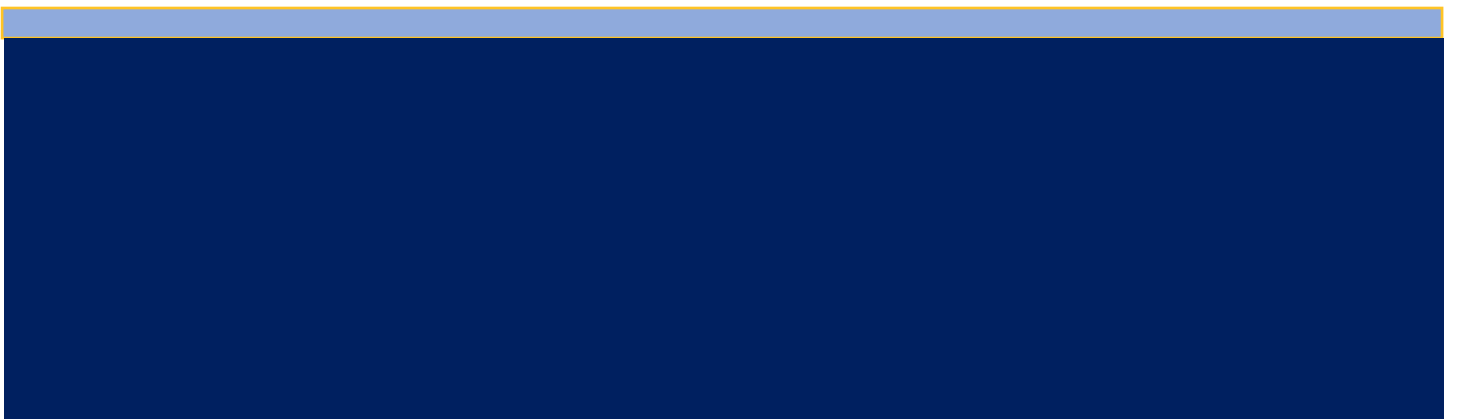


Graduate Faculty and Staff Handbook

2026-27 Academic Year



Recent Changes to Graduate College Policies and Procedures

The following policy and procedural changes are effective fall semester 2026 unless otherwise noted.

Policy/Procedure	Explanation/Notes
Format Review	With the addition of compliance requirements, the Format Review Process is now the Publication Review Process.
Graduate School Representative	The GSR title has been changed to “ Graduate Faculty Representative ” as the student and advisor choose this member, not the Graduate School.
Summer semester enrollment	All students holding an oral preliminary examination, final defense or completing the publication review process must register for summer semester.

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Section 1 Graduate School Overview

The College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies (Graduate College) is home to the Graduate School, the Center for Writers, and cutting-edge graduate interdisciplinary programs (Cellular and Molecular Biology, Environmental and Conservation Sciences, Genomics, Phenomics and Bioinformatics, Materials and Nanotechnology, and Discipline-Based Educational Research), we're here to support every step of your advanced degree.

NDSU Graduate School

The NDSU Graduate School is the central administrative unit responsible for overseeing graduate education, from admission to graduation. It provides policy interpretation, assistance with forms, auditing of completion requirements, and disquisition review.

Key Functions of the Graduate School:

- Processing applications and admissions
- Maintaining student records from the Plan of Study to graduation forms
- Developing and enforcing graduate policies
- Reviewing and approving theses, dissertations, and master's papers
- Offering professional development opportunities and support services

Center for Writers

The Center for Writers is an invaluable resource for everyone at NDSU, including **students, faculty, and staff**. They offer professional writing assistance that can significantly enhance the quality of written work across the board.

For graduate students, this means help at all stages of their thesis, dissertation, grant proposals, and other academic writing.

For faculty and staff, the Center can assist with a range of professional writing needs. By utilizing the Center, you and your students can focus more on content and research direction, knowing that foundational writing mechanics are being supported.

Graduate College Contacts

The Graduate College staff is here to support faculty, staff and students navigate graduate policies and processes from applying for admission to degree completion.

[Graduate School Staff Directory](#) is available on the [Graduate School website](#).

The [Graduate School website](#) is an essential resource for forms, deadlines, and guidelines for all aspects of your graduate education.

