



## **Graduate Assistantship (“GShip”) Policies and Procedures Handbook**

**Effective September 30, 2025**

Direct all questions to the  
Office of the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education  
[GradEd@chapman.edu](mailto:GradEd@chapman.edu)

## Table of Contents

|                                                                        |    |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| About Graduate Assistantships.....                                     | 4  |
| Overview .....                                                         | 4  |
| What is a Graduate Assistantship? .....                                | 4  |
| Eligibility .....                                                      | 5  |
| Graduate Assistantship Position Criteria & Levels .....                | 6  |
| Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs) .....                          | 6  |
| Graduate Writing Assistantships (GWAs) .....                           | 7  |
| Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) .....                          | 8  |
| Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) .....                              | 8  |
| Graduate Assistantship Employment Process and Policy .....             | 9  |
| Employment Letters (GRA, GWA, GTA) and/or GSI Contracts .....          | 9  |
| At-Will Employment.....                                                | 9  |
| Cancellation or Termination of Assistantships .....                    | 10 |
| Non-Reappointment or Dismissal.....                                    | 11 |
| Conflict Resolution.....                                               | 11 |
| Continuation Beyond Initial Appointment .....                          | 11 |
| Tuition Awards .....                                                   | 12 |
| Expected Workload .....                                                | 12 |
| Compensation.....                                                      | 12 |
| Meal Periods and Rest Breaks .....                                     | 12 |
| Holding Multiple Graduate Assistantships.....                          | 13 |
| Paid Sick Leave.....                                                   | 14 |
| University Benefits .....                                              | 14 |
| Health Insurance.....                                                  | 14 |
| Health Center Access.....                                              | 15 |
| Harassment and Discrimination Policy.....                              | 15 |
| Appendix A: Compensation Structure for Graduate Assistantships .....   | 16 |
| Receipt & Acknowledgement of the Graduate Assistantship Handbook ..... | 18 |
| Figure 1.0 Graduate Assistant (GShip) Hiring Workflow .....            | 19 |

***Note to Graduate Students and Graduate Programs:***

Timely hiring is dependent on the student responding to the requests from the Office of Human Resources (Human Resources or HR) regarding background check initiation, providing eligibility documents, and completing other hiring-related functions. Human Resources will endeavor to process all GShip hires within 10 business days for U.S. resident students and 15 business days for international students (i.e., non-resident aliens) provided there is no delay in completing the background check or obtaining student documents. Non-Resident Aliens must also submit to Glacier for tax-reporting determination as a part of the hiring process and for tax-reporting.

# About Graduate Assistantships

## Overview

Each student in a Graduate Assistantship (GShip) will receive a letter from Human Resources or a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) contract from the academic unit in which the GSI's course is taught setting forth the terms of employment at Chapman University. The contents of this Graduate Assistantship ("GShip") Handbook are aimed at assisting Chapman University graduate students, faculty and staff members to understand the structure of and policies pertaining to graduate employment positions under the purview of the Office of the Associate Vice President (AVPGE) for Graduate Education. This Handbook replaces all prior versions and if discrepancies between the contents of this Handbook and the employment letter from Human Resources or GSI contract exist, the employment letter or GSI contract prevails.

## What is a Graduate Assistantship?

Graduate Assistantships (also known as "GShips") are graduate student employment positions where graduate students are engaged in academic and research endeavors designed, to the extent possible, to further the graduate student's career and development as a researcher, scholar, teacher, and professional.

Graduate Assistantships should not be confused with other types of graduate student worker employment. Such work is geared towards the needs of the department, office, or faculty member, is typically administrative and/or clerical in scope, and is not tailored to the graduate student's development.

Current Graduate Assistantship categories at Chapman University include:

- **Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)** - this type of GShip is available to graduate students who have an interest in research and possess the appropriate research skills for the position.
- **Graduate Writing Assistantship (GWA)** - this type of GShip is available to qualified graduate students who have previously been formally trained as writing assistants and are interested in serving as research and technical writing coaches to other Chapman graduate students.
- **Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA)** - this type of GShip is available to graduate students with no prior relevant teaching experience who desire to gain skills related to teaching in higher education. GTAs serve as graders, course facilitators, discussion leaders, and assistants to a Chapman faculty member teaching a course.
- **Graduate Student Instructor (GSI)** - this type of GShip is available to graduate students who have teaching interest, appropriate prior experience, and pedagogy skills necessary for teaching a university course. GSIs are Instructors of Record (IOR) on the course(s) they teach.

