

Texas A&M AgriLife Research Procedures

33.99.08.A0.02 | Graduate Assistantships for Research

Reviewed/Revised: December 9, 2019

Next Scheduled Review: December 9, 2024



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PROCEDURE SUMMARY

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

This procedure establishes 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 thesis or dissertation research as a part of an ongoing AgriLife Research project under the direction of a faculty member. 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 scholarships or other personal awards received by the graduate student. This relationship—which is intended to be mutually beneficial—is primarily for the purpose of conducting mission-oriented research.
- 1.2 When 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 should be assigned to priority research programs within the unit prior to the selection of research assistants.
- 2.2 Since the mission of AgriLife Research is research, priority should be given to 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*, will be followed when considering foreign nationals for GAR positions.

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 who are in a position requiring enrollment in graduate level courses, are eligible for 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. Must 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.
- B. Must register for the required minimum number of credit hours each semester, which is typically 9 hours in the fall and spring semesters and 6 hours in the summer. GAR positions terminate upon failure to maintain the minimum enrollment requirement.
- C. Must work the required number of hours per week, which is usually 50% effort (20 hours), but not more than 50% effort without approval from The Office of Graduate and Professional Studies <https://ogaps.tamu.edu/Buttons/Funding-Opportunities/Request-to-Work-Additional-Hours> .

4.2 When hiring in Workday, the comments section 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 Unit Heads are responsible for ensuring all new GAR are informed of the conditions of their employment when hired.
- 5.2 GAR who do not maintain a 3.0 GPR may not be allowed to continue in the assistantship unless there are extenuating circumstances which merit special consideration.
- 5.3 Unsatisfactory job performance may lead to the discipline and/or dismissal of a GAR.
- 5.4 Technology developed as a result of research performed by GAR is the property of AgriLife Research and is 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 concerning this procedure should be referred to AgriLife Human Resources at 979-845-2423.

REVISION HISTORY

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