Graduate College Fellowships and Awards

The Graduate College offers funding opportunities for students and departments.

	Funding Announcement	Deadline	Funding Notification
Dissertation Fellowships	Fall – May Spring – Nov.	Fall – June Spring – December	Fall – July Spring – December
Recruitment Awards	Early August	NA	2-3 weeks after submission
Student Travel Funding	Available starting July 1 each year	Prior to travel	7 business days after submission
Teaching and Research Awards	Each academic college facilitates the nomination and awarding process.		

Section 2 Role of the Department

Departments are the primary contact for graduate students and provide guidance and support throughout their studies. Departments have responsibilities in keeping curriculum up to date, advising, recruitment and retention, and career development. The Graduate College is a key partner in these endeavors and can collaborate with faculty, staff, and students to facilitate the success of graduate programs at NDSU.

Graduate Program Coordinator

Each graduate program must identify a graduate program coordinator (GPC). This person is entrusted by an academic department to oversee the operations and procedures of the graduate programs of that department. After an advisor, the graduate program coordinator is the next person that a graduate student should contact to resolve questions and to clarify processes related to the graduate programs of that department.

Student Recruitment

The Graduate School supports departments with general recruitment activities such as participating in graduate school fairs. There is a [Recruitment Toolkit](#) available to departments.

Here are some tips to help with graduate recruitment.

- Keep your program pages up to date as prospective students reference program pages more than our curriculum pages in the University Catalog
- Follow up with potential students when they email or call
- Collaborate with the Graduate School for recruitment assistance. The Graduate School also offers funding awards to support program recruitment efforts.
- Admit students in a timely manner.

Student Orientation

Incoming students may be new to graduate school, even new to NDSU and the Fargo-Moorhead area. If possible, a program (or college-level) orientation may give incoming students a sense of support and community at NDSU.

The Graduate School offers a welcome event in the fall and spring semesters.

Program Handbook

Departments should provide students with a program handbook that includes program-specific policies and requirements for degree completion. The handbook should include a

link to the University Catalog to reference the most current university and Graduate College policies.

The handbook should be posted, accessible to students, and updated at least once a year. Any curriculum updates must be made in CourseLeaf, approved by through the governance process, and should be added to the handbook after approval.

Advisor

Every student must have an advisor. Students should meet regularly with their advisor to discuss courses to take, degree progress, and research. The student-advisor relationship must be a mutually acceptable relationship.

If the advisor leaves NDSU, they may continue to serve as the advisor for one calendar year after their departure. After one calendar year, the student must find a new advisor or consult with the graduate program coordinator to find an appropriate solution.

Student Research Compliance

Programs and advisors are responsible for ensuring students are in compliance with research protocols (e.g., IRB, IACUC, IBC). Any research conducted by a student who is not in compliance cannot be used in the student's disquisition.

Section 3 Admission

We appreciate your dedication to recruiting and admitting exceptional graduate students to North Dakota State University. The information in this section will help you as you engage with prospective students.

Application Materials

All degree seeking applicants must submit the following to complete the application process.

- Online Application to the Graduate School
- Statement of purpose
- Resume or C.V.
- \$35 application fee
 - The application fee is waived for McNair Scholars, Native American applicants, and US Military and Veterans
- Original official transcripts are required to be sent from each institution attended, whether or not a degree was earned, and even if courses were transferred to another university.

- If a student has submitted a transcript prior to completing their undergraduate or graduate degree, an updated transcript with the posted degree must be received by the Graduate School before the student will be allowed to register.
- Current NDSU students are not required to submit their final transcript as the Graduate School can verify the posted degree in Campus Connection.
- [**English proficiency language scores**](#) (if applicable)
- Recommendations (if required by the program)
- Other materials/test scores (if required by the program)

Current graduate students adding a graduate certificate may submit the [**Request to Add a Certificate to a Graduate Degree**](#) form to apply.

Admission Status

[**Full Standing**](#)

Students who meet all admission requirements may be admitted in full standing.

[**Conditional Standing**](#)

Students who do not meet all admission requirements, or have prerequisite course deficiencies, but show potential for successfully graduate student may be admitted in Conditional Standing.