In some cases, GShips may be included in a graduate student's admission package. For example, Doctoral Fellowships that provide compensation may include the expectation that the graduate student performs work in a Graduate Assistantship position (such as GRA or

GTA) throughout their enrollment.

## ***Eligibility***

To be eligible for a GShip, graduate students must:

- Meet the university's minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA requirement for graduate students or their program's minimum cumulative GPA requirement, if higher,
- Maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in a term immediately preceding the GShip appointment. If a student holds a GShip position and their term GPA drops below 2.7 in one term or stays below 3.0 in two consecutive terms, the student became ineligible for the GShip and their GShip position will be terminated effective the start of the next term. The student can be reinstated in a GShip position after correcting the GPA and meeting the minimum GPA requirements.
- Specific requirement for students holding GSI positions: Continuously demonstrate excellence in teaching, manifested by course evaluations rated above 4.0 (on a 5-grade scale). If the student teaching evaluation in a single course drops below 4.0, but is at 3.0 or above, the GSI in-class teaching should be evaluated by a faculty instructor to specify the necessary corrections. If the student course evaluation drops below 3.0 or below 4.0 in more than one course in one term or stays below 4.0 in two consecutive terms. The GSI will be assigned to complete the pedagogy training at the Center of Excellence of Teaching and Learning. If the student course evaluation is below 3.0 in more than one course or stays below 3.0 in two consecutive terms the student became ineligible to hold the GSI position and will be terminated effective the start of the next term. The eligibility to hold a GSI position does not affect the student's eligibility to hold other GShip positions.
- Specific requirement for students holding GTA positions: students cannot be enrolled and be a GTA in the same course, including holding GTA position and being enrolled in separate sections of the same course.
- Meet all program-specific requirements to be a student in "good academic standing";
- Be making substantial 'progress toward degree' as defined by their program;
- Enroll in a minimum of 6 graduate credits in all required academic terms<sup>1</sup> during which they hold a GShip, unless they are enrolled exclusively in thesis or dissertation, and;
- Meet the university's continuous enrollment requirement when exclusively working on thesis/dissertation by being enrolled in no less than 1 graduate credit in all terms during which they hold a GShip.

**Note: the enrollment criteria above are for the purposes of holding a Graduate Assistantship only; eligibility for federal loans, maintenance of the valid immigration status, and other purposes such as student housing may require higher enrollment thresholds. Students are responsible for researching their own needs and meeting the enrollment requirements. Read the [Graduate Student Full-Time Enrollment and Continuous Enrollment Policies](#).**

In addition, students holding GShips are considered employees of the University and are

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<sup>1</sup> Required academic terms are defined by the graduate program. Some programs, such as most trimester calendar programs in Health Sciences, are year-round programs and require summer enrollment. Students should check with their Program Coordinator if they are unsure if their program requires enrollment in summer and/or interterm. All graduate programs at Chapman University require a minimum of fall and spring term enrollment.

required to meet all Chapman University eligibility criteria for hire, including but not limited to, successful criminal background check, completing and returning all employment paperwork, required online HR training, etc.

Enrollment, GPA, and progress toward degree, as well as course evaluations for GSI positions, are verified throughout the term of the Assistantship appointment and continuing employment is dependent on meeting these academic standards; students found to be out of compliance will have their Assistantships terminated.

**Students who successfully defend their thesis/dissertation are no longer eligible for GShip after the term of defense (refer to [Graduate Student Full-Time Enrollment and Continuous Enrollment Policies](#)).**

**Summer GShip eligibility when summer is not a required academic term in the program** is predicated on the student *either* having been enrolled the previous spring in accordance with the enrollment stipulated above *or* being enrolled during summer with the enrollment stipulated above. Thus, students in programs where summer is not a required term *may hold/continue a GShip in summer without being enrolled in summer courses*, provided they met enrollment eligibility the preceding spring term. This eligibility criteria does not apply to the students who defend their thesis/dissertation and/or complete the program and university requirements in spring term.

**Interterm GShip eligibility when Interterm is not a required academic term in the program** is predicated on the student being registered for the upcoming spring term in accordance with the enrollment stipulated above. Thus, students in programs where Interterm is not a required term, *may hold/continue a GShip in Interterm without being enrolled in Interterm courses*, provided they are registered to meet the enrollment eligibility in the upcoming spring term.

