry the stipulation that the appointment is contingent upon admission.

If an offer is accepted, the original offering letter must be sent to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services at the time (after acceptance) that as an attachment to the Personnel Action Form (PAF) is submitted.

Additional information as deemed appropriate by the appointing unit may also be included in this letter. Relevant hiring documents listed in the Human Resource Service Required Forms Matrix should be provided as attachments to the offer letter. The following items will be enclosures with each offering letter:

a. Policies Pertaining to Graduate Assistantships (Item 1 of this section)
b. Council of Graduate Schools Resolution Regarding Scholars, Fellows, Trainees, and Graduate Assistants (approved by the Graduate Council, May 4, 1992; Modified July 1999).
c. Notice to Graduate Assistants: Immigration Reform and Controls Act (IRCA) of 1986. As stated in the IRCA notice, the graduate assistant has three days from the official start of duties to submit appropriate documentation for verification of employment eligibility to the department of the office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services. Types of documentation considered appropriate are listed on the "Employment Eligibility Verification" form (known as the "I-9 Form") available at the Human Resource Services' website.
d. Effects of Tax Laws on Graduate Assistants’ Taxable Income.
e. Employee's Withholding Allowance Certificate, Form W-4 (available online at the Human Resource Services' website).
f. Personal Data Form (available online at the Human Resource Services' website). This form should be completed and returned with the acceptance letter.
g. Selective Service Registration Compliance form. This form is required by state statute for any student receiving state funded financial aid (i.e., tuition waiver scholarship associated with a graduate assistantship). This is currently a separate form available on the Human Resource Services' website. This form should be completed and returned with the PAF.

2. Terms of Appointment. Graduate assistants are typically appointed for a semester, an academic year (August 16 through May 15), a summer session, or a full fiscal year (July 1 through June 30). If said appointment is for less than an academic term, the corresponding tuition waiver will be prorated according to the number of weeks of the appointment.
Notice to Graduate Assistants: Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986

Section IV. Item 3,4.

Federal law mandates that any graduate assistant employed by Northern Illinois University must provide documentation to establish identity and eligibility for employment as required on the form I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification. According to federal law, the assistant must complete Section I of the I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification no later than the effective date of appointment (first day of pay), which is indicated in the offering letter, and must, within three business days of the effective date (first day of pay), present original documentation proving eligibility for lawful employment to complete Section II of the I-9. The I-9 can be completed at any time after the appointment has been accepted and prior to the start date.

In compliance with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA), every person hired by Northern Illinois University must verify identity and eligibility to work in the United States by completing an "Employment Eligibility Verification Form" (Form I-9), and provide specified documentation at the commencement of employment. Graduate assistants are considered employees of the university and are thus covered by this federal law. The IRCA pertains to those individuals newly appointed to positions beginning on or after November 7, 1986. All graduate assistants employed for the first time after November 6, 1986 must present original unexpired documentation attesting identity and employment authorization to the employing department/cost center or the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services within three (3) days of the start date of their contract or risk cancellation of the assistantship. The reporting date should be indicated on the assistantship offering letter by the employing department/cost center. Final authorization of the assistantship contract is contingent upon employment verification. Assistants whose appointments are canceled will not receive a stipend for duties performed during the unauthorized period.

Please refer to page three of Form I-9 for a list of currently acceptable documents. This document may be found on the Human Resource Services' website.

Foreign Non-immigrant graduate assistants: In the event the employment documentation authorization (USCIS Employment Authorization, I-20, DS-2019, etc.) expires prior to the end of the appointment period, the verification process must be updated prior to the expiration date with renewed verification documents. Foreign Non-immigrant graduate assistants are advised to obtain employment authorization extensions well in advance, at least 3 months before the expiration date; if the extensions are not obtained by the expiration date, the assistant may not continue in the position. Contact the International Student and Faculty Office for further information (815-753-1346).

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992
Modified Editorially April 2004, July 2010, April 7, 2014
Last Updated: 4/7/14
Effect of Tax Laws on Graduate Assistants' Taxable Income

Section IV. Item 3.7.

