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To: CSU Presidents

From: Jackie R. McClain 
Vice Chancellor
Human Resources

Subject: Graduate Assistant Classification and Employment Policy

Human Resources is pleased to provide a revised Graduate Assistant Classification and Qualification Standard, which was updated to reflect the current range of work performed on campuses. The attached revised classification standard, effective August 31, 2001 (first day of the September pay period), includes both the academic year (AY) classification and a new monthly Graduate Assistant classification.

The Graduate Assistant employment policy also has been updated in response to campus suggestions, and the policy, effective August 31, 2001, regarding appointment of graduate assistants, is as follows:

- Incumbents in a Graduate Assistant classification must be registered in a CSU graduate degree program and enrolled in courses towards the completion of a graduate degree during the graduate assistant appointment period. Students enrolled in credential programs and students enrolled in graduate programs outside the CSU are not eligible for this classification.
- To afford more flexibility, a new monthly Graduate Assistant classification has been created to accommodate appointments that begin and end throughout the academic term, depending on the particular assignment and campus need. Monthly pay rates have been established for this new classification.
- Appointments, for both AY and monthly classifications, may be allowed in any fraction up to full time, as long as the fraction is exactly equivalent to a 2-decimal FTE without rounding. Appointments are not just limited to 1/4, 1/2, 3/4, and full time appointments.

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Vice Presidents, Administration
Associate Vice Presidents/Deans, Faculty Affairs
Graduate Deans
Human Resources Directors
Payroll Managers
Director, SOSS

- In recognition of Internal Revenue Code Section 3121(b)(10) and IRS Revenue Procedure 98-16, it continues to be systemwide policy that “full time” for a graduate assistant is approximately 20 hours per week.
- In place of the existing systemwide restriction against concurrent appointment in another CSU classification, it is now allowable for a graduate assistant to be appointed in another student classification, up to a combined total of approximately 20 hours per week.
- The Graduate Assistant classification is now available for graduate students enrolled in courses during the summer. The existing Bridge Student Assistant Classification (1874) continues to be available for graduate students as determined appropriate by campus employment policies in light of IRS Revenue Procedure 98-16.
- It continues to be the case that a graduate assistant should be required to meet his or her assignment without regard to the specific number of hours required, similar to faculty and other exempt employees. The salary rate is for the term of the assignment, not an hourly rate.
- A graduate assistant is paid to perform a body of work. In the event a graduate assistant has an extended absence or does not complete the assigned work, then salary would be docked.
- Since the Graduate Assistant classification is a student classification, graduate assistants are not provided benefits.

This memorandum is also available on the Human Resources Administration’s web site at: <http://www.calstate.edu/HRAAdm/memos.shtml>. Questions regarding this information may be directed to Cordelia Ontiveros at (562) 951-4503 or via e-mail (contiveros@calstate.edu). Thank you.

CR/CO

Attachment