Graduate Assistantships and Funding

Because of their potential to remit all tuition, graduate assistantships can be a very useful way to support one’s graduate studies. Graduate assistantships include the following types of appointments:

- **Teaching Assistantships (TA)** are instructional positions that include duties such as lecturing, grading papers, supervising laboratories, and leading discussion sections.
- **Project Assistantships (PA)** involve project-related assignments. This work varies by department, and may or may not be related to a student's academic program.

Where to Find Teaching Assistantships

TA and PA positions are usually found by contacting programs, departments, and sometimes faculty directly. Some are advertised via departmental newsletters, web sites, and bulletin boards. A few are posted with the UW Student Job Center, through its online listing. Visit the Job Center frequently.

Historically, our students have been very successful in obtaining TA positions in political science and language departments, but other departments offer opportunities as well. Other departments that typically hire our graduate students (when they cannot fill vacancies from within their own graduate students) include international studies, economics, French and Italian, Spanish, Human Ecology and Women and Gender Studies. But don't limit yourself to these! If you have background and/or expertise in other fields, contact those departments as well. Biocore (Biology Core Curriculum), hire graduate students who majored in biology, neuroscience or genetics. The following is not a list of current vacancies but it can be a helpful guide. Use it as a starting point- a list of potential contacts for planning ahead and making connections early.

Contacts for potential TA positions in other departments:

- **African Studies**: Aleia McCord, Associate Director, 205B Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive, (608) 262-4461 aleia.mccord@wisc.edu
- **Economics**: Kim Grocholski, Graduate Advisor, 7239 Social Science Bldg, 1180 Observatory Drive, (608) 262-3285 kim.grocholski@wisc.edu
- **French**: Shawn Ramer, 608 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive (608) 262-6971 ramer2@wisc.edu
- **Geography**: Sharon Kahn, 144 Science Hall, 550 N. Park Street, (608) 262-3861 smkahn@geography.wisc.edu
- **Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies**: Alberto Vargas, 209 Ingraham Hall, 1155 Observatory Drive, (608) 262-5622 avargasp@wisc.edu
- **Political Science**: Deb McFarlane, 110 North Hall, (608) 263-1878 djmcfarlane@wisc.edu
- **Psychology**: Diane Blumer, Department Administrator, 315 Psychology, 1202 W. Johnson St, (608) 262-5925 dkblumer@wisc.edu
- **Rural Sociology**: Contact instructors of courses that use TAs; (i.e., courses with discussion sections, such as Rur Soc 140 or Rur Soc 215)
- **School of Human Ecology**: Sue Bruns, (608) 262-4897 bruns2@wisc.edu
- **Sociology**: Dana Rasmussen, Assistant to Chair, 8128 Social Science Building, 1180 Observatory Drive, (608) 262-1498 drasmuss@ssc.wisc.edu
- **Spanish and Portuguese**: Tammi Simpson, 1032 Van Hise Hall, 1220 Linden Drive (608) 262-2248 tlsimpson@wisc.edu
- **Gender and Women's Studies**: Su Ann Rose, 3321 Sterling Hall475 N Charter St; (608) 263-4704 surose@wisc.edu
Where to find Project Assistantships

The following academic departments and research centers have hired a La Follette student in the past few years:

- Education Leadership & Policy Analysis, School of Education Hope Lab
- Wisconsin Center for the Advancement of Postsecondary Education (WISCAPE)
  - https://www.wiscape.wisc.edu/
- Wisconsin Center for Research on Education (WCER)
  - http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/
- School of Medicine and Public Health
  - http://www.med.wisc.edu/
- Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE)
  - http://www.wistrans.org/cfire/
- Center for Financial Security (CFS)
  - http://efs.wisc.edu/index.htm
- Center for Nonprofits, School of Human Ecology Department
  - https://sohe.wisc.edu/who-weare/centers/uw-center-for-nonprofits/about-us
- Center on Wisconsin Strategy
  - http://www.cows.org/
- Institute for Regional and International Studies
  - http://iris.wisc.edu/
- Institute of Research on Poverty
  - http://www.iru.wisc.edu/index.htm

Other Project Assistant Positions

Some project assistant positions are not advertised on the UW website. The La Follette student services office will send information on project assistantships with local non-university organizations as the information is received. In addition, La Follette Faculty will advertise for project assistantships tied to grants. These notices are sent to all students by email.

When to Apply

The best time to apply is during the formal mid-semester recruitment. But if you've missed the formal application deadline, it's still a very good idea to submit an application or resume if a department is open to this idea. Regardless of when you apply, it is imperative that you check back with all potential employers on a regular basis, up through the first week of classes – even if the positions are filled. Every year we have had students who landed a TA position in the final weeks before a new term began (when currently appointed TAs may be accepting other funding offers).