This Section is currently being updated.

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992
Editorial Modifications October 2004

Last Updated: 4/12/11
Acknowledgement of Acceptance of Graduate Assistantship

Section IV. Item 4.

Upon receiving the prospective graduate assistant’s written acceptance, the employing department/cost center may send an "acknowledgement of acceptance" letter to the student. This can serve as a reminder of the contingencies/stipulations concerning the appointment, as well as of employment eligibility regulation and other pertinent information (see sample letter below).

Such a letter is not required by the Graduate School or the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services and may be sent at the option of the employing department/cost center (Graduate Council, December 6, 1993). If sent, a copy of this letter is to accompany the Personnel Action Form that the employing department/cost center sends to the office of Graduate Assistantship Employment.

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Sample Acknowledgement of Acceptance Letter

Download this sample letter in Word Format.

This will acknowledge receipt of your letter accepting a Graduate Assistantship at Northern Illinois University. All assistantship appointments are subject to formal confirmation by the appropriate college dean or division head and the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services. However, if you meet all of the eligibility requirements as noted in your offering letter, your appointment will be confirmed.

To continue to hold this appointment, you must comply with any contingencies indicated in your offering letter and bring to the department office of the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment, within 3 days of your report date, original documentation of your U.S. citizenship or current employment authorization as stipulated in the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986.

You will receive the stipend for your assistantship as follows:

(Here you may list the semi-monthly stipend and reaffirm that grads are paid on the 15th and last business day of each month.)

On ______________ you are to report to ______________. Your assistantship identification card can be picked up at the following departmental location although these cards may no longer be issued – we are currently trying to work out a way to discontinue issuing these cards.

Sincerely yours,

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Submitting the Personnel Action Form (PAF) for a Graduate Assistantship

Section IV. Item 5.

**Personnel Action Form (PAF)**

Simultaneously with the preparation of the acknowledgement of acceptance letter (if sent), the offering unit should prepare the Personnel Action Form (PAF), and obtain approval signatures of approval from the department chair and the college dean/division head. The PAF is then submitted to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services for final approval and processing. In order to be processed, the documents outlined in the Human Resource Services Forms Matrix following must accompany the PAF sent to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment: a completed graduate assistantship application form, the evaluation form, the original offering/acceptance letter, a copy of the acknowledgement of acceptance letter (if sent), the completed Personal Data Form, the Selective Service Registration Compliance form (unless it is contained on the GA application) and the completed W-4 form.

**NOTE:** If the assistantship is to be funded through a grant account or a Foundation account, the PAF must be approved by the office of Grants Fiscal Administration or the Foundation’s controller prior to submission to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment.

NOTE: If the assistantship is funded through a cost center requiring additional approvals, these approvals are required prior to submission.

Incomplete forms will delay, and may terminate, the processing of an assistantship appointment. as will the following circumstances:

1. Student not admitted to Graduate School. The student must be an admitted graduate student (or a student admitted to Law School). Students at-large are not eligible to hold graduate assistantships.
2. Stipend level not within approved range. Maximum and minimum stipend levels are specified each year. (See Section IV, Item 1-2.)
3. No Certification of Competency in Spoken English. Under Illinois law, students whose native language is not English must demonstrate competence in spoken English in order to receive graduate teaching assistantships involving oral classroom instructional duties (unless the language of instruction is not English). A minimum score of 50 (220 on the old version) on the Test of Spoken English (TSE/SPEAK) has been set for this purpose. Departments desiring to require higher TSE/SPEAK scores are free to do so.
4. Encumbrance. An encumbrance is an issue between the student and the university; it may pertain to such matters as lack of tuition or fee payment, parking or outstanding library fines, or an incomplete admission file. The Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment will notify the employing department/unit and the student that the PAF cannot be processed until the encumbrance is lifted.
Personnel Files for Graduate Assistants

Section IV. Item 6.

