

Policy on GTA Non-teaching Assignments

This policy is promulgated to guide the employment of Graduate Teaching Assistants in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs in English. Because “all graduate assistants are students first,” (as stated in MTSU Policy 225 V.A.7), the following policy intends to maximize the GTAs’ ability to do their best work *as students* by providing a consistent, predictable work environment in non-teaching assignments. Such an environment allows students to plan their time for study, completing course assignments and projects, and/or preparing for examinations with their best attention and focus on mastering their subject areas and doing their best work as scholars. This, in turn, contributes to the achievement of their aspirations in pursuing graduate study.

MTSU Policy 225 governs the appointments of Graduate Teaching Assistants and establishes the following on Section IV:

IV. Required Assignments

- A. All graduate assistants are to meet the assignment requirements as set forth in the MTSU Standard Assistantship Agreement. Failure to fulfill the terms of this agreement results in a termination of the student's assistantship.
- B. Assignment: Full-time graduate assistants will engage in twenty (20) hours of activities as assigned by the department and agreed to by the student. This requirement can be met in a number of ways, including combinations of the following:
 1. Six (6) contact hours per week in classroom or laboratory instruction in which the graduate teaching assistant assigns the grade, or
 2. Eight (8) contact hours per week in laboratory supervision in which the faculty member assigns the grade, or
 3. Ten (10) contact hours per week in teaching at the Campus School, or
 4. Clock hours (up to twenty [20]) per week in supervised activities in the department or office of their assistantship, or
 5. A combination of the above, not to exceed these specifications.

Teaching Appointments

Following these guidelines, within the Graduate Program in English, Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) who are assigned to teach classes as described in IV.B.1 (two classes) for which they assign grades and who attend any pre-service and in-service training required of all GTAs in teaching assignments as described in VII.F are considered to have fulfilled all of the required duties per week of the assistantship. No additional work may be required of GTAs assigned to teach two classes.

A Mentored Teaching Assistant (MTA) assignment is the equivalent of ten (10) clock hours. Students who have one GTA and one MTA assignment are considered to have fulfilled all of the required duties per week of the assistantship. No additional work may be required of GTA/MTAs.

Non-teaching Appointments

GTAs in non-teaching assignments as research assistants (RAs) and/or program assistants (PAs) are required to work up to twenty (20) clock hours per week as described in IV.B.4. RAs and PAs in non-teaching assignments are required by the program to keep track of their hours using the [English Non-teaching Graduate Assistant Timesheet \(available for download at _____\)](#). These hours include any and all time spent conducting research in the library, through databases,

or on the Internet; reading research materials; organizing and annotating information; inputting data; composing, analyzing, and/or evaluating bibliographies, transcriptions, or other deliverables; planning, organizing, implementing, participating in, and debriefing after events; attending meetings with supervisors concerning their work as RAs or PAs; and any other demands upon an RA's or PA's time in fulfilling the assigned duties. This form should be signed by the RA/PA and the supervisor and submitted to the Office of Graduate Programs in English by the 5th of the following month, where the timesheets will be kept on file. RAs and PAs are not permitted to "bank" or accrue "comp" hours from week to week or semester to semester, nor may supervisors require an RA or PA to do so, but should plan work for the required number of hours each week. As indicated in Policy 225 IV.B.5, supervisors may not request or require more than twenty (20) hours of work from any full-time RA or PA in any given week.

GTAs may have split assignments. Split assignments may involve a combination of teaching, half-time (10 hours) service as research assistants (RAs), and/or half-time (10 hours) service as program assistants (PAs). GTAs who have a teaching assignment of three (3) contact hours per week as described in IV.B.1 and who attend any pre-service and in-service training required of all GTAs in teaching assignments as described in VII.F are considered to fulfill ten (10) hours of the required twenty (20) hours per week of the assistantship. Students assigned as RAs and/or PAs for the other ten (10) hours of a split assignment are required by the program to keep track of their hours using the [English Non-teaching Graduate Assistant Timesheet \(available for download at _____\)](#). These hours include any and all time spent conducting research in the library, through databases, or on the Internet; reading research materials; organizing and annotating information; inputting data; composing, analyzing, and/or evaluating bibliographies, transcriptions, or other deliverables; planning, organizing, implementing, participating in, and debriefing after events; attending meetings with supervisors concerning their work as RAs or PAs; and any other demands upon an RA's or PA's time in fulfilling the assigned duties. This form should be signed by the RA/PA and the supervisor and submitted to the Office of Graduate Programs in English, where the timesheets will be kept on file, by the 5th of the following month. RAs and PAs are not permitted to "bank" or accrue "comp" hours from week to week or semester to semester, nor may supervisors require an RA or PA to do so, but should plan work for the required number of hours each week. As indicated in Policy 225 IV.B.5, supervisors may not request or require more than twenty (20) hours of work from any full-time RA or PA in any given week. Further, GTAs commit to the following when they sign the Acknowledgement of MTSU Employment Limitations for Non-Benefited Employees: "I understand that it is my responsibility to keep a record of my hours and to notify my supervisor(s) if I will exceed my allowed hours in a one-week period (Saturday through Friday) based on schedules developed by my supervisor(s), and that I will work with my supervisor(s) so that my work hours are reduced as necessary to stay at or below the allowed hours total for the week."

Periods of Appointment

MSU Policy 225 V governs the time periods covered by 9-month and 12-month appointments as follows:

- C. Academic Year Appointment: The Fall semester appointment period will begin one (1) day after the University Convocation and end one (1) day before Fall graduation. The Spring semester appointment period

will begin on the Monday preceding the day classes begin and end one (1) day before Spring graduation.

Summer appointments begin the first day of the Summer term and end one (1) day before Summer graduation.

Since GTA/RA/PA assignments are made by semester, the definitions in Policy 225 V.C govern the duration of any given non-teaching assignment.