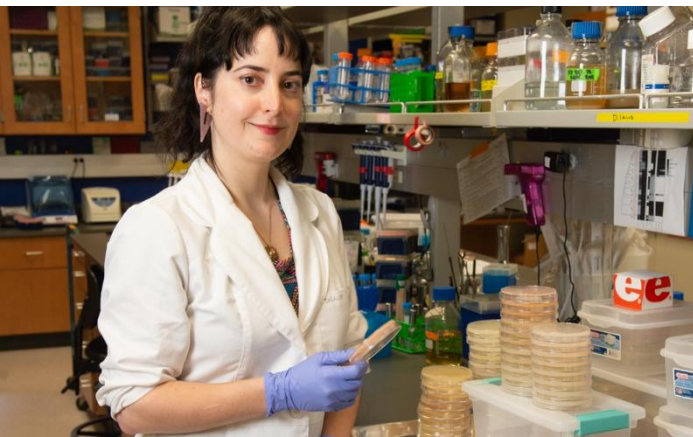


GRADUATE SCHOOL



**SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY
EDWARDSVILLE**

Graduate Studies Team



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Graduate Assistantships: The Basics

Who Qualifies?

- ✓ Enrolled grad student (degree-seeking)
- ✓ Good academic standing (min 3.0 GPA)

Benefits

- ✓ Tuition waiver during contract semester(s)
- ✓ Stipend paid on semi-monthly basis

Contract Basis

- ✓ GAs remain on payroll for contract period unless termination/change submitted by hiring unit

Offices Involved

- ✓ Grad School manages [GA Handbook](#) & contracts
- ✓ HR manages payroll & Financial Aid applies tuition waivers

Graduate Assistantships: The Basics

Contract Lengths

- ✓ Fall/Spring = Min 12 weeks
- ✓ Summer = Min 8 weeks
- ✓ No longer than one calendar year

Stipend Amounts

- ✓ Grad School ensures minimum University stipends are met
- ✓ Units may pay more than University minimums

Start & End Date of Contract

- ✓ Start date is first date reporting to work
- ✓ End date should be final date of work (not past grad date)

Staying Connected

- ✓ [Join the GA Support Staff Teams site](#) for info related to contracts
- ✓ Separate listserv for GA supervisors (auto enrolled)

Hiring Best Practices

Job Posting & Application

- ✓ Be as specific as possible regarding skills, qualifications, experiences required & preferred
- ✓ Require docs that support ability to assess best candidates

Interview Process

- ✓ Ensure fair, unbiased & consistent interview process
- ✓ Reaffirm skills & work schedule needed for position

New Hires

- ✓ Consider contract for one semester only to allow for assessment of student fit for the position

Onboarding

- ✓ Create an organized, intentional, & thorough onboarding process in advance of start date

Onboarding Best Practices

When & How

- ✓ Immediate & ongoing
- ✓ Use multiple modalities to support GA learning: verbal instructions, written materials/SOPs to reference, shadowing others

Communication Standards

- ✓ Clarify preferred communication methods during & outside of work time
- ✓ Discuss how to approach the unexpected

Ensure Access to Supervisor

- ✓ Be approachable & responsive to questions
- ✓ Model the behaviors & standards you expect from students

Build a Structure for Feedback

- ✓ Create regular opportunities for feedback and questions in both directions
- ✓ Consider standing check-in meetings, progress reports on shared documents, etc.

Alignment with GA Contract

The GA Contract is an employment agreement with SIUE.

- ✓ **Start & end dates of actual work should align with the contract start & end dates**
- ✓ **Nature of work performed should align with the contract job duties**
- ✓ **Average hours worked each week should align with appointment percentage (10/15/20 hours per week)**

Tracking Time

Timesheets are REQUIRED

- ✓ Can use electronic or paper timesheets (both provided on [GA Forms website](#))
- ✓ Both worked time and any paid leave time should be recorded
- ✓ Should be completed by GA & reviewed by supervisor on a monthly basis
- ✓ Retained in the department – not sent to Grad School

What Counts as Work Time?

- ✓ Training sessions, class time, workshops or events that they are asked to attend due to GA position
- ✓ For TAs – preparation time & grading
- ✓ If significant/overnight travel is involved, typically only actual hours reporting to work count as work time

GA Paid & Protected Leave

Sick Leave

- ✓ Not accruable from month to month
- ✓ 50%/20 hours = 4 hours/month
- ✓ 37.5%/15 hours = 3 hours/month
- ✓ 25%/10 hours = 2 hours/month

Bereavement Leave

- ✓ Up to 3 days for services for immediate family, in-laws, grandparents
- ✓ Up to 1 day for services of other relatives

Pregnancy & Parenting

- ✓ For new parents & medical conditions related to pregnancy
- ✓ Tuition waiver protected with up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave
- ✓ Consult with EOA Office

When SIUE is Closed

- ✓ GAs do not need to make up time when SIUE is closed during their normal work hours
- ✓ If unit needs their services during a closure, they should be given time off to compensate

Managing Schedule Modifications

Requests for Time Off Beyond Paid Leave

- ✓ GAs are students first, so some degree of flexibility is encouraged
- ✓ Discuss alternative dates/times where hours can be made up that suit both the department and the GA, ideally within one month
- ✓ Put agreed upon adjustments in writing and ensure both supervisor and GA have a copy. Timesheet should reflect actual hours worked!

Extended Absences

- ✓ If absence is needed beyond hours that are feasible to make up, GA can be put on unpaid leave via GA contract modification
- ✓ Removes GA from payroll during unpaid leave dates
- ✓ Rare, but sometimes necessary
- ✓ Contact Christina for process guidance

Time Off Requests – How to Respond?

Common GA Scenario

- ✓ GA has contract with start date in Aug 2026 and end date in May 2027
- ✓ Their schedule is 5 hours per day: Mon/Tues/Wed/Thur
- ✓ The week of Dec. 21st, SIUE is closed on Thur the 24th and Fri the 25th
- ✓ GA requests to take off Mon/Tues/Wed of that week to travel home and this does not present a burden to the department

How do you respond?

The Facts

- ✓ GA is missing 15 hours of work that week outside of the Univ closure
- ✓ An arrangement should be made to make up the 15 hours either before and/or after the missed time
- ✓ Agreed upon schedule modification should be put in writing and retained by both parties (email is the simplest mechanism)

Addressing Performance Concerns

First & Foremost

- ✓ If serious concern related to potential violation of Student Conduct Code, research/academic misconduct, violence, sexual harassment, illegal activity, etc. contact the Grad School (and other appropriate offices) immediately

For Concerns Such As:

- ✓ Minor attendance/tardiness issue
- ✓ Not meeting performance expectations in quality or quantity
- ✓ Not aligned with office expectations for attire, communication, etc.

Initial Steps

- ✓ Use as a teachable moment
- ✓ Have a verbal conversation that is clear and explicit on how to remediate concerns
- ✓ Follow-up via email with summary

If Issues Persist

- ✓ Follow-up conversation reiterating issues, changes needed, and deadline to resolve
- ✓ Include Director/Chair to elevate and provide all written summary via email
- ✓ If continues, contact Jill for termination options & procedures

Resources Available

[Hiring Unit Resources website](#) has extensive information always available

- ✓ Overview video and steps of hiring process
- ✓ Protocols for addressing performance issues
- ✓ GA Handbook for policies on benefits, paid leave, etc.
- ✓ Contract specifics, I-9 samples, stipend amounts

Contact Our Office for Guidance!

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