As part of the university’s Human Resource Management System, the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services is responsible for maintaining a personnel file on each graduate assistant. The file must include a complete record of all correspondence and forms pertaining to the appointment, including originals of the:

1. Graduate Assistantship Application Form
2. Evaluation form (how graduate assistant met departmental criteria for appointed assistantship appointment
3. Offering letter (a lot of department have the acceptance as part of the offering letter)
4. Acknowledgement of Acceptance letter (if sent) (Graduate Council, December 6, 1993)
5. Personnel Action Form
6. Employment Eligibility Form (the Form "I-9") and copies of accompanying documentation.
7. Personal Data Form
8. Selective Service Registration Compliance Form (until this becomes a part of the graduate assistantship application and for the Dept. of Accountancy who uses their own GA application).
9. Letter of Resignation (if applicable)
10. Other pertinent correspondence

The employing department/cost center is encouraged to keep copies of these materials in their own files.
Termination or Resignation of Graduate Assistantship

Section IV. Item 7.

Should the appointee fail to report for the assignment on the date noted in the offer letter, he or she was notified, in writing, to report, the employing unit should must, if it wishes to terminate employment, notify the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment of Human Resource Services immediately, preferably via phone or email. The department should then submit a PAF (Personnel Action form) through the appropriate college dean or division head, so that the Payroll Office Human Resource Services may be notified that the appointment is being canceled. Similar notification should be made when a student resigns an assistantship before the official appointment end date. In this latter case, the letter must indicate the date on which the student last worked. Failure to report such situations promptly can result in over payment of the stipend payments to persons who do not deserve them, with the concomitant inappropriate reduction in the hiring unit's budget.

A student who accepts and later resigns a graduate assistantship (whether or not the term of appointment has begun) may accept another assistantship at Northern Illinois University only if its term of appointment begins no sooner than the start of the academic term following the effective date of resignation or at least one month after the effective date of the resignation, whichever is the later date, unless the written consent of the former employing unit is submitted to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment. A resignation should be submitted in writing to the employing unit and to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment. For purposes of subsequent appointment the effective date of resignation is considered to be the date on which the letter of resignation is received by the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment. For purposes of this policy the fall term is considered to begin August 16, the spring term is considered to begin January 1, and the summer term is considered to begin May 16.

Among graduate schools nationally, it is considered unethical for a person who has accepted an assistantship appointment at one institution to accept an assistantship appointment at another institution without resigning the first position, in writing, by April 15, or, if after April 15, without also obtaining a written release from the employing unit at the first institution (see Council of Graduate Schools resolution in Section IV, Item 3 of this manual).

A graduate assistantship may be terminated, according to the following policies principles and procedures. (NOTE: Where reference is made to the "head of the employing unit," this should be understood to mean "head of the employing unit, or his or her designee.")

1. Failure to report for work on the reporting date specified in the offering letter constitutes grounds for termination of the assistantship, with no remuneration, at the discretion of the head of the employing unit. Notification of such termination is to be sent, immediately, to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services.

2. Notwithstanding any other University policy, practice or procedure, a graduate assistantship may be terminated by the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment without notice if the assistant is found to be ineligible by virtue of noncompliance with
either Board of Trustees or University regulations or with federal and state laws and regulations.

3. A graduate assistant (GA) can be immediately removed from any particular work assignment without notice if, in the opinion of the supervisor or the head of the employing unit, continuation of the GA assistant in that assignment poses a threat to the safety or well-being (physically, academically, or otherwise) of the assistant or of others. In such a case, the GA assistant may be reassigned, at the discretion of the head of the employing unit, to other duties if another appropriate assignment exists within the unit, or if not, may be given notice of immediate termination as in (7) below. The grounds for the immediate termination shall be provided to the student in the notice. The student shall be given an opportunity to respond to the notice and to ask the head of the employing unit for reconsideration of the termination action. During this time, the student may be removed from employment and the workplace.

4. A graduate assistant may be given notice of immediate termination for poor performance of work assignments, for poor academic performance, contumacious conduct, or for any other reason that does not violate federal and state employment law and university policy prohibiting discrimination. The notice must contain the grounds for termination.