## **Graduate Assistantship Position Criteria & Levels**

### ***Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs)***

GRAs are typically contingent upon the availability of external funding and/or existence of sufficient department/school/college funds. Funding is usually in the form of external research grants/contracts, training grants or research funds awarded to a particular faculty member, based upon their research interests. Students are encouraged to contact individual faculty members or their program director to inquire about possible research assistantships. Students are selected for graduate research assistantships based on merit, relevant experience and skills, compatibility with the research goals of the principal investigator of the contract or grant, and specific limitations defined by the granting agency. Similar factors are considered for institutional funded Graduate Assistantship opportunities. Students should consider their own academic and professional goals as graduate students when considering assistantship opportunities. Continuation of any research assistantship is based on the continuation of available funding and the satisfactory performance of the graduate students. Therefore, students must discuss with the faculty member not only the current availability of funds and the compatibility of the research with their own interests but also the duration of the funding.

GRAs are hired for a preset number of anticipated work hours each week based on the tasks to be assigned by the faculty supervisor. The total number of anticipated hours for a GRA is 19.5 hours per week and must be adjusted down if other GShip employment is held concurrently. GRAs work on an hourly basis and submit their time each week. Any time that exceeds the 19.5 hours in a week must be pre-approved by the GRA's faculty supervisor and accounted for on the GRA's time sheet.

The following levels exist within the Graduate Research Assistantship category; faculty supervisors determine the level of experience, expertise, and contribution necessary for placement in the appropriate GRA level:

- ***Graduate Research Assistant 1 (GRA1)***: A graduate student who has some limited prior research experience at a lower level. A GRA1 works on a research project under the direct supervision of a faculty member(s) who is the principal investigator of an externally funded project or a faculty member(s) who received institutional funds for the research project. The GRA1 performs research tasks beyond the scope of a typical undergraduate or hourly graduate student worker, usually independently under the mentorship of a faculty member. Tasks may include conducting literature reviews, data collection, preparation of data for reporting, and logistical research to support the principal investigator(s).
- ***Graduate Research Assistant 2 (GRA2)***: An advanced graduate student who conducts research in support of a principal investigator of an externally funded project or a faculty member(s) who received institutional funds for the research project. The GRA2 performs research tasks beyond the scope of a GRA1. Tasks may include data collection and analysis, report preparation, coordination of field sites for data collection, and other project-specific organizational responsibilities. The GRA2 may be expected to make an original contribution (e.g., article for publication, presentation at a state or national conference) to a research effort that serves the common professional objectives of the student and supervisor.

## ***Graduate Writing Assistantships (GWAs)***

GWAs are dependent upon the existence of sufficient funds from the Office of the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education to support the position. Students should contact GradEd@chapman.edu to inquire about the potential availability of a GWA position early in the term prior to the term in which they wish to serve. The duties for GWA positions are listed below. GWAs are expected to work 10.0 hours/week either for spring/summer/fall trimesters at the Rinker campus or for fall/spring semesters at the Orange campus. GWAs work on an hourly basis and submit their time each week. Any time that exceeds 10.0 hours in a week must be pre-approved by the GWA's faculty supervisor and accounted for on the GWA's time sheet.

These appointments are hired for one term with the possibility for reappointment based on available funding and performance. GWAs work in conjunction with the Writing Center and must have completed extensive training in writing coaching, which may include completion of courses in the English Department at Chapman, to be eligible for consideration.

There is only one level of GWA position and duties include the following:

- Providing one-on-one coaching in research and technical writing skills with graduate students.
- Conducting small group instruction on multiple topics relevant to graduate student writing.
- Mentoring graduate students during their completion of substantial graduate program writing requirements, such as research papers, articles for publication, theses, and dissertations.
- Writing brief reports of what occurred during research and writing coaching sessions.
- Creating resource materials for graduate student researchers and writers.
- Presenting in classrooms about graduate student research and writing coaching.
- Committing to a weekly work schedule.
- Attending the English Department and Writing Center staff meetings.

### ***Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs)***

GTAs are dependent upon the existence of sufficient department or school/college funds to support the position and are directly related to a particular course(s) or lab session(s). As with GRAs and GWAs, GTAs work on an hourly basis and submit their time each week.

GTAs primarily work at the undergraduate level in traditional lecture and laboratory settings. GTA appointments are generally for one academic term and the services performed by the GTA must be relevant to the student's academic program. Students should contact the program director or department chair for specific information about the potential availability of a GTA position early in the term prior to the term in which they wish to serve as a GTA. There is only one level of GTA position; it is primarily for graduate students who do not have prior relevant teaching experience and desire to gain instructional skills related to higher education. Duties will include assisting one or more instructors of record with the following:

- Preparation or updating of lecture materials.
- Running lab sessions.
- Conducting review sessions.
- Holding office hours to consult with students regarding course requirements. This does not supplant a faculty member's regular office hours for advising students.
- Proctoring quizzes and exams.
- Monitoring grades.
- Grading assignments and exams based on established criteria provided by the Instructor of Record.
- May perform teaching on a limited basis with the support of the faculty member, while the faculty member has primary oversight and responsibility for the course.

