



Digital Worlds®
INSTITUTE

MA in DAS
Graduate Assistant
Policies & Procedures Guide
2016-2017

Welcome to the Digital Worlds Institute at the University of Florida

The Digital Worlds Institute is dedicated to helping students develop their academic and professional abilities to the fullest extent possible. The **Digital Worlds Graduate Assistant Policies and Procedures Guide** is designed to give you an overview of the your Graduate Assistantship.

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Graduate Assistantships at the Digital Worlds Institute

Digital Worlds graduate assistants are typically accorded one of two fractions of what is known as the Full Time Equivalent (FTE). If you are assigned at .33 FTE, or 1/3 time, you will be expected to work 13 hours per week to fulfill assistantship requirements. Assistants assigned at .50 FTE, or half-time, will work 20 hours per week. These weekly hour requirements are averages; depending on the nature of projects to which assistants are assigned, some weeks may require more than the assigned hours, while others may have fewer.

Students on assistantship must maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher to keep their assignment. Students are expected to be on time for their work time, and to minimize any non-work related activities, media, or communications during each shift. This includes homework, use of Facebook and any other social media, visits from friends, excessive phone calls/texts, and the like.

Graduate assistants should consult with their supervisor early each term to determine the end date of their work for that semester. Do not make end-of-semester travel plans without first conferring with your supervisor.

Academic Requirements for Maintaining Assistantships

Each GA is required to keep a GPA of 3.0 or higher to maintain their assignment, and must comply with the registration requirements outlined on page 4 of this guide.

Graduate Assistant Responsibilities

GA responsibilities typically include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- clerical duties, research assignments,
- utilizing organizational skills to communicate expectations/ideas clearly,
- following supervisor's instructions, and
- adherence to accepted standards of professional behavior.

Faculty Supervisor's Responsibilities for Assistants

The faculty supervisor's responsibilities typically include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- identifying and outlining the GA's responsibilities prior to their arrival,
- providing the GA with a performance evaluation by completing the College of the Arts Graduate Assistant Evaluation Form in a timely fashion,
- working with the GA to overcome any deficiencies in fulfilling the responsibilities listed above, and
- notifying the Director if the GA is having difficulty fulfilling their assigned duties.

GA Evaluation Process

Graduate assistants shall be evaluated in writing for each contract offered of one semester or longer. The evaluation is to cover the assigned duties and responsibilities appropriate to the assignment. Supervisors should make sure that graduate assistants are fully aware of the performance standards and expectations that apply to the assignment at the beginning of each semester.

In general, all performance standards should be observable, measurable, achievable, reasonable, and related to the assignment. More importantly, performance standards should be consistent for similar assignments so that all graduate assistants are evaluated fairly. The Collective Bargaining Agreement provides specific guidelines for observation and visitations, as well as evaluating the nature of the assignment.

To ensure a fair and successful evaluation, your supervisor should address performance issues as they occur in a timely, personal, and verbal manner. In addition, the student should:

- know what is expected of him/her,
- be properly trained and have the support to successfully complete the assignment,
- be immediately made aware of any unsatisfactory performance and be provided with the means to improve on said performance, and
- have exemplary performance noticed and noted.

The effort put forth in a well-planned and thoughtful evaluation can accomplish many goals. In addition to documenting the student’s work product, it will:

- provide valuable insights into work done so that the student may improve and grow,
- reinforce good performance by recognizing positive contributions,
- enhance two-way communication, which is important in all careers, and
- clarify goals of the Institute and College.

The faculty supervisors must notify the Director if the assistant is not fulfilling their assigned duties.

Procedure

At the beginning of the student’s assignment, the supervisor should list the responsibilities and expectations for the position. A copy of this list should be given to the student. Graduate assistants are generally evaluated prior to the final week of the semester. Assistants must have the opportunity to sign the document and may attach comments to the evaluation, if desired. A copy will be placed in the student’s file and will also be given to the student. If your evaluation cannot be completed, or if questions related to this procedure arise, please contact the Director’s office immediately.

Registration Requirements

Each semester, there will be a registration/advising meeting to discuss advance registration for the next term(s). During this meeting, the schedule of courses and semester plan will be reviewed. Students will be reminded of holds, and provided with the section numbers needed for self-registration. Other important program information will be shared, and students will have the opportunity to ask any questions. The meeting will be held near the midpoint of the semester; exact dates and times will be conveyed via e-mail.

The University of Florida operates on a semester system consisting of two 16-week periods and two 6-week summer terms. The following chart has both full and part time registration requirements for each semester that you are registered.

Required Full-Time Registration

	Fall and Spring	A	Summer B	C
Assistants on .25 to .74 FTE	9	3	3	6
Assistants on .75 to .99 FTE	6	2	2	4

Students on a Digital Worlds assistantship will receive a tuition waiver for 9 credit hours; therefore, students must be registered for 9 hours to be eligible for the waiver. *Please note that tuition waivers cover tuition charges only – they do NOT cover fees.* Tuition waivers typically run after the drop/add period ends, provided that the student’s hire process is complete and registration is correct.

Failure to register for an appropriate number of credits may affect continuation of assistantships or other student aid.

Graduate students on appointment: The full-time registration requirement of 12 credit hours is reduced to 9 credit hours for students who are graduate assistants. For students on appointment for the full summer, registration must total that specified for C term. Registration may be in any combination of A, B, or C terms. However, courses must be distributed so that the student is registered during each term on appointment. Students on appointment are financially liable for excess credits beyond the required registration. If a student on appointment drops below the required registration at any time in the semester, **the student becomes financially liable for the entire registration.** In other words, if you drop a class while on an assistantship, you forfeit your tuition waiver and must pay tuition for the entire semester. Students who do not register properly are not permitted to remain on appointment.

Potential Funding for Digital Worlds students

Information about grant research support is available at <http://www.research.ufl.edu/researchsupport/>

Available grants for graduate student education are listed at <http://www.graduateschool.ufl.edu/prospective-students/funding/other/grants/>

For information on general University scholarships, see <http://www.uff.ufl.edu/Scholarships/GeneralUniversity.asp>

Funding for grant research or grant related travel for students is available at <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/prospective-students/funding/travel/>

Graduate school information about available assistantships and grants can be found at: <http://graduateschool.ufl.edu/prospective-students/funding/graduate-assistantships/>

College of the Art – GA Evaluation

Identify the most important responsibilities and duties assigned during the evaluation period. Provide comments regarding the employee's performance, strengths, and/or areas that need improvement. List each duty separately and state how the GA performed the responsibility well and areas for improvement in performing the responsibility.

1)

2)

3)

4)

The evaluation shall be placed in the employee's evaluation file and a copy given to the graduate assistant per the University Board of Trustee/Graduate Assistant United Collective Bargaining Agreement. <http://www.ufgau.org/>

Graduate Assistant's Name

Graduate Assistant's Signature

Date

Faculty Supervisor's Name

Faculty Supervisor's Signature

Date