At the time of admission, the program must specify conditions to be satisfied to move to Full Standing. Students with an undergraduate cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the time of admission will be admitted in Conditional Standing by the Graduate School

- Students admitted in Conditional Standing are automatically placed on academic warning until the conditions of admission are met.
- Students admitted conditionally to a graduate program cannot earn more than 12 graduate credits prior to completing the conditions of admission.
- Students admitted to an accelerated degree program may earn up to one-half of their required program's graduate credits while in conditional standing.
 - There may be financial aid implications for students who earn more than 15 graduate credits while conditionally admitted.

Application Decisions

Programs are responsible for entering admission decisions in a timely manner, ideally within 4-6 weeks after the application deadline.

Fall Entry	
June 1	Last day to admit international students
July 1	Last day to admit funded domestic students
September (census date)	Last day to admit non-funded domestic students
Spring Entry	
November 1	Last day to admit international students
November 15	Last day to admit funded domestic students
February (census date)	Last day to admit non-funded domestic students
Summer Entry - Only programs with an official summer start date may admit international students for summer entry	
April 1	Last day to admit international students
April 15	Last day to admit funded domestic students

Section 4 Enrollment and Academic Standing

Graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment, fall and spring semesters, until all degree requirements have been completed. For students completing a disquisition (master's paper, master's thesis or doctoral dissertation), that includes the successful completion of the Graduation School's disquisition publication review.

- Students must be officially admitted and fully enrolled to attend classes.
- Graduate assistants must register for a minimum of six graduate credits each fall and spring semester.
- Summer registration is required for students holding an oral preliminary examination or final defense and students completing the disquisition publication review process.
- International graduate students must also comply with specific visa regulations.

Holds

Students may encounter holds that prevent course registration. Most common registration holds are:

- Conditional Admission (CNA): Student has not completed the conditions of admission. Students should refer to their admission letter for details.
- Financial Holds: Unpaid tuition or fees. Contact One Stop
- Financial Obligation Agreement (FOA): Each semester a student must accept the FOA to confirm their financial responsibility to the university.
- Graduate School Hold (GSH): More information is needed, generally final transcripts or degree certificates from your previous institution(s), before you can register.
- Graduate Academic Standing (GAS): Student is on academic warning or probation.

Credit/Course Load

- Full-time status: 9 or more graduate credits per semester.
- Half-time status: 5 graduate credits per semester.
- Graduate Assistants: 6 credits minimum each fall and spring semester. Departments may require a higher minimum
- International students must follow visa compliance guidelines.

Student registration is capped at 15 credits each semester. To request more than the 15-credit limit, student must submit the [Over 15 Credit Petition](#) form.

Leave of Absence and Reactivation

With the approval of the advisor and graduate program coordinator, students may request a **Leave of Absence** (LOA) to pause graduate studies for up to four fall/spring semesters .

A leave must be requested before the fourth week of the semester.

A student may take multiple leaves, but the degree completion deadlines are not extended.

Students must submit a **Reactivation** form to return to their program.

- Students who do not submit the LOA request must register for one credit for each fall and spring semester they were inactive.

Students who are away for more than two years must reapply to the Graduate School.

Family and Medical Accommodation Policy

This policy helps students dealing with serious health issues, a new child, or a seriously ill family member. You can request:

Modified Assistantship Duties: The agreement allows for an adjustment to assistantship tasks and goals for a limited period without a reduction in stipend or workload.

- Eligible students get a Parental Accommodation period of up to six weeks after the birth or adoption of a child under age 6.
- Modified duty agreements must end within 12 months.

Extensions: Students may also request an extension to complete their preliminary examination, final defense and/or their disquisition publication review process.

- Extensions are granted case-by-case, with a maximum of two calendar years.
- A Leave of Absence may be required in addition to an extension.
- The full policy is available in the Graduate Catalog.

898 Continuation Credit

The 898-continuation credit is a fee-based option for students who need to enroll in graduate credits when other courses don't apply. This includes students who have:

- Completed all degree requirements except for their disquisition.
- Returned to graduate studies after an absence without filing for a Leave of Absence.
- International Students must work with the Global Programs and Services office to confirm your eligibility.

Students registered for 898 credits only will have access to

- Email
- NDSU web resources
- Library
- IT Help Desk
- Career Center

But not access to

- Wellness Center
- Athletic events
- Student Health Services

Academic Standing

To remain in good academic standing, graduate students are required to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher.