### ***Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs)***

GSIs primarily work at the undergraduate level in traditional lecture and laboratory settings; student-faculty research courses, reading conference courses, student internship courses, and independent study courses are not GSI assignments. Initial GSI appointments are generally for one academic term and are subject to successful demonstration of teaching ability to be re-appointed. Students should contact the program director or department chair for specific information about the potential availability of a GSI position early in the term prior

to the term in which they wish to serve as a GSI.

GSI's are identified as the ***Instructors of Record (IOR)*** in Chapman University publications and will have primary charge and responsibility for the course with the mentorship of a faculty member. Duties of a GSI will include:

- Teaching in a classroom or laboratory setting.
- Preparation and updating of course and lecture materials.
- Conducting review sessions.
- Holding office hours to consult with students regarding course requirements.
- Preparation and updating of exam questions and assignment materials.
- Grading assignments and exams.
- In most cases, the GSI has full responsibility for the delivery and assessment in a course where the content is pre-defined by a faculty coordinator. In cases where the GSI has extensive prior teaching experience and documented prior success teaching at Chapman, the GSI may develop course materials independently with the guidance of a faculty mentor for a course that has been approved by the offering department/program.

GSI's are dependent upon the existence of sufficient department or school/college funds to support the position and are directly related to a particular course(s) or lab session(s); services performed by the GSI must be relevant to the student's academic program. GSI's with 100% instructional responsibility for a course are part-time salaried positions and receive a salary based on the number of classroom hours scheduled per week and the number of weeks of the class. GSI's who have less than 100% instructional responsibility for a course (i.e., team teach a course) receive compensation for the GSI's course and course-related work determined by multiplying a set hourly rate, documented in the GSI's contract, by the documented course-related hours worked.

Non-course related work for all GSI's is paid hourly (see "Appendix A" for compensation details). GSI's, like all categories of GShips, are not eligible for full-time employee benefits.

## **Graduate Assistantship Employment Process and Policy**

### ***Employment Letters (GRA, GWA, GTA) and/or GSI Contracts***

Students who receive a GShip are given at least annually an Employment Letter or contract, depending on the type of GShip role, detailing the specifics of the assignment. An Employment Letter is prepared by Human Resources according to specifics provided by the hiring program, signed by the student, and sent back to Human Resources. GSI contracts are prepared by the unit in which the GSI's class is to be taught and are returned to the unit. Students are encouraged to carefully read the terms of their Employment Letters or contracts. A new Graduate Assistantship Employment Letter or contract must be issued prior to the beginning of any academic term not covered in the initial letter or if the type of Graduate Assistantship changes at any point in time (GRA moving to GTA, for example).

### ***At-Will Employment***

**All Graduate Assistantships are at-will appointments.** Either party may terminate the

employment relationship at will, at any time, with or without cause. Since Graduate Assistantships are at-will appointments, the University may terminate a Graduate Assistantship for any reason not prohibited by law, including the failure to satisfy academic requirements. Graduate Assistantships are also subject to termination for failure to meet eligibility requirements (see Eligibility). The following are few examples of when the University may terminate a Graduate Assistantship for academic reasons:

- The student drops below the required number of credits to maintain eligibility for Graduate Assistantship (see Eligibility);
- The student fails to maintain “good academic standing”, including minimum GPA or other academic requirements, or ceases to make progress toward their degree as determined by their program (see Eligibility);
- The student is dismissed from the University for any academic or conduct-related action, as all student employment is dependent on the student being enrolled (see Eligibility).

Students may not, under any circumstances, hold a Graduate Assistantship after the last day of the final pay period for the academic term in which the student completes all required coursework or successfully defends their thesis/dissertation, *regardless of whether the University Registrar confers the degree in that same term* with the exception of summer GShips when summer is not a required academic term in the program. This means (1) students who have completed all required coursework are not eligible to hold GShips in later terms by enrolling in additional, non-required courses, and (2) students who have passed their defense but have not fulfilled the library submission requirement (or other degree requirements post-defense) are NOT eligible for GShips in later terms, however, (3) students who have completed all required coursework or who have passed their defense in spring term, are eligible for GShips in summer term, but not in later terms.