5. The Graduate School and Human Resource Services recommend, but do not require, that any decision (except as outlined in 1 and 3 above) to terminate an assistant be made after the assistant has been informed in writing of deficiencies and given an appropriate time to correct deficiencies. Copies of any such documentation should be signed by the assistant to acknowledge receipt and by his/her supervisor and the head of the hiring unit as evidence of concurrence; copies must be sent to the Graduate Assistant Employment Office and the Dean of the Graduate School.

6. Prior to making a decision to terminate an assistant (except as outlined in 1 and 3 above), the head of the hiring unit and the supervisor are required to consult with the Graduate Assistantship Employment Office and the Dean of the Graduate School.

7. If a graduate assistant is notified in writing of termination, the assistant’s supervisor and the head of the hiring unit, prior to the effective date of termination, must give the assistant one opportunity to state why he/she should not be terminated. In rare, exigent circumstances that require removal of the student from employment before he/she has had an opportunity to be heard, the student shall be provided this opportunity within a reasonably short period of time after the student is removed from employment. The decision to terminate the assistant’s employment is solely the responsibility of the supervisor and head of the hiring unit. Their decision is final.

8. A GA whose work performance is deemed to be unsatisfactory shall be advised by his or her supervisor.

9. If the deficiencies of the preceding paragraph are perceived by the supervisor to be severe enough that lack of amelioration would necessitate termination of the assistantship appointment, the GA shall be so notified in writing. Such notice shall include specification of the areas and nature of deficiency in work performance, and provide a reasonable period of time for the GA to address these deficiencies and demonstrate improved performance.

10. If, in the opinion of the supervisor, the GA fails to show sufficient improvement in work performance over the period allowed for remediation, the supervisor may give the GA and the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment notice of termination. This notification
must be in writing and should indicate reasons(s) for termination. Must be submitted in duplicate simultaneously to the GA and to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment. The written notice must indicate the effective date of the termination, which may not be sooner than fifteen calendar days from the date upon which the notice is hand-delivered to the GA or mailed, postage prepaid, to the GA's current local address as on file with the Office of Registration and Records.

11. Assessment of the quality of work performance is the sole right and responsibility of the employing unit, and is an academic and professional judgment. However, the GA may dispute any facts or procedures relating to the termination. The GA may appeal the termination to the head of the employing unit. Such appeal must be submitted, in writing, within five calendar days of the date upon which notice of termination is hand-delivered or mailed to the GA as described in (6). A copy of this appeal must be submitted simultaneously to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School. If the head of the unit declines to reverse the notice of termination, written appeal may be made to the Graduate School.

12. Appeal to the Graduate School of a decision to terminate a graduate assistantship must be submitted in writing by the GA to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School, with a copy to the head of the employing unit. Such appeal must be made within ten calendar days of the date of the notice of termination as defined in (6), unless the head of the employing unit has been unavailable for the appeal described in (7). In the latter case, the written appeal to the Graduate School must be submitted within five calendar days of the date upon which the decision of the unit head is hand-delivered to the GA or mailed, postage prepaid, to the GA's local address as defined above.

13. As soon as possible after receipt of the appeal, the Associate Dean of the Graduate School will convene the Graduate Council Appeals Committee (hereinafter known as "the Committee"), notifying the GA and employing unit as soon as a meeting time has been set. If any of the members on the Committee is from the employing unit in the case, that person may not serve while the Committee considers this case; the Dean of the Graduate School may choose an alternate from another unit may serve.

14. The Committee shall first consider whether a). the student has presented sufficient evidence to contradict relevant facts established by the supervisor in the improvement plan and termination letter; or b). whether the established processes for termination were followed.