A student whose cumulative GPA falls below the minimum requirement, they are placed on **academic warning**.

Students enter the grading period on academic warning and achieve a minimum semester GPA of 3.00, demonstrating adequate progress, but their cumulative GPA remains below the 3.00 minimum they are be placed on **continued academic warning**.

If student's cumulative GPA continues to be below 3.0, they are placed on **academic probation**. Students on academic probation may not continue their studies until an acceptable remediation plan is filed and approved by the Graduate School.

Section 5 Graduate Faculty and Graduate Council

Graduate and Affiliate Graduate Faculty

All tenured or tenure-track Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, or Professors in an academic unit or program area at NDSU are considered full-status members of the NDSU Graduate Faculty.

A full-status member of the Graduate Faculty may teach graduate courses, chair supervisory committees, vote at graduate faculty meetings and serve as a member of supervisory committees, graduate student appeals committees, the Graduate Council or in any other capacity as required.

Affiliate Graduate Faculty

Other qualified individuals who are not full Graduate Faculty members may contribute to the scholarship and professional development of our graduate students. Departments and programs may nominate these individuals for Affiliate Graduate Faculty (AGF) status. Nominations are reviewed by a Graduate Council committee and voted on by the full Council membership.

The nomination process, a description of the AGF levels and eligibility requirements and term information are posted in the [University Catalog](#).

Affiliate status does not grant the additional rights or privileges held by Full Members of the NDSU Graduate Faculty.

Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is representative body responsible for formulating, reviewing, disseminating, and monitoring the implementation of policies and procedures concerning graduate education at North Dakota State University.

The Graduate Council is composed of graduate faculty representatives from each academic college, including College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies, additional at-large faculty members and two graduate students.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to contact Graduate Council member with concerns or ideas regarding Graduate School policies and procedures.

Current Graduate Council membership may be found on the [Graduate School website](#).

Section 6 Graduate Degree

Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee Form

By the end of their second semester of study, students should submit the Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form.

The Plan of Study is a crucial agreement between the student, academic program, and the Graduate College. It details all the courses required complete to earn a graduate degree. This may include:

- Qualifying transfer credits.
- Up to 10 credits earned as a non-degree NDSU graduate student that apply toward your degree.

The following programs are **not required to submit a Plan of Study form**. The curriculum required for these programs is built in Campus Connection and programs may be monitored by using the Advisement Report tool.

Accountancy	Family and Consumer Science Education
Agricultural Education	Family Nurse Practitioner (D.N.P.)
Architecture	Health Administration
Athletic Training	Human Development and Family Science – except Developmental Science subplan
Business Administration	Industrial and Manufacturing Systems Engineering (M.Engr.)
Business Analytics	Landscape Architecture
Clinical Research	Leadership in Physical Education and Sport Coaching
Community Planning and Resilience	Music (M.M. and D.M.A.)
Computer Science (Plan C)	Project Management
Construction Management	Public Health
Counseling	Public Policy
Criminal Justice (M.S.) - fall 2026 admits	Software Engineering (M.S.E)
Data Science	Sport Management
Education (M.S., M.Ed.)	Supply Chain Management
Educational Leadership	
Exercise Science and Nutrition (M.S.)	
Extension Education	

Any deviations from the posted curriculum must be approved and submitted by the advisor with the Request to Waive or Substitute Courses eForm in Campus Connection. Currently students do not have access to this form.

Supervisory Committee

In addition to an advisor, graduate students completing a disquisition must also have a supervisory committee, chosen by the student and advisor. This committee must meet the Graduate School membership requirements.

- Supervisory Committee membership is documented on the Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form.
 - Students in programs that do not require the Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee form will document their committee by using the “Form Supervisory Committee” form.
- Any changes to the committee can be made with the Change to Supervisory Committee form.

	Plan A & B	Plan C	Doctoral
Number of Required Members	3	1	4
Advisor - full or affiliate graduate faculty at appropriate level	✓	✓	✓
Member 2 or Co-Advisor - full or affiliate graduate faculty member	✓	NA	✓
Member 3 - full or affiliate graduate faculty or non-faculty expert)	✓	NA	✓
Graduate School Representative (GSR) - full graduate faculty member	NA	NA	✓

Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) (doctoral students only)

The Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) acts as a neutral party on the supervisory committee, ensuring Graduate School policies and procedures are followed. The GFR doesn't need to evaluate the content of the research and disquisition.