All graduate students--both continuing and new or incoming students--are encouraged to apply for all graduate assistantships that match their qualifications. It is not necessary to be on campus to pursue a potential assistantship. Any incoming student who is planning to enroll as a graduate student in an upcoming term is eligible to apply for UW-Madison graduate assistantships that will start in that particular term. Acceptance of an application for a graduate assistantship is not contingent upon the applicant's matriculation. Your ultimate appointment to a particular position is contingent upon your
matriculation, but this does not mean that your application for an assistantship must be delayed until your matriculation. In short, do consider applying for any graduate assistantship for which you may be qualified, provided that the assistantship appointment will start within the same semester in which you plan to begin your graduate study at UW-Madison.

Benefits

Graduate assistantships offer a number of significant benefits, particularly if the appointment meets the minimum criteria. Every assistantship provides a stipend. In addition to the stipend, a graduate assistantship appointment of 1/3 time or greater, when carried over a complete semester, also includes full tuition remission as well as benefits such as health insurance. (Please note that tuition remission does not include segregated fees) For complete details on UW-Madison tuition remission, eligibility factors, and benefits, check the Bursar's Tuition Remission Policy.

Many appointments are timed to begin at the same time as one of the academic terms. But it is not uncommon to find a graduate assistantship after classes have begun. In that case an appointment of 1/3 time (i.e., 33 1/3% appointment) would not be sufficient to obtain the tuition remission or the health insurance benefits. However, it is often possible to negotiate a higher appointment rate for the remainder of a semester in order to become eligible for those benefits. The rate that qualifies one for benefits (such as tuition remission) is that which would be necessary to produce the same number of hours of work that a 1/3 time appointment over the course of an entire semester would produce (roughly equivalent to 260 hours).

Obligations

Graduate assistantship appointments usually include a number of obligations including minimum or maximum enrollment requirements and training requirements.

Enrollment Requirements

If you obtain a graduate assistantship that is supported by the La Follette School you must be enrolled full-time based on your appointment percentage. Please note the minimum enrollment requirements listed below to be considered full-time.

Fall or Spring Appointment:

• Teaching Assistant, 6 graduate credits for 33% to 49% appointment, 4 graduate credits for 50% or higher appointment; (3 cr for dissertators)

• Project Assistant, 6 graduate credits for 33% to 49% appointment, 4 graduate credits for 50% or higher appointment; (3 cr for dissertators)

Summer Session Appointment:

• Teaching Assistant, no enrollment required
• Project Assistant, no enrollment required
Students who are awarded assistantships in other departments should verify enrollment requirements with those departments; other employing departments may require different credit loads. Enrollment may also be required for other reasons such as visa conditions, on-campus housing rules, fellowship requirements, student-loan stipulations, or graduation. Check with the appropriate offices for specific enrollment requirements.

**Training Requirements**

Teaching assistantship appointments may include an added obligation to attend one or more training sessions. Most employing departments require their TAs to attend training workshops during the week preceding the beginning of classes.

**Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarship (FLAS)**

Academic-year FLAS fellowships are awarded for a full academic year to graduate students engaged in: a formal overseas or domestic program of full-time language and area studies coursework or full-time dissertation research abroad. The deadline has passed to apply for this year, but several MIPA students have funded their second year of school through the FLAS.

Summer FLAS fellowships are also available and intended to help students gain the equivalent of a year's worth of college level language study. They support students enrolled in: formal domestic programs of intensive language study at the beginning, intermediate or advanced level; formal overseas programs of intensive language study at the intermediate or advanced level (5th semester and beyond); formal overseas programs of intensive study at the beginning level of languages for which appropriate equivalent instruction is not available in the United States.

The Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarship, FLAS, is offered through these centers: The African Studies Program, Center for East Asian Studies, Center for European Studies, Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies Program, Center for Russia, East Europe and Central Asia, Center for South Asia, Center for South East Asian Studies, and Global Studies. The application is due around February 12th each year. Specific requirements may vary depending on the language. Please consult the relevant area studies program or the following website for further details and application forms: http://flas.wisc.edu/

**Other Funding Resources**

- On-campus jobs open to public: Classified Positions and other jobs (Office of Human Resources), [http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/employment/employ.html](http://www.ohr.wisc.edu/employment/employ.html)
- Cost of Attendance Information: [http://www.finaid.wisc.edu/cost-of-attendance.htm](http://www.finaid.wisc.edu/cost-of-attendance.htm)
- Graduate School Funding Information: [https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/currentstudents](https://grad.wisc.edu/studentfunding/currentstudents)
- University of Wisconsin-Madison Financial Aid Office: [http://www.finaid.wisc.edu/graduate-and-professional.htm](http://www.finaid.wisc.edu/graduate-and-professional.htm)
- Private Fellowships and Scholarships Search (FastWeb), [http://www.fastweb.com](http://www.fastweb.com)