



MEMORANDUM

TO: President John Thrasher
Provost Sally McRorie
Vice President Amy Hecht
Vice President Tom Jennings
Vice President Gary Ostrander
Vice President Janet Kistner
Deans, Directors, Department Heads, & HR Representatives

FROM: Renisha Gibbs, Associate Vice President and Finance & Administration Chief of Staff
Michael Lake, Chief Budget Officer, University Budgets
Mark Riley, Dean, The Graduate School

THRU: Kyle C. Clark, Vice President for Finance & Administration

SUBJECT: 2019-2020 Graduate Assistant Stipend Increases and Contract Administration

DATE: November 18, 2019

This memorandum reflects provisions and instructions pertaining to the administration of 2019-2020 stipend increases and health insurance subsidy increases for graduate assistants and serves as a reminder for contract administration items pertaining to graduate assistants. This information is in accordance with 2019-2020 FSU-BOT/GAU Collective Bargaining Supplemental Agreement (CBA) ratified by GAU on November 14, 2019.

Competitive Pay Adjustment (Effective November 15, 2019)

- For Fiscal Year 2019-2020, each eligible graduate assistant with at least a 0.50 FTE appointment will receive a one-time, non-recurring performance bonus in the amount of \$650, less applicable taxes and deductions. Each eligible graduate assistant with an appointment between 0.25 FTE and 0.49 FTE will receive a one-time, non-recurring performance bonus in the amount of \$325, less applicable taxes and deductions. The bonuses will be effective November 15, 2019 and will be reflected in the paycheck on December 6, 2019.
- Graduate assistants on multiple appointments will receive a bonus according to the FTE for each appointment, not to exceed a total bonus amount of \$650 per individual graduate assistant. Graduate assistants must be employed by FSU and be in active payroll status on the effective date of the bonus in order to be eligible.
- No action is needed by the department/program to implement the bonus. However, it is the responsibility of the respective department to notify Rebecca Peterson (rpeterson@fsu.edu) in the Office of Human Resources, in writing, by November 22, 2019, of any graduate assistant who should not receive a bonus due to ineligibility. Ineligibility will only apply to graduate assistants who are funded by contract and grants, when such salary increases are either not permitted by the terms of the contract or grant, or adequate funds are not available for this purpose in the contract and grant.

Minimum Stipend Increase (Effective August 7, 2020)

- Effective August 7, 2020, the new minimum stipend will be \$15,600 for graduate assistants on a 0.50 FTE academic year appointment (19.5 pay periods) or prorated to that value in accordance with a minimum of \$20.00 an hour. Fall 2020 appointments will be required to meet the new minimum stipend.

Health Insurance Subsidy

- The University has increased the total amount provided to graduate assistants for health insurance subsidies for the 2019-2020 academic year. Graduate assistants are eligible to receive health insurance subsidies if they have first enrolled in the qualifying insurance policy offered by the Health and Wellness Center and have a qualifying appointment.
- To qualify, graduate assistants must be employed from at least the first day of classes through the last day of finals in a given semester on at least a 0.25 FTE appointment. Additionally, the graduate assistant must be enrolled for at least 9 credit hours during the fall and spring semesters.
- Domestic student health insurance subsidy amounts:
 - \$1,965/year for graduate assistants on at least a 0.50 FTE appointment for fall and spring
 - \$1,315/year for graduate assistants on at least a 0.25 FTE appointment for fall and spring
 - \$1,515/year for graduate assistants on at least a 0.25 FTE appointment for either the fall or spring and on a 0.50 FTE appointment for the other semester
- International student health insurance subsidy amounts:
 - \$2,002/year for graduate assistants on at least a 0.50 FTE appointment for fall and spring
 - \$1,352/year for graduate assistants on at least a 0.25 FTE appointment for fall and spring
 - \$1,552/year for graduate assistants on a least a 0.25 FTE appointment for either the fall or spring and on a 0.50 FTE appointment for the other semester

Funding for the Stipend/Health Insurance Subsidy Increases

E&G Funded Employees. The increases for these employees (OMNI fund codes 110, 121, 210 and 211), will be funded by the University.

E&G Carryforward Funded Employees. The increases for these employees (OMNI fund code 126, 140, 240 and 241), will be funded from the department's Carryforward resources.

Non-E&G Funded Employees. Eligible graduate assistants whose stipends are funded from auxiliary, student activities, technology fee, and other non-E&G funds should receive the increases, provided resources are available within said funds. Departments should notify the Budget Office in writing of any non-E&G budgets that will not have said funds for the increases as soon as possible.

Other Contract Administration Requirements

Matriculation Fee and Out-of-State Fee Waiver Program

- The University agreed to language that departments issuing out-of-state waivers must consider international graduate students as a priority when making waiver allocation decisions.

Workloads

- As a reminder, teaching and research are an integral part of the requirements for obtaining a graduate degree at Florida State University. Students appointed on assistantships have a primary relationship with the University as a student and are to be pursuing their studies full time, in addition to carrying out their work as a graduate assistant. Per the CBA, graduate assistants cannot be appointed at a total combined FTE (for all FSU appointments) exceeding 0.75 FTE. Furthermore, any department planning to appoint a graduate assistant in an additional employment capacity that will result in a total combined FTE greater than 0.50 FTE, should consider limiting the length of the additional appointment so that academic progress can be monitored.

Appointment Letters

Appointment letters are required for every graduate assistant appointment, including all re-appointments. Article 2, Appointments and Terminations, of the CBA requires the following:

- Appointments may not exceed one calendar year.
- Programs cannot use appointment dates to avoid granting benefits to eligible graduate assistants. At a minimum, appointment dates should start by the first day of classes and run through the last day of finals.
- If a department has a legitimate need to start an appointment after the first day of classes or end the appointment before the last day of finals, the department is required to notify The Graduate School.
- Notice of Appointments: Programs must issue appointment letters in a timely manner according to the following schedule:
 - A. Fall/Spring Appointments: At least 30 days before the first day of classes.
 - B. Summer Appointments: At least 21 days before the start of the applicable summer term.

Should you have any questions, please contact Renisha Gibbs or Rebecca Peterson.

Thank you.

RG/rp

Cc:	Jane Livingston	Paul Harlacher
	Elizabeth Hirst	Rebecca Peterson
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