Section E: Employment

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FINANCIAL SUPPORT AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES

Financial support and job opportunities for graduate students in the Design Graduate Program are under the purview of the Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel.

Graduate Assistantships

Teaching and Research Assistantships. Graduate students holding appointments as teaching assistants and research assistants must be registered each semester of their appointment; this applies to appointments of any percentage or any number of hours.

A limited number of assistantships are available within the Department. These are assigned for the 9-month academic year. Graduate assistants receive a monthly stipend and tuition reduction or waiver. A teaching assistant is assigned duties according to expertise, previous experience, and departmental needs. This could include teaching or assisting with a course. A research assistant is assigned to work on a project with a specific project leader. Assistantships are assigned only after official admission has been granted by the Graduate School; therefore, there is urgency in submitting the application forms by January 15.

Information for Graduate Assistants is available online at: http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/gae/.

Graduate Appointments

Graduate assistantships are contingent on the student’s progress towards the degree, registration for at least 6 credits per semester during the academic year (1 credit for Ph.D. candidates who have completed all the required credit and dissertation requirements, and 1 credit for master’s students who have completed all the credit and thesis requirements). Graduate assistants are not to be employed for more than 20 hours per week or on appointments exceeding 50% for any semester in which an assistantship is held.

Teaching appointments are subject to cancellation due to low enrollment.

Recommendations for graduate assistantships are made by graduate faculty after an annual review of graduate students. These reviews take place at the beginning of spring semester. Recommendations are advisory. Final decisions on assistantships are made by the department head.

Non-native English speakers are required to take the SPEAK test and achieve a score of 1. A score of 2-5 on the SPEAK test will necessitate the student
enrolling in courses offered through the Center for Teaching and Learning Services, 612-625-3041. Department administrators monitor SPEAK test scores to place eligible graduate students in assistantships.

Students with assistantships of 25% or greater are eligible for resident tuition rates and a dollar amount in tuition benefits based on the number of hours worked. Contact the Graduate Assistants Office, 612-624-7070, for more information.

Timely Progress and Registration. An appointment offer is contingent on students’ timely progress towards completion of their degrees and registration for at least 6 credits per semester during the academic year (1 credit for Ph.D. candidates working on a dissertation). Failure to register by the end of the second week of class of each semester will result in termination of the graduate assistantship and will affect students’ payroll checks. The department may convert your assistantship to a non-student appointment through the end of that semester only -- a one-time only option. Benefits such as the Graduate Assistant Health Insurance Plan also will be affected. Graduate assistants are not to be employed for more than 20 hours per week or on appointments exceeding 50% for any semester during which an assistantship is held. This includes employment of any kind in other university departments and includes university contracts for professional services.

Advanced Doctoral and Advanced Master’s Status. Advanced Doctoral and Advanced Master’s status refers to students who have completed all degree program requirements, including thesis credits, with only the final defense remaining, but who need to be registered in order to hold an assistantship. It is the department’s policy that graduate students who have completed all but the final defense will be moved to the new status the semester following the addition of the “GT” tracking flag.

International Student Visas. If students are in F-1 visa status, federal law prohibits the University from employing them for more than 20 hours per week or more than a 50% time appointment during the scheduled class periods, including finals week, unless students have been authorized for “practical training.” If students are in a J-1 student visa status, the maximum employment time is 30 hours per week or 75% time during the scheduled class periods, including finals week. The University cannot pay students for any services performed in excess of these limits in F-1 and J-1 student visa status.

College Work Study Payrates. College Work Study is based on an hourly payrate. DHA’s administrative staff has converted Work Study’s hourly pay rate to a percentage so that you may calculate your total assistantship more easily. If you have not done so, please apply for financial aid to determine if you are eligible for College Work Study, and notify the Assistant to the Head if you are eligible to receive a College Work Study award.
Duties and Responsibilities

Teaching Assistants: Meet with the lead instructor for information regarding the assigned course and to review the syllabus (Graphic Design teaching assistants are expected to have taken the related undergraduate course as preparation for their assignment), teach the section as scheduled, hold office hours each week, give two copies of the course syllabus to the department head by the first day of your class of each semester teaching, and attend teaching assistant orientation workshop(s) held by the University of Minnesota (required for first-time TA’s, optional for returning TA’s)

Research Assistants: Meet with your faculty supervisor to determine work schedule and responsibilities. Goldstein Museum of Design graduate assistants may be required to work some evenings and weekends.

Departmental Support

The department’s guidelines for the maximum length of term and level of graduate student support enable us to support as many graduate students as possible. The following are guidelines for the amount of departmental support allotted graduate students:

- Master’s students: 4 semesters at 50% time
- M.F.A. students: 6 semesters at 50% time
- Ph.D. students: 6 semesters at 50% time

Summer Session appointments are generally not available.

It is the policy of the Department of Design, Housing, and Apparel and the Graduate School that no graduate student be appointed for more than a total of 50% time. This includes appointments in other departments.

Graduate School-Administered Fellowships and Scholarship

The Graduate School awards a small number of fellowships to outstanding students who are entering the University of Minnesota Graduate School for the first time. Special fellowships and grants also are available to minority and disadvantaged students upon entry and to students in advanced stages of their graduate studies. Individuals interested in being considered for a Graduate School Fellowship should contact the Program’s Director of Graduate Studies. Applications must be received by January 15th to be considered for a fellowship for the next academic year.
Federal Loans and Grants

The Federal Government is another source of financial aid. The Department strongly encourages application for the “Free Application for Federal Student Aid” (FAFSA), due in early May. U.S. citizens and eligible non-U.S. citizens may apply. Contact a local financial aid office, any state scholarship agency, or the University of Minnesota’s One Stop Student Services (612) 624-1111. Federal student financial aid programs include Federal Stafford Loans, Federal Perkins Loans, and Federal Work-Study. Funding through the University of Minnesota International Student and Scholar Services is not available for entering international students; prior to applying for funding, a student must complete one full academic year and 21 graduate credits at the University of Minnesota.

Career Planning/Placement

The St. Paul Campus Career Center is available to assist you in preparing your resume and cover letters for your job search. The office is located in 198 McNeal Hall. The url: http://www.stpaulcareers.umn.edu/