

## Research Assistantship Recommendation and Approval Form

It is the expectation that the combination of studies and a full-time research assistantship equals a full-time commitment and the student will not hold another position.

Please read the back/page 2 of this form for eligibility criteria, explanations, and policies.

**Research Assistant** - a matriculated graduate student who conducts research under faculty supervision toward attainment of a graduate degree and is supported by grants (externally or internally funded) awarded to UMass Dartmouth faculty/staff and whose stipend as well as a portion of the tuition charge or continuation fee is supported by the stipend funding source or other funds available to the PI, department, or college.

**Graduate Researcher** - a matriculated graduate student who fulfills the role of a Research Assistant and is supported by grants (externally or internally funded) with a stipend that meets the requirements of the Guidelines for Graduate Student Financial Support but has received assistantship/fellowship support for the maximum time allowable and, is therefore, no longer eligible for assistantship/fellowship benefits.

Selection of this research assistant should be made using a hiring process that takes into consideration, at a minimum, the academic performance of the applicants and their qualifications for the position.

Student's Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_ Student's ID: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Given name) (Family name)

Student's Program of Study: \_\_\_\_\_ Program level:  masters  doctoral

Name of student's dissertation/thesis/project advisor (if already determined): \_\_\_\_\_

### APPOINTMENT DETAILS:

The maximum number of hours a student may work under an assistantship appointment is twenty hours per week when classes are in session (i.e., from the date classes begin until all final semester grades are due) and forty hours per week when classes are not in session.

Academic semester - Full-time - 20 hour commitment per week

Academic semester - Part-time \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week (minimum of ten hours per week for partial tuition credit benefit)

Stipend amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

Intersession \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Spring break \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week

Summer \_\_\_\_\_ hours/week Start Date \_\_\_\_\_ End Date \_\_\_\_\_

If student will not be enrolled full-time at any point during an academic semester of this appointment, please specify the reason why a waiver of the enrollment requirement should be accorded:

- student no longer needs full-time load of course work due to being in final year or semester of program
- critical need for the services of the student

Waiver requests for other reasons should be forwarded via email to [apgradstudies@umassd.edu](mailto:apgradstudies@umassd.edu)

**FUNDING SOURCE DETAILS:** A copy of this form will be provided to the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration and constitutes permission for tuition or continuation fee recovery.

Principal Investigator: \_\_\_\_\_ Funding Agency: \_\_\_\_\_

Fund: \_\_\_\_\_ Department ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Project #: \_\_\_\_\_ Speed type: \_\_\_\_\_

Tuition recovery from the funding source cited above or speed type \_\_\_\_\_

Yes  No - sufficient recovery funding is available if the student enrolls in more than 9 credits during any semester of this appointment

Approved waiver of tuition recovery (copy of email authorization from Associate Provost for Graduate Studies must be attached)

College Fee credit requested \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of College Dean REQUIRED for College Fee credit authorization

All others charges are the responsibility of the student

### APPROVALS:

**Approval by the Graduate Program Director for Graduate Program Eligibility** The student is qualified to assume the duties, is in good academic standing, and is making progress toward the degree. The duties are relevant to and appropriate for the student's academic program.

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval by the funding source manager (e.g., Principal Investigator):**

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval by the College Dean:**

Printed name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Approval of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Assistantship Recommendation and Approval – Synopsis of Policies and Procedures**

See Guidelines for Graduate Student Financial Support on Graduate Studies website for greater detail

### **Process of Approvals**

Departments should offer assistantships as early as possible; for many new students, receipt of an assistantship makes the difference in a decision whether to attend the University. Offering admission and the assistantship award concurrently is highly encouraged.

For recommending an assistantship, the offering department should complete this form and move it forward to obtain the required signatures. The final approval is that of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies, after which a contract will be issued to the student.

### **Timing**

Assistantships may be awarded for the entire year or by semester. In order to receive and maintain tuition or program continuation credit benefits, students must work in the assistantship position for a minimum of twelve weeks per semester. The Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies will send a message each semester indicating the date by which students must begin working as well as when recommendation forms are due. Benefits awarded to students who do not meet the twelve week requirement may be rescinded.

### **Relationship to Student Employment**

Additional steps must occur for the student to be placed on payroll for the stipend portion of the assistantship award. For this, the hiring unit initiates the process through the Student Employment hiring system. Students need to be aware that they will be required to show evidence of a social security number or appropriate documentation that a social security number is pending. In addition, the student must demonstrate eligibility to work in the United States via the I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification form.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

Students must be matriculated into a master's or doctoral level degree program. Students enrolled in certificate programs or non-degree status are not eligible for any assistantship/fellowship financial support from University funding sources. Students in combined/accelerated undergraduate/graduate programs are not eligible for assistantships/fellowships or tuition or program continuation credit until they have completed all the requirements for their undergraduate degree and have been matriculated to the graduate level of study.

Students must be enrolled full-time (9 credits or more per semester). No assistantship/fellowship financial support from university sources is provided to part-time students unless their services represent a critical need for the University/program, or students no longer need a full-time load of course work during their last semester/year. Waiver requests for other reasons should be forwarded via email to: [apgradstudies@umassd.edu](mailto:apgradstudies@umassd.edu).

Students who have GPA below 3.0 are not eligible for assistantships or fellowships.

The maximum length of time for assistantship/fellowship financial support from university sources through all categories except Research Assistants is two years for a master's degree program (three years for a three-year professional terminal master's program) or four years for a doctoral degree program. Research Assistantship support is limited to a maximum of three years for master's students and six years for doctoral students who enter the program with a bachelor's degree and five years for those who enter the program with a master's degree. All awards throughout the student's program of study at a given level are included in the calculation of maximum time for assistantship/fellowship financial support.

### **Terms and Conditions**

An assistantship award is accompanied by tuition or continuation fee credit appropriate to the terms of the award. Tuition benefits accorded for courses offered through University Extension for On-line and Continuing Education are dependent upon the type and level of award. A full-time assistantship award requires a work commitment of twenty hours per week and a part-time assistantship award requires a work commitment of between ten and nineteen hours per week.

Failure to maintain full-time enrollment at any point during the duration of an assistantship/fellowship appointment, without a waiver of the requirement, may result in the reversal of any tuition benefits that have been credited and the student will become responsible for payment of the charges.

The tuition/fee credit provided is a scholarship award, whereas the stipend is compensation for services rendered.

The contract issued by the Office of the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies is the official contract between the University and the student concerning the terms and expectations of the assistantship when accepted by the student. The assistantship contract issued states the general requirements as well as the stipend, tuition credit amount, general work assignment, and hours per week the student is expected to work for the stipend awarded.

Acceptance of an assistantship indicates an intention on the part of the student to complete the degree program at UMass Dartmouth. Assistantships represent a substantial investment by the University and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Students awarded assistantships are expected to make progress toward their degree and must be in good academic standing as well as satisfactorily perform the assigned duties in order to retain their assistantship and/or receive a subsequent award. Many departments have specific requirements for academic and/or professional performance.

Although it is possible to combine assignments, one of which must require a commitment of at least ten hours per week, into a full-time assistantship, the resulting package of duties needs to be approved by the student's department as well as the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies as having a coherent purpose in addition to meeting the criteria above.