### ***Cancellation or Termination of Assistantships***

If the Graduate Assistantship is canceled by the University or by a graduate student on or before the start date by the Graduate Assistant, no compensation is paid.

If the Graduate Assistantship is terminated by the University during the employment term, compensation will be paid in full on the last day of actual employment.

The University reserves the right to cancel a course at the University’s discretion. If a course that was supporting a Graduate Assistantship is cancelled, the GShip will be terminated on the effective date of the cancellation of the course, and the University shall pay the Graduate Assistant for all hours worked through the cancellation date.

If a graduate student voluntarily terminates (i.e., resigns from) an assistantship appointment and provides at least 3 days advance notice, compensation will be paid on the final workday. If a graduate student quits without notice, final pay will be provided within seventy-two (72) hours of the last workday.

## ***Non-Reappointment or Dismissal***

As stated above in the “Employment Letters or Contracts” section, Graduate Assistantship appointments are at-will and employment with Chapman University is at the mutual consent of each employee and the University. Accordingly, while the University has every hope that employment relationships will be mutually beneficial and rewarding, employees and the University retain the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause. Students are expected to adhere to standards of performance to maintain eligibility for the assistantship.

In the performance of their responsibilities, students with Graduate Assistantships must abide by the academic and instructional criteria and policies established by the department, school/college or program in which their assistantship is held. They are governed by the same standards of conduct and university policies in the performance of their academic responsibilities as are members of the faculty. As Students, Graduate Assistants are also subject to, and must comply with, the University’s Student Code of Conduct --

<https://www.chapman.edu/students/policies-forms/student-conduct/ files/pdfs/student-conduct-code-master.pdf>.

## ***Conflict Resolution***

It is the hope of the University that students with Graduate Assistantships will find the conditions of their assistantships to be satisfactory and the experience gained to be rewarding. However, if a student has a problem or complaint regarding the Graduate Assistantship that is not covered by University policies such as the University’s Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy and Policy on Sexual Harassment Prohibited by Title IX, the problem should be brought immediately to the attention of the supervising faculty member to whom the graduate assistant is responsible. If a solution cannot be achieved in this fashion, then the student should consult with the chair of the department. If the problem cannot be resolved in this manner, the student should bring the problem to the attention of the dean of their home academic unit. If the problem remains unresolved, the student should refer the dispute to the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education. In all cases, the determination of the Associate Vice President on the dispute shall be final. Graduate Assistantships’ Employment Letters or contracts include an arbitration agreement in which the employees and University agree to resolve disputes arising out of employment exclusively by binding arbitration conducted by JAMS in Orange County, California.

## ***Continuation Beyond Initial Appointment***

There is no obligation on the part of the University to reappoint students with GShips beyond the term outlined in the Employment Letter or contract. Reappointment of all GShips is predicated on the availability of funds, University need, continued eligibility status, and satisfactory performance reviews [including evaluation by faculty supervisor (GRA, GWA, GTA, GSI), student evaluations and class observations (GTA, GSI)]. Students should contact the applicable department chair or school/college dean if they have questions about the reappointment of their Assistantships.

## ***Tuition Awards***

All graduate student tuition awards are considered tuition fellowships and are processed through the funding source in conjunction with the Office of Financial Aid. Tuition fellowships are separate and distinct from Graduate Assistantships, which are considered student employment, not financial aid.

## ***Expected Workload***

A student with a Graduate Assistantship is expected to be able to fulfill their responsibilities in no more than 48.75% of the student's total effort during enrolled terms and in less than 1000 hours per calendar year. It is the first responsibility of a graduate student to achieve satisfactory academic progress in their own research and studies, along with timely progress toward their degree. Therefore, Graduate Assistantship appointments shall be less than 50% of the student's total time during enrolled terms to support the students' primary academic pursuits. It is also incumbent upon the students to make every effort to coordinate their GShip activities with their own research and professional goals. This coordination is best accomplished through discussions with prospective research advisors about the directions and goals of their research and the level and duration of external funding. Multiple GShip positions may not be combined to exceed that limit. The department of appointment should inquire from the student whether they have any other appointments that could affect the total workload.

The time devoted to the assistantship may vary from day to day and week to week if it does not exceed the average given above and the 1000 hours per calendar year maximum. In addition, the student is not expected to work more than 8 hours in each day, more than an average of 19.5 hours per week during enrolled terms, nor on 7 consecutive days. On occasion, the performance of the duties may unavoidably exceed the norm stated here (e.g., field trips, professional meetings, and conferences). However, these deviations should be rare and in no case should the total workload over the course of the year exceed the limits described above. As noted, GRAs, GTAs, and GWAs work on an hourly basis and submit their time each week. Any time that exceeds the allotted schedule for the week must be pre-approved.

