

SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA UNIVERSITY

**CHECKLIST FOR HIRING GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTS,  
GRADUATE ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANTS, GRADUATE RESEARCH  
ASSISTANTS AND GRADUATE TEACHING FELLOWS**

Please direct questions to the Human Resources Analyst, Human Resources Office, Ext. 2347.

A full description of employment procedures and downloadable forms are available at the Human Resources Office website at  
<http://www2.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/hroepmenu3.htm>

**Step 1** A Department Head must ensure that there is an existing position (line in the budget) for a graduate assistant. If not, a position must be created through the budget request process. If approved, the Department Head and Dean will be notified in writing by the Provost and the Vice President for Administration and Finance with a copy to the Human Resources Office. The Human Resources Office will secure a position number. The position will appear in the budget for the new fiscal year.

**Step 2** For an applicant to be considered a qualified applicant he/she must complete the GA/GTF Application Form and the Background Check Authorization Form and meet all minimum qualifications for the category as follows:

**Categories of Appointment**

**Graduate Teaching Fellows (GTF).** The graduate assistant teaches a course(s) and has full responsibility for the course(s). He/she is the Instructor of Record for the course(s) and must meet SACS criteria. The SACS criteria are listed on the Human Resources web site at  
<http://www2.selu.edu/Administration/Depts/HumanResources/sacscriteria.htm>

If there are any questions regarding whether a candidate meets SACS criteria, the Department Head should consult with Dr. Bea Baldwin, Assistant Vice President for Academic Affairs and the University's SACS liaison officer.

**Teaching Assistant (TA).** Teaching assistants usually assist faculty members in teaching their courses, but the faculty members remain responsible for and serve as the Instructors of Record for these courses. In some departments, teaching assistants may be assigned to assist a faculty member with taking roll, grading papers, conducting help sessions, etc. In other departments, teaching assistants may serve a period of apprenticeship under the supervision of a faculty member.

**Research Assistant (RA).** The graduate assistant primarily performs research assignments for a faculty member. Often the research assistant is

working together with the faculty member in conducting a research project.

The United States Department of Labor (DOL) has clarified that it will not assert that an employee-employer relationship exists between graduate research assistants and a higher education institution:

“In some cases graduate students in colleges and universities are engaged in research in the course of obtaining advanced degrees and the research is performed under the supervision of a member of the faculty in a research environment provided by the institution under a grant or contract. Normally the graduate students involved in these programs are simultaneously performing research under the grants or contracts and fulfilling the requirements of an advanced degree. Under such circumstances, Wage and Hour will not assert an employee-employer relationship between the students and the school, or between the student and the grantor or contracting agency, even though the student receives a stipend for their services under the grant or contract. Where no employment relationship exists, there is no application of the minimum wage and overtime pay provisions of the FLSA.”

*Administrative Assistant* (AA). The graduate assistant performs assignments primarily of a clerical nature or supervisory nature, although he/she may be assigned other duties. [Excerpt from the Graduate Assistant Handbook] ”If a teaching assistant or an administrative assistant is purposely misclassified by their supervisor as a research assistant in an attempt to circumvent the FLSA and if we are audited and found to be in violation, the supervisor responsible will be personally liable for the fines and penalties. The university will also be responsible for damages and back wages. These fines could be up to \$10,000 for each violation. A second violation can result in imprisonment. Willful violations are also subject to civil money penalties of up to \$1,000 for each violation.”

**Step 3** Once the Department Head or GA Coordinator decides to hire the applicant, the Department Head should submit the completed hire package to the Dean of the Graduate School. The hire package includes a Recommendation of Employment, GA/GTF Application Form, Verification of Personal References, and the Background Check Authorization Form.

**Step 5** The new employee must attend the scheduled orientation session and must bring his/her Social Security card and driver’s license or passport for U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service requirements. International students must bring their passport, Visa, I-94, I-20 and a work permit. He/she must also bring a voided check or a savings deposit slip and bank routing numbers from his/her own account for direct deposit. All new employees are required to utilize direct deposit for payroll.

The employee is then set up in the payroll system.

Note: International students, except those who have previously been employed in the United States, will not have Social Security cards since they cannot obtain cards until they arrive in the United States