

Texas A&M AgriLife Research Procedures

33.99.08.A0.02 | Graduate Assistantships for Research

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PROCEDURE STATEMENT

Texas A&M AgriLife Research (AgriLife Research) employs Graduate Assistants Research (GAR) to assist with its agricultural research programs which provide a scientific and technological base for Texas agriculture and its associated industries. These assistantships—administered at the unit level—are awarded on a competitive basis.

REASON FOR PROCEDURE

This procedure establishes the guidelines for the employment and administration of GAR in AgriLife Research units.

PROCEDURES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1.0 GENERAL

- 1.1 GAR are expected to conduct their thesis or dissertation research as a part of an ongoing AgriLife Research project under the direction of an AgriLife Research scientist. Supervisors of GAR are responsible for ensuring that resources used for salaries and support are expended only for mission relevant activities. There is a clear distinction between the AgriLife Research relationship with a GAR and any scholarship or other personal awards to the graduate student. This relationship—which is intended to be mutually beneficial—is primarily for the purpose of conducting mission oriented research.
- 1.2 Where graduate research is conducted at a Research and Extension Center or a Research Station, the GAR program is jointly administered by the off-campus unit and the associated academic department.

2.0 PRIORITIES FOR GRANTING RESEARCH ASSISTANTSHIPS

- 2.1 Assistantships will be allocated to priority research programs of the unit before the selection of research assistants is made.
- 2.2 Since the mission of AgriLife Research is research, priority should be given to those candidates seeking research degrees. However, consideration may be given to candidates seeking non-thesis degrees when the unit has reason and/or justification to believe the candidate will make a valid research contribution.
- 2.3 The provisions of System Regulation 33.99.09, *Employment of Foreign Nationals*, shall be followed when considering foreign nationals.

3.0 STATUS OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTS, RESEARCH

GAR are employees of AgriLife Research, and are classified as student workers in accordance with System Regulation 33.99.08, *Student Employment*. GAR—who work at least fifty percent time for four and one-half months or for a semester of more than four months, and whose positions require that they be enrolled in graduate level courses—are eligible for those benefits outlined in System Policy 31.02, *Employee Insurance and Retirement Benefits*, and System Regulation 31.02.02, *Group Insurance Programs*.

4.0 CRITERIA AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ASSISTANTSHIPS

4.1 The minimum criteria for granting assistantships are:

- A. Admission to the Graduate College for the academic institution concerned.
- B. Meet the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), Graduate Management Admissions Test (GMAT), Grade Point Ratio (GPR), and/or other criteria as established by the Texas A&M University (TAMU) College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, or the subject matter college where the student is enrolled.

4.2 When recommending appointments to research assistantships, the justification section of the EPA should contain the following information:

- A. Degree being sought and current status in this degree program.
- B. Duration of the appointment.
- C. Brief description of duties and requirements.
- D. Any other relevant information.

5.0 ADMINISTRATION OF GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS, RESEARCH

5.1 Heads of units are responsible to ensure that all new GAR are informed of the conditions of their employment at the time of the appointment to the position.

5.2 GAR who do not maintain a 3.0 GPR or perform job duties in a satisfactory manner may not be allowed to continue in the assistantship unless there are extenuating circumstances which merit special consideration.

5.3 Technology developed as a result of research performed by GAR is the property of AgriLife Research, and is therefore subject to the regulations governing publications, proprietary rights, inventions, and patents.

RELATED STATUTES, POLICIES, OR REQUIREMENTS

[System Policy 31.02](#), *Employee Insurance and Retirement Benefits*

[System Regulation 31.02.02](#), *Group Insurance Programs*

[System Regulation 33.99.08](#), *Student Employment*

[System Regulation 33.99.09](#), *Employment of Foreign Nationals*

CONTACT OFFICE

Questions about this procedure should be referred to AgriLife Human Resources at 979-845-2423.