## ***Compensation***

Students are paid twice per month as compensation for services performed in the GShip. Timely completion and submission of timecards by students holding GRA, GTA, and GWA appointments is required. Please reference the Payroll Calendar for specific dates of pay.

The compensation amounts are shown in ***"Appendix A"***, and the compensation that applies to each Graduate Assistant is set forth in their Employment Letter or contract.

## ***Meal Periods and Rest Breaks***

GRAs, GWAs and GTAs who work five (5) or more hours per day are required to take an uninterrupted meal period of at least thirty (30) minutes, but Graduate Assistants who work

six (6) hours or less per day may waive the meal period with the University's mutual consent. The meal period is unpaid. GRAs, GWAs and GTAs are also entitled to a paid rest period of at least ten (10) minutes for each four (4) hours worked. The rest period must be in the middle of the employee's work period, to the extent practicable. Rest periods are not required for employees who work less than three and a half (3.5) hours in a day.

The immediate supervisor of a student with a Graduate Assistantship is responsible for monitoring the student's academic progress, work, and hours. Work performed beyond the agreed workload and more than 8 hours in a workday, 40 hours in a work week, or 7 consecutive days must be pre-approved. Such additional work must be documented on the Exception Time Reporting form and be submitted within one week of occurrence to the department's/school/college's business office for appropriate handling.

## ***Holding Multiple Graduate Assistantships***

### ***Policy on Second Assignments to Graduate Students***

The policies for holding multiple positions as a graduate student were updated on 3/7/23 and were approved by the Vice Provost of Operations and Finance and revised 10/31/24.

Combined appointments for graduate students must not exceed 19.5 hours per week during enrolled terms and must be less than 1,000 hours per calendar year. Students may have a maximum of two positions in any term. As long as these guidelines are met, graduate students may hold a maximum of two appointments as described below.

- (1) **Simultaneous Assistantships:** Students may hold a maximum of two (2) hourly Graduate Assistantships in the same term, even if the rate of pay for these positions differs (e.g., a student may serve as both a GRA and a GTA in the same term). All Graduate Assistantships must follow the compensation guidelines in "**Appendix A**".
- (2) **Hourly vs. Salaried Pay:** Effective, January 2025, students cannot be employed on hourly and salaried positions simultaneously.
- (3) **Mixed Positions:** Students may hold a maximum of two (2) concurrent positions - an hourly non-GShip student position and an hourly Graduate Assistantship in the same term, even if the rate of pay for these positions differs (e.g., a student may hold an hourly administrative position and serve as a GRA in the same term).
- (4) **Teaching and Assistantship:** Students may hold concurrent employment in an hourly Graduate Student Instructor teaching position and a maximum of one (1) hourly Graduate Assistantship or hourly non-GShip student position in the same term, even if the rate of pay for these positions differs (e.g., a student could serve as a GSI for a 3-credit course and as a GRA for less than 9.75 hours per week in the same term).
  - a. **Primary Job:** Typically (e.g., with a 3-credit course), the number of hours in the teaching contract is more than the hourly assignment and teaching is considered to be the primary job.

## ***Paid Sick Leave***

In compliance with the Healthy Workplaces, Healthy Families Act of 2014, Graduate Assistantship employees who work 30 or more days within a year in California will receive a maximum of 24 hours (three (3) workdays) of sick pay. Employees are entitled to use accrued paid sick leave beginning on the 90<sup>th</sup> day of employment and may use the leave in the event of the employee's own or a family member's injury, illness, or for preventive care, within a calendar year. "Family member" includes current spouses, registered domestic partners, children, parents, grandparents, grandchildren, and siblings. Sick pay hours may also be used for employees who are victims of domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking. Sick pay hours are not to be used as personal time or vacation.

The balance and usage of sick pay hours will be displayed on the biweekly pay notice and on the My Chapman Self Service Portal. Unused sick pay hours are not carried over to the next year, however, each January, if the participants continue to be in active assignments, the sick pay hours will be renewed up to the maximum of 24 hours.

Graduate Assistants requesting to use sick pay hours should provide as much advance notice via verbal or written request to faculty/supervisor as practicable. Absences over three consecutive days should be coordinated with the Office of Human Resources to document the use of sick pay hours for a specified purpose.