Detailed GFR eligibility requirements are listed in the [Graduate Catalog](#).

Non-Faculty Experts

A committee member who isn't a full or affiliate graduate faculty member, must be approved by the Graduate School at the time Plan of Study and Supervisory Committee, Form Supervisory Committee, or Change to Supervisory Committee form is submitted. The following items must be attached to the form.

- A letter of support from the department chair (for interdisciplinary programs, the program coordinator) explaining how this expert will contribute to your committee.
- Their curriculum vitae (CV).

Oral Preliminary Examination and Final Defense

Notification Forms

The notification form must be received, with all required signatures, a minimum of seven (7) days prior to the scheduled date.

- Forms received less than seven calendar days prior to the examination date will not be processed.
- A new a new date must be scheduled, and a new notification form filed by the seven-calendar day deadline.

Report Forms

Report forms must be received, with all required signatures, a minimum of 14 days after to the scheduled date.

The report forms

- document whether or not a student passes the examination/defense/lecture recital
- note any changes a student needs to make to preliminary examination product or their disquisition
- should not be held until changes are made to the disquisition

After the Final Defense

In addition to the report form, students must submit the follow items to the Graduate School

- IRB/IACUC/IBC Compliance Notification, even if their research does not involve human subjects, live vertebrate animals, or biohazards.
 - Any approval documentation must be attached to the form when submitted. If the student was not a member of the research team at the time the protocol

was approved, the original letter of approval AND the letter approving the student's addition to the research team must be included.

- Do not attach the research protocol, only approval letters.
- The Graduate School is not responsible for obtaining supporting documents or determining if approval is required for the research conducted for the disquisition.
- Signed Approval Page
 - This form is different than the Report of Final Defense/Lecture Recital.
 - Committee members can wait to sign the form until the student has made the requested changes.
- \$175 processing fee.

All items must be received (with all required signatures) by the Graduate School prior to submitting the disquisition for publication review. If the fee and/or forms are not received by the submission deadline, the official submission date is considered to be the date on which the last item is received.

Disquisition Format Review Process

All disquisitions must be submitted for the disquisition publication review process and publication. As with any publication, NDSU has format requirements for publishing disquisitions in the institutional repository. Thus, each disquisition must be reviewed to ensure the format and accessibility requirements have been met.

For Plan A, Plan B, and doctoral students, the publication review process is the last step towards degree completion. Disquisition formatting guidelines and templates are available on the Center for Writers website under [Disquisitions](#).

The student's degree will post at the end of the semester in which a student successfully completes the publication review process and all other degree requirements. If a disquisition is approved after the last day of a semester, the student's degree will post for the subsequent semester and the student must register must register for that semester (fall and spring).

Final Steps

Before a graduate degree can be posted, the following items must be completed.

[All students](#)

- All grades must be posted in Campus Connection
 - A degree cannot post if there are outstanding grades.

- Final clearance of academic requirements will be made when current term grades have been submitted.
- All graduation audit discrepancies must be cleared
- Student's cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
 - Any grade changes submitted after the grade deadline will delay the student's graduation term to the follow semester.

Plan C Master's Students

By the last day of the semester in which all coursework has been completed, the student must submit the Graduation Application. A \$25 processing fee will be applied to the student's account in Campus Connection.

Section 7 Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Waivers

Graduate Assistantships: Student Eligibility

To be eligible for (and maintain) an assistantship a student must:

- Be a degree seeking student
- Be in good academic standing
- Be enrolled in a minimum of six graduate credits during fall and spring semester*
- Consent to a criminal background check (All Teaching and Service Assistants, Research Assistants as applicable)
- Maintain appropriate residency status
- Demonstrate English Proficiency (Teaching Assistants)

*There are four major caveats for the six-credit enrollment minimum per semester. They are as follows:

Graduating Semester: This policy does not apply if the student is in their final semester and has fewer than 6 credits remaining to complete their program of study.

International and GA Requirements: International students who have completed coursework and have only research remaining must follow this policy, even if enrolling in 6 credits is not necessary to maintain visa status.

