



# Graduate Assistant Employment Handbook



Georgia State University College of Law  
P. O. Box 4037 | Atlanta, GA 30302-4037  
Phone: 404.413.9000 Fax: 404.413.9225

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## Department List of College of Law Services

The main number for Georgia State University College of Law is (404) 413-9000. When calling a number within the College of Law, dial only the 5-digits (3-XXXX) extension number of the department. For an outside number, dial 9 key first then area code and the 7-digit number. A complete list of administrators and faculty is available on the law school's website at <http://law.gsu.edu/directory>. The following is a short list of law school administrators and staff from whom you might need assistance as you work in and around the college:

- **Interim Dean**  
Leslie Wolf | 404-413-9035 (lwolf@gsu.edu)
- **Dean's Office Administrator**  
Jacqueline Stephenson | 404-413-9035 (jstephenson7@gsu.edu)
- **Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs**  
Ryan Rowberry | 404-413-9196 (rrowberry@gsu.edu)
- **Associate Dean for Student Affairs**  
Alexis Martinez | 404-413-4077 (alexism@gsu.edu)
- **Assistant to the Dean**  
Christianna Jarvis | 404-413-9044 (cjarvis@gsu.edu)
- **Associate Dean for Library and Information Services**  
Kristina Niedringhaus | 404-413-9140 (krisn@gsu.edu)
- **Associate Dean for Experiential Education**  
Lisa Bliss | 404-413-9131 (lbliss@gsu.edu)
- **Assistant Dean for Development**  
Ely Abbott | 404-413-9022 (ely@gsu.edu)
- **Assistant Dean for Administration and Finance**  
Dawn Gamadanis | 404-413-9060 (rgamadanis@gsu.edu)
- **Senior Director of Professional Development & Career Strategies**  
Lyn Knapp | 404-413-9074 (eknapp@gsu.edu)
- **Senior Director of Admissions**  
Monique McCarthy | 404-413-9004 (mmccarthy18@gsu.edu)
- **Director of Communications**  
Amy Jorgensen | 404-413-9050 (ajorgensen@gsu.edu)

- **Director of Information Technology**  
Samir Majmundar | 404-413-9108 (terrance@gsu.edu)
- **Registrar**  
Marilyn Crouch | 404-413-9012 (mcrouch@gsu.edu)
- **Human Resources Officer**  
Anjelica Lymon | 404-413-9065 (alymon@gsu.edu)
- **Human Resources Coordinator (GRA Appointment Contact)**  
Tina Blanks | 404-413-9265 (tblanks@gsu.edu)
- **College Finance Officer**  
Mignon Jackson-Jones | 404-413-9096 (mjackson@gsu.edu)
- **Business Manager II(Student Org Financial Contact)**  
Valencia Lewis | 404-413-9098 (vlewis3@gsu.edu)
- **Receptionist**  
Yves McKenzie | 404-413-9000 (ymckenzie@gsu.edu)  
Kareema Wingfield | 404-413-9000 (kwingfield1@gsu.edu)
- **Technology Services Help Desk** | 404-413-9111(help@gsu.edu)

### University Offices

- **General Information** (404) 413-2000
- **Georgia State Police** (404) 413-2100
- **Police Emergency** on-campus phone: 3-3333 (404) 413-3333
- **Disability Services** (404) 413-1560
- **Parking Information** (Student Org Related Contact Valencia Lewis)
- **Lost & Found/Safety Escort** (404) 413-3234

### How do I find information specific to Graduate Assistants?

The Resources Page within [InsideLaw](https://insidelaw.gsu.edu) (<https://insidelaw.gsu.edu>) serves as a hub for information related to resources and services for new Graduate Assistants.

## Introduction

This handbook provides general information for graduate assistant employment at Georgia State University and is designed for Graduate Assistants of the College of Law. This handbook includes information regarding employment eligibility, conditions of employment, duties and assignments, work hours, time reporting, compensation, working conditions and graduate assistant responsibilities and rights.

The College of Law reserves the right to amend, supplement, or rescind any portion of this document as appropriate.

## General Graduate Assistant Information

### Purpose of Graduate Employment

The College of Law believes that our students are one of our greatest assets. The purpose of graduate employment in the College of Law is to:

- Provide useful and supportive services to the various academic and administrative programs and/or departments within the College.
- Provide graduates with valuable employment experiences related to their educational and professional career goals.
- Assist with financial support to help meet the cost of attending college.
- Provide a safe working environment that embraces diversity.
- Understanding of your role as a student employee.
- Provide access to a wide range of extended University resources and services.
- Provide opportunities for constructive evaluation and feedback.
- Provide an employment experience which mirrors our organizational commitment and values.
- Provide the best educational experience possible for our students for them to strengthen their reliability, credibility, trustworthiness, and respectfulness.