Sick pay hours carry no cash value and therefore are not paid out as extra pay nor upon separation from the University. Graduate Assistants who are re-employed with the University within 12 months of separation will have their accrued unused sick pay hours reinstated.

Retaliation or discrimination against employees who request paid sick hours or use paid sick hours, or both is prohibited. Employees can alert the Human Resources Office or file a complaint with the Labor Commissioner against an employer who retaliates or discriminates against the employee. For more information about these provisions, please contact the Human Resources Office at [HROffice@chapman.edu](mailto:HROffice@chapman.edu).

## ***University Benefits***

Students in Graduate Assistantships do not receive vacation leave, health benefits, or retirement benefits. Graduate Assistantships will be eligible for coverage under the University's workers compensation policy for illness or injury incurred during the course and scope of their assistantships.

## ***Health Insurance***

All students at Chapman, including students in Graduate Assistantships, may purchase student health insurance from UnitedHealthcare on a per academic term basis. International students are required to purchase the student health insurance, unless they are eligible for a waiver. Other students must opt in to purchase this insurance at the beginning of each term. Information on the UnitedHealthcare student health insurance plan and waiver eligibility for the international students is available at <https://www.chapman.edu/students/tuition-and-aid/SBS/tuition-and-services/student-insurance.aspx>.

## ***Health Center Access***

Graduate students who possess their own health insurance (either through their parents' policy, the student policy referenced above, or on their own) are able to pay a fee per term that enables them to access services at the Student Health Center as needed. The Health Center fee is a per term charge that is added to the student's billing statement and is paid well in advance of seeking services; it is not a "pay at the time of need" situation. Further information is available at the link above.

## ***Harassment and Discrimination Policy***

All students are expected to follow Chapman University policies, including the Chapman University *University's Interim Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy* and *Policy on Sexual Harassment Prohibited by Title IX* and the *Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Prevention Policy for Employees*. These policies are incorporated in this Handbook as if reproduced in full. The policies are available online at <https://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/files/eodo/dhrp-policy.pdf> and <https://www.chapman.edu/faculty-staff/human-resources/files/eodo/title9-policy.pdf>.

Awareness and prevention training is required, as set forth in the graduate assistant's employment letter or contract, and training is provided by the Human Resources Department through an online program that is accessible 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Live workshops are also conducted periodically throughout the year.

## Appendix A: Compensation Structure for Graduate Assistantships

The amount of compensation assigned to each position level is updated periodically to maintain market relevance. Students in Graduate Assistantships will receive an Employment Letter or contract setting forth the compensation and other terms of employment. The following provides general information regarding the pay structures for GShips.

**GSIs** receive a salary based on the number of classroom hours scheduled per week and the number of weeks of the class. For example, in Spring 2025, a 3-credit course that meets 3 hours per week for 15 weeks will be paid \$6,685 (\$45.71 hourly) for teaching the course and attending to course-related work (such as preparing for class, grading, supporting students). In interterm 2025, the rate increases to \$46.85 hourly. IF the pay rate increases again, the increase will be reflected in the contracts. For the particulars of your own GSI assignment, please refer to your contract from the academic unit.

GSIs record their non-course related activities (required HR training, etc.) on a biweekly timesheet and are compensated at an hourly rate and according to the formula stated in their GSI contract. For Spring 2025, the hourly rate for non-course related activities is \$30.00/hour; GSIs should refer to their contract for additional information.

As part-time employees, GSIs may teach a maximum of 6 credits in fall or spring terms. Depending on the summer term in which the GSI teaches, the maximum number of credits taught ranges between 2 and 4 credits. GSIs may not teach in Interterm.

GSIs who teach 3 credits or less in a fall or spring term may also be employed in another GShip category (see below) in the same term provided the total number of hours worked in the other, non-GSI category is no greater than 9.5 hours per week.

**Non-GSI GShip positions (GRA, GTA, GWA)** are considered part-time hourly reporting employees and record all GRA/GTA/GWA hours worked on a biweekly timesheet. As part-time employees, the maximum number of hours per week for graduate students working exclusively in non-GSI GShip positions is 19.5 per week in any term that requires enrollment by their programs. Hours are stipulated in the employment letter.