Department/Program Requirements: Departments may require students to register for more than 6 credits to hold an assistantship

Summer Assistantships: Students seeking a summer assistantship must be enrolled for a minimum of 6 credits either during the spring prior or fall term immediately after the summer fellowship; summer enrollment is not required for a summer term assistantship. Individual college policies may have additional requirements for summer enrollment.

Graduate Assistantships: Position Eligibility

To be eligible for (and maintain) an assistantship the appointment must:

- Be a minimum of 160 hours per semester (10 hours per week over 16 weeks) to qualify as a half- or part-time assistantship.
- Be no more than 20 hours per week during fall and spring semesters. *
- Offered only to eligible Graduate Students. (see above)

- Facilitated through NDSU via NDSU department(s).
- MOUs using the Graduate Assistantship structures and policies must be approved by and filed in the Provost's Office.

*There are two exceptions to this requirement that are as follows:

- Allowing up to 40 hours of work weekly during spring break, winter break, and summer semester.
- Allowing up to 26 total hours per week
 - Available to full-time domestic and permanent residents with an assistantship
 - Submit a Special Request form each relevant fall and spring semester
 - If Special Request is approved, a copy of the request must be attached to the payroll form.
 - New: International Students on OPT and CPT, on a case-by-case basis in coordination with the Global Programs and Services Office
 - If Special Request is approved, a copy of the request must be attached to the payroll form.

Hiring & Onboarding

The steps below must be completed to ensure a student may start their assistantship and receive their stipend and tuition waiver (if applicable).

The general process or workflow is as follows:

1. Initial Assistantship Offer
2. Initiate New Hire Contract
3. Route Contract for Approvals
4. Initiate HR hire
5. Student completes HR paperwork
6. Complete Hire; Training Compliance

Graduate Assistant Contract

For step two of the hiring process, the contract is initiated by the hiring department and routed for approvals in DocuSign before being signed by the Graduate Assistant and Graduate School.

The contract is the primary reference for the assistantship appointment details and must be maintained in its accuracy and relevance. Changes must be communicated to the contract initiator to file either an addendum or new contract.

Contracts should be initiated to begin a new appointment or to renew a concluding appointment; initiation should occur 6-8 weeks in advance of start date to help ensure hiring process completion prior to start date. Contracts may only be made out for up to 12 consecutive calendar months at a time, and a minimum of one annual review is required for all assistantship types, which must be specified on the contract.



Background Check (as applicable)

Background checks may be completed up to three months prior to the employee's start date. Background check requests may be sent to the Graduate School to ndsu.gradschool.asst@ndsu.edu for processing; checks not requested in advance will be initiated on/by Graduate School signature date.

I-9 Submission (New Hires & Rehires Only)

The student will receive an email with a link to complete Section 1 of the I-9 online form.

To complete Section 2, the student must present original identification documents to HR/Payroll, or approved department representative.

Section 1 and Section 2 must be completed before a hire is approved. The student must not start their assistantship work until both sections of the I-9 form are completed.

I-20/DS-2019 Connection

Students who need an I-20 will be contacted by Global Programs and Services; they will need to update their I-20 to include any additions/changes to their assistantship. They will need financial information documentation proving funding for 12 months of attendance cost. Students may use any of the following documents to satisfy this need; it must include the funding amount(s): An admission letter with an assistantship offer; an official offer letter for assistantship position on department letterhead, or a complete graduate assistantship contract.

Students are not required to have a Social Security Number to complete their hiring process; they will need a complete/updated I-9, and I-20 for visa-holders.

All questions regarding I-20 and DS-2019, including questions regarding financial documentation should be addressed by NDSU Global Programs and Services. Questions regarding HR/Payroll processes may be directed to the NDSU HR/Payroll.

Required Trainings Completion

Once the HR (MSS) hire has been completed, students will need to complete their required trainings for their assistantship position as part of their position responsibilities. Required trainings should already be clearly specified on their contract and added to their Vector Solutions account.

All assistantship appointments/positions require the following trainings, and the trainings will be added to their Vector Solutions account by HR (as applicable). If the student needs additional laboratory safety trainings as part of their requirement, these will be added to both the contract and the student's Vector Solutions account by the hiring department.