15. The Committee, by majority vote of members present, may make one of three decisions:

a. The Committee may determine that facts underlying the improvement plan and termination letter are sufficient to warrant no further consideration of the appeal and that the process for termination was followed. The Dean of the Graduate School shall inform the GA, the supervisor, hiring unit, and the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment of the decision. In such cases, the termination is affirmed, and the appeal is concluded. No further appeal is possible.

b. The Committee may determine that the student presented sufficient evidence that the hiring unit or that the supervisor violated the process for termination. In such cases, the termination is rescinded and the student is returned immediately without disruption to pay to an assistantship appointment within the hiring unit.
The Dean of the Graduate School shall inform the GA, the supervisor, hiring unit, and the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment of the decision.

c. The Committee may determine that sufficient evidence exists to require the clarification of facts that led to the termination. In such cases, the Dean of the Graduate School will convene a meeting of the Committee.

16. The Committee’s meetings will be closed. In addition to the Committee members, the only persons present will be the GA submitting the appeal, the head of the employing unit, the assistant’s supervisor, and no more than one additional person accompanying each of these two, to advise, observe, and counsel. The latter person is prohibited from addressing the Committee or any person in the room.

17. The meeting of the Committee. This is not a legal proceeding, and there is no requirement that the GA be represented by legal counsel. However, if the GA chooses to be accompanied by such counsel, the representative of the employing unit may be accompanied by the University’s General Counsel. No other persons shall be present.

18. The meeting of the Committee. This is not a legal proceeding, and there is no requirement that the GA be represented by legal counsel. However, if the GA chooses to be accompanied by such counsel, the representative of the employing unit may be accompanied by the University’s General Counsel. No other persons shall be present.

19. If the conclusion of the Committee is that the termination should be rescinded, the assistantship will be restored without break from the date of termination. The decision of the Committee is final; there is no further appeal process.

20. A GA whose assistantship is terminated or otherwise ended during a semester or term for reasons in (1) or (2) above should expect cancellation of the associated tuition waiver scholarship. An GA whose assistantship is terminated or ended for deficient performance or for unexcused absence from duties during the term of the assistantship may receive a prorated waiver of tuition for that academic term.

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992
Amended by Graduate Council, April 7, 2014
Editorial modifications, April 16, 2004

Last Updated: 4/7/14
Tuition-Waiver Scholarships Associated with Graduate Assistantships

Section IV. Item 8.

After the Personnel Action Form (PAF) has been approved, information pertaining to the value of tuition waiver and stipend level are processed by the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment and submitted given to the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA), and tuition waivers are entered into the Bursar’s Office where the waiver is entered into the computerized billing system. Tuition waivers are authorized only after the PAF has been fully approved.

The amount value of the tuition waiver scholarship is based upon the length of the assistantship and relevant policies. A student with a full academic year appointment will receive a full waiver for the number of hours that he or she is enrolled in that semester. Thus, if the student enrolls for 9 hours, the student will be credited for 9 hours of tuition. The student will not receive a refund for the difference between the maximum allowable waiver and the amount corresponding to actual enrollment. Tuition waivers will be prorated in instances where students are not on assistantship appointments for a full semester. For example, a student working only 11 weeks during a 16-week semester will receive a tuition waiver for only 11/16 of the number of hours in which he or she is enrolled. Tuition waivers cannot be used for international study abroad courses and are not applicable to contract courses.

For staff assistants, section 127/117 of the IRS Tax Code requires that the value of any tuition waiver in excess of $5,250 be added to the employees’ taxable wages and that employment taxes be withheld.

**Tuition Waiver for the Summer Session.** A student may receive a tuition waiver scholarship tuition waiver for the summer term session, if they hold an assistantship during the summer term, or if held an assistantship appointment for at least 8 weeks during the spring semester. Receipt of a tuition waiver depends on proper enrollment during the semester or term adjacent to (either preceding or following) the assistantship appointment period provided that the student is an admitted graduate student during that summer.

Should the student not complete the assistantship appointment, the summer waiver will be prorated based on the actual length of appointment. In instances where the tuition waiver has already been used the preceding summer, the Office of the Bursar will assess the student for the appropriate portion of the summer tuition due based on the percent time of actual employment. Where a student holds a graduate assistantship for only a part of the spring semester, the tuition waiver scholarship granted for the following summer session will be prorated based on the percent employment for the spring semester.