### **Hourly rates for non-GSI GShip positions are as follows<sup>2</sup>:**

- **Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA):** \$36.89 per hour as of 1/1/25, increased to \$37.81 per hour as of 1/1/26, with a maximum of 19.5 hours worked per week.
- **Graduate Writing Assistant (GWA):** \$36.89 per hour as of 1/1/25, increased to \$37.81 per hour as of 1/1/26, with an anticipated 10 hours worked per week per semester/trimester.
- **Graduate Research Assistant I (GRA1):** \$36.89 per hour as of 1/1/25, increased to \$37.81 per hour as of 1/1/26, with a maximum of 19.5 hours worked per week.
- **Graduate Research Assistant II (GRA2)<sup>3</sup>:** \$39.00 per hour as of 1/1/25, increased to \$39.97 per hour as of 1/1/26, with a maximum of 19.5 hours worked per week.

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<sup>2</sup> Hours are stipulated in the employment letter. Any work hours beyond the maximum amounts allotted for each position must be pre-approved and recorded on the employee's timesheets.

<sup>3</sup> Under very exceptional circumstances, the GRA2 compensation rate may be exceeded due to required specialized expertise or mandates by funding agencies/sponsors.

**Duration of appointments for the 2026-27 Academic Year:**

- Fall 2026 Semester: classes held 8/24/2026-12/5/2026 (4 months)
- Fall 2026 Trimester: classes held 8/24/2026-12/5/2026 (4 months)
- Interterm 2027: classes held 1/4/2027-2/3/27 (1 month)
- Spring Semester 2027: classes held 2/1/2026-5/31/2027 (4 months)
- Spring Trimester 2027: classes held 1/4/2026-4/10/2027 (4 months)
- Summer terms (semester or trimester calendar) are available at <https://www.chapman.edu/academics/academic-calendar.aspx>.

**REMINDER on variable start/end dates for each type of GShip position. Consult the [Academic Calendar](#) for the term you are working:**

**Payroll and start and end date information by GShip appointment type:**

- GSLs are appointed two weeks prior to the start of the term and end on the day grades are due.
- GTAs start on the first day of classes for the term and end on the day grades are due.
- GWAs start on the first day of classes for the term and end on the last day of classes for the term.
- GRAs have exact start and end dates within the same Fiscal Year (June 1 - May 31). GRA appointment start/end dates do not rely on dates of academic terms.

## Receipt & Acknowledgement of the Graduate Assistantship Handbook

The Graduate Assistantship Handbook is intended to provide general guidance to students in their assistantships at Chapman University.

Because the graduate programs and assistantships may evolve and change according to accreditation and institutional requirements, the Handbook contents may change at any time, at the discretion of the University. No changes in policies or rules will be made without due consideration of the mutual consequences such changes will have on graduate student employees and on the University.

**Please read the following statements and sign below to indicate your receipt and acknowledgement of the eligibility conditions for Assistantships:**

1. I have read the current Graduate Assistantship Handbook posted on the AVPGE website.
2. I understand that the policies, rules, and information described in it are subject to change at the sole discretion of the University.
3. I understand that, should the contents of the Graduate Assistantship Handbook be revised, the University may require an additional signature from me to indicate that I am aware of and understand such changes.
4. I understand my Employment Letter or contract details the specifics of my assignment, including time reporting, and I must abide by its instructions in addition to those provided in the Graduate Assistantship Handbook.
5. I understand my assistantship is at-will and may be terminated at any time, with or without cause.
6. I understand I must meet the university's minimum cumulative 3.0 GPA requirement for graduate students or my program's minimum cumulative GPA requirement, if higher, and maintain a minimum 3.0 GPA in a term immediately preceding the GShip. If a student's holds GShip position and their term GPA drops below 2.7 in a term immediately preceding the GShip or stays below 3.0 in two consecutive terms immediately preceding the GShip, the student became ineligible for the GShip and their GShip position will be terminated effective the start of the next term. The student can be reinstated in GShip position after correcting the GPA and meeting the minimum GPA requirement.
7. I understand I must meet all program-specific requirements to be considered a student in "good academic standing."
8. I understand I must be making substantial 'progress toward degree', as defined by my program.
9. I understand I must enroll in a minimum of 6 graduate credits in all required academic terms, unless I am enrolled exclusively in thesis or dissertation.
10. I understand I must meet the University's continuous enrollment requirement by being enrolled in no less than 1 graduate credit in any required term during which I hold an assistantship, including when exclusively working on thesis/dissertation.
11. I understand I may not hold a graduate assistantship after the last day of the final pay period of the academic term in which I complete my required coursework or successfully defend my thesis/dissertation.
12. I understand I must notify the Office of Human Resources and my faculty supervisor if my eligibility for a graduate assistantship changes.
13. I agree to abide by all rules, guidelines, and policies contained in the Graduate Assistantship Handbook.

Student ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Figure 1.0 Graduate Assistant (GShip) Hiring Process

