

**Guidelines for
Graduate Students on a Graduate Contract**

I. Please read the *Guidelines for Graduate Students on a Graduate Contract* and your contract carefully. If you accept the award and agree to the provisions described, sign the contract and return to The Office of Graduate Appointments, Chubb Hall 050, Ohio University, Athens, OH 45701. The contract provides specific financial support such as:

- A. Graduate appointment with a stipend for services as a teaching associate (TA), research associate (RA), graduate administrative associate (GA) or an assistant resident director (ARD).
- B. Graduate fellowship, which does not require any services.
- C. Graduate tuition scholarship, which covers instructional (registration) fees (including non-resident fees, if applicable).
- D. Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) stipend/scholarship, which provides support to cover instructional (registration) fees (including non-resident fees, if applicable), but requires service to pay for a portion of those fees.

II. General Information

A. The graduate tuition scholarship covers instructional (registration) fees (including non-resident fees, if applicable) up to 18-quarter hour credits per quarter for the period of the contract. Any registration exceeding 18 hours will incur an additional cost per hour to the student as determined by the Ohio University Board of Trustees.

B. There are General Fees (\$398. per quarter in 2000-2001) that are not covered by the tuition scholarship and must be paid by the student. (If you are receiving a graduate appointment or a graduate fellowship, the general fees may be deducted from your payroll check. See Item III. C. below).

C. You are required to maintain a health insurance plan if you are registered for seven or more credit hours. To assist with this requirement, the university offers a major medical insurance plan, designed to supplement the care provided by the Student Health Service. You must buy health insurance from Ohio University unless you have coverage elsewhere. **YOU WILL BE CHARGED HEALTH INSURANCE UNLESS YOU INDICATE THAT YOU HAVE OTHER COVERAGE.** If you plan on waiving Ohio University health insurance, you must return the insurance waiver option statement on your bill to the Bursar's Office or go to the Bursar's Office, Chubb 010 to complete the insurance waiver requirement. The health insurance cost for the year's premium for 2000-2001 is \$428 for U.S. citizens and \$505 for international students. (If you are receiving a graduate appointment or a graduate fellowship, this may be deducted from your check. See Item III. C. below). Check with Hudson Health Center (740-593-1660) for details.

D. Students receiving stipends are paid on October 1, November 1 and December 1 for the fall quarter. (December 1 checks are usually available prior to Thanksgiving vacation) You are paid January 1, February 1 and March 1 for the winter quarter and April 1, May 1 and June 1 for the spring quarter. Summer stipend checks are paid at the end of first and second summer sessions. The checks are mailed to the department/school offering you the graduate appointment or fellowship.

E. You should provide your local address as soon as it is available. This may be done at your department/school, at the Registrar's Office, Chubb Hall (Windows 2, 3, 4 or 5) or at the Office of Graduate Student Services, 304 Wilson Hall (College Green). This is very important for routine (grade reports, class schedules, bills) and emergency purposes.

III. Forms that must be completed: Follow the directions for each form.

A. Verification of Employment Eligibility and Identity (Form I-9). **All graduate students with a graduate stipend appointment employed at Ohio University for the first time must complete this form.** The Immigration and Control Act of 1986 requires all employers to verify each new employee's identity and employment eligibility. The new graduate associate must complete a Form I-9 within three working days of the effective day of the appointment. The I-9 Form must be completed in person at the Office of Graduate Student Services, 304 Wilson Hall as soon as you arrive on campus or receive the contract if you are on campus already. Please consult the attached letter and the list of acceptable documents to determine what is required of you to complete the form. **Payment for services will not be allowed without the completion of this form.**

B. Request for Optional Exemption as a Student. Completing this form will exempt you from the Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio. You may return this Exemption Form with your contract. Since it requires a local address, you may turn it into the Graduate Appointments Office or the Payroll Office after you arrive at Ohio University and establish a local address. However, if you want to participate in the Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio, you must contact the Payroll Office after you arrive on campus and complete The Personal History Record (Form A).

C. Option to have the General Fee and/or Insurance Deducted. If you are receiving a graduate appointment or a graduate fellowship, you may want the General Fee and Health Insurance charge deducted from your paycheck. **You must indicate this option on your contract.** Students receiving an Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) contract cannot select either of these options.

Students receiving a stipend of \$1,200 or more per quarter may have the quarterly General Fee deducted from the payroll checks. The fees are deducted in equal amounts from the three checks for each quarter.

If your stipend is for \$1,750 or more per quarter, you may elect to have your University Health Insurance charge deducted from your three paychecks in the first quarter in which your Health Insurance is initiated. Please consider these options carefully because you will only be able to choose these options at the time that you sign your contract. If you want to select one or both of these options, you must select the option/s on the enclosed contract.

D. Personnel Data Profiles. University Human Resources gathers information regarding employees personal and office data so that reporting may be done internally and to external agencies (state and federal). If you are receiving a graduate appointment stipend or an OGS stipend/scholarship, you should complete and return this form to Records and Information Services in University Human Resources, McKee House. If you previously have submitted this form, you do not have to complete it.

E. Employee Withholding Allowance Certificate. (return the completed form to the Office of Graduate Appointments or the Payroll Office) You must indicate the address where you want the W-2 form (Wage and Tax Statement for the year) mailed in January of the upcoming year. If you need assistance in completing this form, contact the Payroll Office. (740-593-1861)

IV. Requirements to maintain your Graduate Contract

A. Graduate students cannot have two full time graduate appointments. Full-time appointments generally indicate working 15-20 hours per week. Half time appointments generally indicate working 8-10 hours per week. Graduate Associates may not accept other full-time employment, either in or outside of the

University. Your department/school and Dean of your college must approve other part time paid duties at Ohio University.