Students desiring a tuition waiver for the summer preceding the appointment must submit a written request for the waiver to Human Resource Services, Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment. However, the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment cannot process the request until a PAF has been submitted by the employing department/cost center and approved.
by the Graduate School. Should the PAF not have been submitted by the employing department/cost center, the student may have to pay tuition in order to confirm registration in the summer session. The student should then apply for tuition reimbursement from the Bursar’s Office once the PAF has been submitted and approved. All applications for reimbursement must be submitted to the Bursar’s Office IN WRITING WITHIN 60 DAYS after the close of the summer term so that the appropriate refund of summer tuition may be processed. In the event the waiver is not used for the summer preceding the appointment, and the student completed an academic-year appointment, a waiver will automatically be entered for the following summer.

Residency. For purposes of calculating the value of a tuition waiver scholarship associated with a graduate assistantship appointment, the graduate assistant is considered an in-state or out-of-state resident by the same criteria that are applied to other graduate students. (Provost, August 21, 1996.)

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992
Amended by Graduate Council, April 7, 2014
Editorial modifications, May 5, 1997; March 1, 1999; February 6, 2004

Last Updated: 4/7/14
Graduate Assistantship Payroll Distribution

Section IV. Item 9.

By University policy, all pay for employees is made by NIU's policy is electronic direct deposit of pay for all employees. Payroll's distribution for employees is semi-monthly with distributions on the fifteenth (or prior business day) and the last business day of each month. An authorized (signed) agreement for automatic payments, which is included on the Personal Data Form, must be completed to initiate this process. This information is included on the Personal Data Form which is available from the Human Resource Services website.

The Payroll office Human Resource Services has firm deadlines for the submission of new employment processing; if the information is not received, the stipend payments will be delayed by a minimum of one pay period. Departments are expected to adhere to processing deadlines.

NOTE: Students should be timely in submission of all required documents. Students must also be made aware that encumbrances, incomplete admission, or other problems could result in further delays in their ability to assume assistantship duties and in the processing of the assistantship appointment.

Approved by Graduate Council, May 4, 1992
Modified by Graduate Council, November 24, 1998
Modified Editorially, July 1, 2002; April 16, 2004; July 13, 2010; April 7, 2014

Last Updated: 4/7/14
Extra Employment for Graduate Assistants

Section IV. Item 10.

In unusual instances, the Graduate School may allow for the extra employment of full-time (20-hour-per-week) graduate assistants if the additional work is "infrequent," and "irregular," and not aligned with their current assistantship. If a department wishes to employ a graduate assistant for extra time, the Request for Extra Employment for Graduate Assistant Form must be submitted to the office of the Associate Dean of the Graduate School by the department or other unit requesting the employment.

Extra employment of a graduate assistant holding a half-time (10 hours per week) or three-quarter time (15 hours per week) appointment may also be requested by completing the Request for Extra Employment for Graduate Assistant form. Students on these appointment types may be approved for the difference between the assistantship duty obligation and 20 hours per week. Departments desiring to hire a half- or quarter-time assistant for extra time may be required to make an additional assistantship appointment.

In addition to consideration of the information on this form, decisions to approve the request will be based on the student's good academic standing and satisfactory progress toward the degree. Permission may take as long as ten (10) days to process and is not guaranteed. The student must not begin the extra work until permission has been granted by the Graduate School. Students will not be paid for additional work performed if this permission is not granted.

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) strictly limits foreign students entering the United States on an F-1 non-immigrant visa to 20 hours of total employment per week while the University is in session. During University recess periods, an F-1 student may work on campus 40 hours per week if he or she is eligible, has permission from his or her department chair/director of graduate studies and the Graduate School, and intends to register for the next term. A student entering the country on a J-1 visa is limited to the employment stipulations specifically noted on his or her visa. Students approved for extra employment will be paid via extra compensation. A time record sheet and an Additional Pay Form are to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Assistantship Employment at Human Resource Services in order for payment to be made.

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