- Annual Notice of Policies/Designated Medical Provider Form

- Baseline Safety Training
- Equal Opportunity and Title IX Training (in-person required for FY26)
- FERPA

Vector Solutions accounts are only generated after the hire is finalized and are only available to current active employees.

Trainings are required in relation to graduate assistantships, regardless of the student being awarded a tuition waiver.

Supervisor Responsibilities

Supervisors directly oversee the Graduate Assistant in their employment role at NDSU and have several responsibilities to help ensure a successful assistantship.

Managing Assistantships

Supervisors must outline clear, actionable duties for the student in their role as an assistant as it pertains to the assistantship position. Strictly academic duties or requirements are not to be included on contracts. Advisors who are also supervisors must separate roles within the parameters of the contract and in the supervising of the graduate assistant as opposed to advising the student.

Supervisors must know all required trainings, including any departmental training requirements for labs or other specific work. It is recommended that supervisors oversee/review hours worked for each assistant they supervise to ensure contract parameters are met.

Changes to assistantships, such as stipend changes, hour changes, duties changes, updates to training requirements, leaves of and returns from absence, etc. must be promptly reported to the department's contract initiator/business coordinator to file updated paperwork for the assistantship appointment.

Advance Notice for Assistantships

The time commitment defined by an assistantship may be averaged across a given period of time. For example, a teaching assistantship of 20 hours/week should total to 320 hours across the 16 weeks of the academic term. In these cases, students should be given adequate advance notice of these variable expectations so that they can adjust their schedules to meet the requirements of the assistantship. Supervisors must also remain sensitive to the academic demands faced by graduate students.

Performance Review

Assistantship supervisors must provide oral and written assessment of graduate student employees. As outlined in the contract, GSA and GRA performance must be evaluated at least

annually. GTA review with respect to overall communication proficiency must be completed by the third week of the semester.

Continuing Assistantships

Process

The steps of a continuing assistantship, either a renewal or transfer, are generally the same of a new hire, with some modifications, as noted below.

1. Offer Renewal or Transfer Assistantship
2. Initiate Renewal or Transfer Contract
3. Route Contract for Approvals
4. Payroll form for Transfer or Renewal adjustments
5. Complete Hire; Training Compliance

Renewal Contracts

Renewal contracts are used to formally extend an assistantship appointment as a result of satisfactory review and successful maintenance of assistantship eligibility. Renewal contracts are to be made for a minimum of one semester, and may be made out to one full calendar year or 12 consecutive months. This is an opportunity to refine or revise aspects of the assistantship appointment, although it should remain within its initial purpose or nature.

No additional payroll paperwork is required, unless there is a correlative change that would necessitate it, such as a change in stipend or hours or a return from leave between contracts. The business coordinator for the department of employment will need to be notified if any such changes occur.

Transfer Contracts

If a student is currently employed at NDSU, including another graduate assistantship position, a Transfer Contract should be submitted to communicate if a Graduate Assistant will be transferring to a new assistantship appointment. Transfer contracts follow the main rules and procedures as a New Hire contract except that they are meant to transfer a current assistant into a different assistantship position, typically also meant to discontinue their current assistantship.

To complete a position transfer, a Graduate Payroll Change Form will be submitted instead of using the MSS HR Hire process to move the student from one position to another.

Ending Assistantships

Students will eventually leave their assistantship positions. Typically, this is due to successful defense and graduation. Protocols may be different depending on the reason for termination, as specified below.

Mutual-Agreement Terminations

All assistantships will come to an end; a majority of assistantships end because the student has successfully graduated and is no longer eligible as an alum. Sometimes, students find internship opportunities, need a leave of absence, or have another reason to amicably leave their position for a time that would constitute terminating the position.

If an assistantship is ending early, such as due to a graduation well in advance of the original end date, suggested best practice is to submit an addendum to update the end date and to confirm all parties are aware of and agree to the updated terms. The MSS termination can then be processed as usual.

