



**UAF Policy 09.05.011**

Original Adoption: March 8, 2013

Revised: n/a

Responsible Chancellor's Cabinet Member: Provost

Responsible Department/Office: Graduate School

## **Teaching Assistantships and the Chancellor's Tuition Account Policy**

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### **POLICY STATEMENT**

Graduate Teaching Assistants who have predominantly instructional or instructional support roles are eligible for tuition and health insurance payment from the Chancellor's Tuition Account (FGTA). Graduate Assistants whose duties are not predominantly instructional should not be termed "Teaching Assistants" and their tuition/health insurance will not be paid from the Chancellor's Tuition Account unless that is specifically authorized by the Chancellor.

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### **BACKGROUND & JUSTIFICATION**

This policy does not change the existing policy (<http://www.uaf.edu/gradsch/grants-and-fellowships/assistantships-teaching-and-research/>) that teaching assistantships include a tuition and health insurance payment:

**Teaching assistantships** may involve teaching courses, leading a discussion section, supervising a laboratory, grading papers, or meeting with students. The typical appointment involves working up to 20 hours per week. A teaching assistant receives a stipend, health insurance and tuition payment (see below) by the university:

- For no more than 10 credits if the workload is 15 to 20 hours per week.
- For no more than 5 credits if the workload is 10 to 14 hours per week.
- If the assistantship appointment begins on or before the first day of instruction and ends on or after the last day of final examinations for that semester (16 or more weeks). (4/15/93)

However, this policy specifies the duties that teaching assistants can be required to carry out:

- (a) Supervised instruction, either of course sections or of laboratory sections.
- (b) Preparation, setup, and/or removal and clean-up of equipment and materials for laboratories, art/music studios, theatre venues, or classroom demonstrations, provided that studio/theatre work is to support classes rather than faculty creative work or community events.
- (c) Leading study sessions and/or meeting with students outside of class to assist them with understanding course work, homework assignments, or other class-related issues.
- (d) Grading of student work.

- (e) Staffing the Math Lab, Writing Center, or similar units providing assistance to students.
- (f) Instructional support, such as preparing handouts for a class, helping to prepare or proctor an exam, adding materials to a course website or Blackboard, and similar tasks.
- (g) Completing appropriate training for their instructional duties, for example, safety training, instruction in pedagogy and departmental policies and practices.
- (h) Other duties commonly understood to be instructional or instructional support.

This policy should not be construed to forbid occasional non-instructional tasks that constitute a small fraction of the TA assignment. An example would be participation in “open house” events.

Tuition and health insurance are part of the financial support provided to graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and graduate research assistants (RAs). For RAs the tuition and insurance are normally paid by the grant or contract that pays the stipend of the RA, although occasionally it is paid by a unit from unrestricted funds, especially if a particular agency will not provide tuition funding.

TA tuition and health insurance are paid from a central account (overseen by Financial Services) that is commonly referred to as the Chancellor’s Tuition Account. The Chancellor’s Tuition Account also pays some other types of tuition (e.g., the tuition discount afforded WUE students), but the TA tuition is its largest single expenditure. The original decision to pay TA tuition centrally (rather than requiring schools and colleges to pay it) was made because most TAs are contributing to the delivery of the baccalaureate core curriculum and other, large enrollment courses that often have students from several majors. Thus the TAs don’t only benefit the units (mainly CLA and CNSM) who supervise them, but also all of the other baccalaureate programs around campus, as well as the AA program housed in CTC.

However, this is predicated on TAs being assigned instructional duties. When TAs are assigned non-instructional tasks akin to those of an administrative assistant or research assistant, it violates the spirit of the original decision as well as the generally understood definition of “teaching assistant”.

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## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

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School and college deans have the responsibility to ensure that this policy is followed, and should institute appropriate procedures to track the major duties assigned to TAs.

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## **EXCEPTIONS**

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Exceptions must be approved by the responsible dean, the Provost, and the Chancellor. They will be approved only if the Graduate Assistant serves a general University purpose, rather than one specific to a School or College.

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## **PROCEDURES**

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1. Each school or college should have a policy governing the duties of teaching assistants, consistent with this policy but specific to the needs of that unit.

2. Each school or college should establish processes that ensure that TA duties are assigned consistent with UAF and the school/college policies.

POLICY APPROVED BY:



Brian D. Rogers, Chancellor  
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Signed: March 8, 2013