B. The minimum registration requirements are as follows: (some department/schools may require more hours). Registration must be graduate level courses. (Audit, Ohio Program of Intensive English (OPIE) language or undergraduate courses cannot be used to meet the minimum graduate hour requirements.) Under unusual circumstances, some limited exceptions to the minimum enrollment level may be granted. Any requests for exceptions should be sent with the department/school and college approval to the Associate Provost for Graduate Studies for approval.

1. A minimum of 12 graduate hours for all students on a full graduate stipend contract.
2. A minimum of 15 graduate hours for all students on an OGS stipend/scholarship, partial stipends, or on a tuition scholarship only.
3. A minimum of 15 graduate hours for all students on a fellowship.

C. You must show satisfactory progress toward degrec, as defined by the department/school.

D. You must perform graduate associateship duties satisfactorily, as defined by the immediate supervisor or department/school.

E. You must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 (on a 4.00 scale) in all graduate courses. Some departments/schools may require a higher GPA.

F. All new international students receiving a graduate contract must be tested for English proficiency by the Ohio Program of Intensive English (OPIE). An appointment is valid only if English proficiency is substantiated by the Ohio Program of Intensive English.

A student with a graduate appointment generally must be registered each quarter for a minimum of 12 graduate credit hours. If a student is required to enroll in OPIE Language hours, the student must pay for those OPIE language hours. The tuition scholarship (with the permission of the department/school) may cover the cost of the remaining graduate credit hours up to a maximum enrollment of 18 hours. For example, with departmental/school approval, a student with a graduate appointment who is enrolled in 8 hours of OPIE will pay 8/15 of the instructional fee (including non-resident fees) and the entire general fee.

G. If a student withdraws from the university within the first 15 days of the quarter, the tuition scholarship is canceled. Under this circumstance the student is responsible for 20% of the comprehensive registration fee (including non-resident fees) for the quarter. The tuition scholarship cannot be used under this circumstance.

V. Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) Stipend/Scholarship Contract

If you have been awarded an Office of Graduate Studies (OGS) stipend/scholarship contract, this contract is structured to assist you in covering the cost of tuition. The OGS contract works in the following manner:

A. You are required to provide six (6) hours of service per week to your department or school for ten (10) weeks of each quarter that you are awarded an OGS contract or a total of 60 hours of service per quarter. This service has a value of \$10.00 per hour for a total of \$600.00 per quarter. You will be responsible for paying taxes on the \$600 and you may ask for retirement benefits. An amount of \$525 will be deducted from that stipend and applied toward your instructional fee.

B. You will also receive a partial tuition scholarship worth the value of your instructional fees for that quarter less \$600. For example, if you are a non-resident student, your instructional fees for 2000-2001 are \$3,507.00 per quarter and you would receive a partial tuition scholarship worth \$2,907.00 for each quarter. The value of the service you will provide in combination with the partial tuition scholarship you have been granted will cover most of your instructional fees for the quarter. Your OGS stipend and partial tuition scholarship do not cover the university's general fee (\$398 per quarter in 2000-2001), health insurance, advocacy fee, or any other fees.

What to Expect at the Time of Registration

When you register for the quarter in which you receive an OGS contract, you will receive a bill that will specify your instructional and general fee costs, your health insurance costs (unless you have it waived-see item II C on the graduate contract guidelines), and an advocacy fee (you may waive this fee when paying your bill). You will need to pay the general fee, your health insurance, the advocacy fee, and \$75 of the instructional fees. You will be required to register for 15 hours of graduate credit. The payment of the \$75 portion of the instructional fees in combination with your OGS stipend of \$600 and your partial tuition scholarship will cover your entire instructional fees and the taxes and retirement on your OGS stipend. Since the \$600 OGS stipend is taxable according to the IRS, you will ultimately receive a W2 form (Wage and Tax Statement for the year) from the Payroll Office.

What to Expect Each Month

Your quarterly OGS stipend of \$600 will be paid in three monthly installments of \$200. Of this amount \$175 per month (\$525 per quarter) will be withheld from your payment and applied toward your instructional fee. At the first of each of those months you will receive a small check or direct deposit issued by the Payroll Office for any amount of your stipend not needed to cover your instructional fees and applicable taxes and retirement.

VI. Additional information

A. Tuition scholarships may be available for the summer quarter to students who have a tuition scholarship or an OGS stipend/scholarship for the spring quarter preceding or the fall quarter following the summer quarter. You must enroll for 15 hours of graduate level courses and pay the general fee for the summer quarter.

B. Teaching associates must meet oral English proficiency requirements. These requirements apply to all teaching associates who have classroom responsibility regardless of whether or not English is the teaching associate's native language. This proficiency must be certified within University guidelines by the department/school for whom the student is teaching. For further information on how to meet English proficiency requirements, contact your department/school.

C. All appointments made under separately budgeted restricted accounts assume a full-time appointment (20 hours per week), or the appropriate portion thereof, unless indicated otherwise.

D. If you are on a graduate appointment stipend and are married, your spouse will be eligible for a tuition scholarship that pays half of the instructional fee (not the general fees) up to six credit hours per quarter during the period or period(s) in which your contract is in effect. This tuition scholarship will not pay for OPIE language courses or audit credit hours. Application forms, available in the Office of Graduate Appointments, must be completed and returned to the Office of Graduate Appointments before the 15th day of the quarter for which the student is seeking the benefit.

E. If you have any questions regarding your contract or the guidelines, please call the Office of Graduate Appointments (740-593-4122) or e-mail Lisa Poston-Brooks @ brooksl1@ohio.edu