

Teaching & Learning Innovation

GRA Orientation
2021

September 10, 2021



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

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Overview of TLI GRA Orientation

- Icebreaker
- History of TLI
 - Review of Organization and Programming
- University Organizational Charts
- GRA University Policies
- COVID-19 Guidance
- Connecting Aspirations and Expectations
- Job Performance Evaluation Process
- The Exit Process for TLI GRAs

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GRA University Policies



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Graduate Assistants

University Policies

- Graduate assistantships provide experiences to enhance professional development while working with an institutional mentor.
- The graduate assistant receives financial support for graduate study by contributing to the teaching and/or research mission of the university.
- A one-half time graduate assistant in each of the four categories of assistantships normally should enroll for 6-11 semester hours of course work. A one-fourth time graduate assistant in each of the four categories of assistantships normally should take 9-13 semester hours. Exceptions to the above must have prior approval of the Head of the student's academic home unit. A student on a one-half time assistantship who takes at least six semester hours will be considered full-time.
- The maximum number of years that a graduate student can be appointed to a 25% or more assistantship is three years as a master's student, five years as a doctoral student, or eight years in doctoral programs in which students enter with a baccalaureate degree only. Departments or programs may impose stricter limits. Requests for an extension beyond the maximum terms here specified must be made in writing by the academic unit to the Dean of the Graduate School. Established time limits for completion of graduate programs – six years for a master's program and eight years for a doctoral program – also apply to all graduate assistants.
- More information can be found here:
 - https://catalog.utk.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=1061#poli_admi_grad_assi

Graduate Assistants

Rights & Responsibilities

- As specified in the *Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual* (Section 100 105-Pr3, p 2), “A student employee is one whose primary function is that of enrollment in an academic program.” Thus, first priority of all graduate assistants must be satisfactory progress in their scholastic program. At the same time, acceptance of an assistantship is predicated on the belief that satisfactory progress can be concurrently achieved in work assignments and scholastic programs. Collaborative efforts between graduate assistants and their supervisors should be focused on the goal of satisfactory performance in both these areas.
- In cases where graduate assistants feel that they have a legitimate complaint about any aspect of carrying out their assignments (work hours, duties assigned, pay, work conditions, etc.), they have a right to pursue all established channels to resolve the conflict. In the order that follows, the student should speak to his/her immediate supervisor, the appropriate department head, the appeals committees in the home unit or college, and the dean of the college/school involved. If the student feels that a resolution should be sought beyond the department/college level, the Dean of the Graduate School should be contacted. Established procedures outlined in the Graduate Council Appeals Procedure and/or *Hilltopics* will be followed.
- Link to Hilltopics: <https://hilltopics.utk.edu/>

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TLI GRA Expectations



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TLI GRA Overview

- GRAs in TLI are 50% FTE or 20 hours a week
- All TLI GRAs are on a 12-month appointment
- All TLI GRAs will experience
 - an annual goal setting and evaluation process,
 - a periodic job assessment twice each year at the end of each semester, and
 - a final evaluation, which will play a large part determining if a GRA will be asked to return (if applicable) for the following year. This evaluation will take place at the end of the spring semester.

TLI GRA Expectations

- TLI GRAs are expected to be available based on their pre-determined schedule. Work schedules are initially developed by the TLI GRA, and then submitted for approval by their TLI direct supervisor.
- GRAs will record the hours that they work using the Non-Exempt Employees Bi-Weekly Timesheet. This document can be found on TLI's Employee Resources webpage under the tab, "Reporting Hours".
- TLI GRAs do not have to be physically present in Greve Hall to complete their work, but they should notify their direct supervisor about the hours that they have used to complete their assigned task(s) and/or project(s) on a biweekly basis.
- All requests regarding TLI GRA schedule changes should be submitted in writing to their TLI direct supervisor as needs arise.

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COVID-19



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COVID-19

University Policies

- When entering buildings and in public areas, facemasks covering your mouth and nose must be worn. However, masks are not required in spaces when you are alone in a private office, eating or drinking, or working out at the university's fitness center.
- If you believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, please notify your direct supervisor immediately so that you can discuss next steps for your health and safety, as well as appropriate schedule changes.
- For more information about COVID-19, visit the university's COVID-19 website at:
 - <https://www.utk.edu/coronavirus/>

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Job Evaluation Process



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TLI GRA Job Evaluation Process

- Within the first two months of starting work within the unit, TLI GRAs must work with their direct supervisors to finalize their annual goals for the current academic year.
- At the end of each semester, each TLI GRA must review their goals with their direct supervisor and discuss all progress made towards completion.
- At the end of the spring semester, a final evaluation of each TLI GRA's performance will take place in partnership with their direct supervisor.
- A brief summary report (1-2 pages) will be written based on the overall performance of each TLI GRA, and that report will be submitted TLI's Executive Director for review and support purposes.
- The final evaluation will play a large role in determining if the TLI GRA will be invited back to continue to work with TLI as a GRA the following academic year (if eligible).
- The final report must be submitted to TLI's Executive Director by March 15.

TLI GRA Exit Process

- Every member of TLI is important, valued, and brings a unique perspective to the work necessary to continually build a successful unit, as well as meet and succeed university expectations and our unit's mission.
- With this in mind, every TLI GRA will be asked to either complete a qualitative feedback form about their experiences in TLI, or participate in a "Exit Interview" with their direct supervisor and/or TLI Executive Director (if applicable) upon the end of their time in TLI.
- The purpose of this process is to capture information related to the TLI GRA's experience in TLI that could help to identify positive aspects of the unit that should be reinforced in the future, and/or to improve the experience working in the unit for future TLI GRAs.

GRA Community Building and Professional Development Series

Once a month, TLI's GRAs will meet with full-time TLI staff members to discuss one or more of the following:

- Develop community with one another
- Learn more about the field of faculty development as a career option
- Develop a TLI program, workshop, or event to offer to the campus community
- Talk about their current academic journey and/or aspirations for the future

Where to Find Other Relevant Documents and Information

- Visit TLI's Employee Resources Webpage located at the link below for additional information. Click the tab entitled, "GRA Documents".
 - <https://teaching.utk.edu/employeeresources/>

Thank You!

Welcome (Back) to Teaching and Learning Innovation!

We are delighted to have you!



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