Early Termination (Breeched Agreement)

Some assistantships may be eligible for early termination. Most often it is due to unsuccessful maintenance of assistantship eligibility, including not maintaining 6 credits each applicable fall and spring semester. Other reasons, listed in the Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Policies, are as follows:

- A student does not abide by the appointment conditions.
- A student fails to perform tasks as assigned.
- A student does not make adequate degree progress.
- A student is placed on Academic Probation.
- A student does not make satisfactory research progress.
- A student fails to maintain minimum registration.
- A student persistently refuses to follow reasonable advice and counsel of faculty in carrying out assistantship obligations.
- A student fails to comply with responsibilities as an employee set forth in the University Catalog, department rules and regulations governing assistantships, or the terms of sponsored research agreements that fund the assistantship.
- A student's personal conduct is seriously prejudicial to the university, including violation of the NDSU Code of Student Behavior, state or federal law, and general university regulations.

Supervisors considering early termination for one of the above reasons must first attempt to remediate and resolve the situation directly with the student, as applicable. Afterwards, it must escalate using the process detailed in the next section. If a student is found to be outside of these requirements, their assistantship may be terminated; they may still be eligible to be hired into other forms of student employment. The student's eligibility may be restored, and may be hired or rehired into an assistantship role if their eligibility is re-established. If an assistantship position is terminated early, the student may follow the appeals process as outlined in the Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Policies.

Procedure for (Breeched Agreement) Early Termination

If an assistantship is being terminated due to one of the reasons listed in the policy/above, the case will first need to be reviewed by the hiring department and/or academic program department before it can be recommended to the Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies for review. The procedure is as follows:

1. Student and supervisor meet to discuss concerns in relation to GA policy (eligibility and termination clauses)/reasons for potential termination. Supervisor and student first need to seek agreeable solution at lowest level. May be escalated if agreed solution does not work or if step one is not applicable to reason (i.e. ineligibility).
2. If initial solution/agreement is not met or achieved, supervisor will consult with department of employment and academic department as needed regarding reason(s) for potential termination.
3. Department of employment will conduct internal review with oversight from department chair.
4. If internal review renders validity to cause and action, supervisor and department chair may recommend termination to Dean of the College of Graduate and Interdisciplinary Studies for termination. Recommenders need to provide documentation and evidence supporting the recommendation.
5. CGIS Dean will review all relevant evidence and department/college findings regarding termination in accordance with Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship Policies Terminations and Appeals policy. A formal letter of termination by the CGIS Dean will be supplied to the department chair and/or supervisor upon approval.
6. Upon notice of CGIS Dean confirming termination from assistantship, the NDSU hiring department will process the termination of the graduate assistant.

Tuition Waivers

Tuition waivers may be offered to students receiving a qualifying graduate assistantship or fellowship and are governed by both the Graduate Assistantship and Fellowship policies and specific tuition waiver policies of the granting academic college.

Eligibility

Qualifying graduate assistantships must be a minimum of 10 hours a week and may not exceed 20 hours a week and must total a minimum of 160 hours during spring and fall semesters.

Students who, for any reason, do not complete a minimum of 160 hours in a given semester will not be eligible for that semester's waiver and will be billed for the tuition.

Tuition waivers (full and/or partial) are not given if the student works fewer than the minimum hours (160) required per applicable fall and spring semester(s).

Eligibility for a summer tuition waiver is dependent upon the specific tuition waiver policies of the granting college which may include holding a summer assistantship or having received a tuition waiver for the preceding or following academic term (spring or fall semester).

A comprehensive list of requirements and parameters for tuition waivers granted by assistantships is outlined in the Graduate Assistantship Tuition Waivers policies.

Tuition waivers are applied to student accounts following completion of required trainings.

Waivers are calculated by semester, weeks, and time worked. Below are the dates between which waivers are determined for each semester. Typically, time worked is only allotted for one waiver at a time.

Semester	Start Date	End Date
Fall	August 16th	December 31st
Spring	January 2nd	May 31st
Summer	1st Monday after Spring Semester Ends	August 15th

Coverage

Tuition waivers cover base tuition for NDSU graduate credits only. Students are responsible for differential tuition, student fees, and tuition for non-graduate level credits taken, Cooperative Education credits ((Prefix) 897), audited course credits and continuing enrollment credits ((Prefix) 898). For a comprehensive list of tuition rates, please visit the NDSU One Stop Webpage: [Graduate Tuition](#)

The tuition waiver may be reduced by other financial awards directed specifically to pay tuition.

Students receiving a graduate tuition waiver may not receive other NDSU tuition waivers. Students eligible for multiple tuition waivers will receive the waiver resulting in the most tuition being waived.

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