## Application and Selection Process

Graduate Assistant (GA) positions are limited and preference is given to current law students. Students may be appointed directly by law faculty or selected competitively via applicant pool based on research or professional experience, academic record, and the correlation between the applicant's specific experience and the particular assistantship positions that are available.

Once selected, students may be reappointed for subsequent terms, subject to academic and/or work performance, departmental policy and position availability. All newly appointed GAs must complete a "New Hire Packet" within three (3) days of an employee's date of hire. This packet should be completed by students who have not been employed by the University System of Georgia in the past six (6) months and submitted to the University's Human Resources and Payroll Department (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, One Park Place South). Any graduate assistant employed by the University must present documents that satisfy employment verification (I-9) requirements.

Additionally, the "Departmental Appointment and New Hire Packet," available under the "Human Resources" tab on InsideLaw, are to be completed by both student and supervisor and submitted to the College of Law's Human Resources Coordinator.

## Special Instructions for Lawyering Advocacy Program GAs

The Advocacy Program Director appoints a limited number of Lawyering Advocacy Program GAs each year. Students interested in this opportunity should contact the director. The **Lawyering Advocacy GA Appointment Form**, with signatures, is to be completed by both the graduate assistant and the program director and submitted to the College of Law's Human Resources Office.

### Deadlines

#### **For Appointments:**

- Fall Semester: July 1<sup>st</sup>
- Spring Semester: November 15<sup>th</sup>
- Summer Semester: April 1<sup>st</sup>

#### **For Tuition Waivers**

- Fall Semester: August 7
- Spring Semester: January 9
- Summer Semester: May 13

## Employment Eligibility & Requirements

In order to be eligible for an appointment, graduates must be enrolled at least part-time. Graduates who have not actually been enrolled in the University or who do not meet the part-time requirement are not eligible for employment..

All graduate assistants, including international students who currently hold the J-1 or F-1 visa, must have a U.S. social security number in order to be considered for a graduate assistant position. International students who do not have a U.S. social security number should request a commitment to employment letter from their hiring department once they've been awarded an assistantship. The student should take this letter to a local Social Security Administration office to complete an application for a U.S. social security number.

Additional graduate assistant requirements include:

- Students employed as graduate research assistants (conducting substantive research for faculty) must have completed the required first-year curriculum.
- Students must maintain satisfactory academic standing during the period(s) of their appointment.
  - Non-Scholar appointments – 2.20 GPA
  - Scholar Appointments - 2.50 GPA (effective with the 2017-18 cohort).

- All faculty graduate assistants are required to attend research training offered through the College of Law Library. For dates, times, or additional information on research trainings please contact the Law Library at (404) 413-9100.
- All graduate assistants are required to attend a mandatory College of Law Human Resources training session. For dates, times, or additional information on training sessions please contact [lawgra@gsu.edu](mailto:lawgra@gsu.edu).
- Dropping below the required minimum credit hours of academic coursework during the term and/or having a GPA below the requirement may result in the loss of assistantship appointment as well as additional financial obligations to the University. As such, graduate assistants are encouraged to discuss these potential impacts with the College of Law Human Resources Department prior to make any adjustments to their total number of credit hours.
- Graduates who have been admitted to the university may not work as a graduate assistant prior to their actual enrollment.

F-1 Students are eligible for on-campus employment and approved off-campus employment, known as “practical training”. Completion of an employment workshop is required for practical training authorization. Employment workshops are required for all international students interested in off-campus practical training (employment) authorization. There is no cost for the workshops. For more information, visit: <http://iss.gsu.edu/current-students/f-1-status/employment-authorization-social-security-number/>.

### Student On-Campus Employment

All College of Law classes are taught in English, so proficiency in reading, writing and speaking English is essential. Applicants are presumed proficient in English if they: (1) are from a country where English is an official language; or (2) earned an undergraduate or graduate degree from a college or university in which instruction is in English.

For further details, please refer to the currently published bulletin.

### Holiday Schedule

Georgia State University has established 12 official paid holidays each year for its employees. An exact schedule of these holidays is published each year by the university administration. The University will be closed for the following designated holidays.

- New Year’s Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- Memorial Day



- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday following Thanksgiving
- Five days Winter Holiday\*

\*This takes place during a two-week mandatory University closing

## Work Hours & Scheduling Limitations

- Graduate assistants that are full-time students may not exceed 10 hours per week or 120 hours during regular academic semester . Part time students may not exceed 5 hours per week or 60 hours during the regular academic semester. This hourly restriction is inclusive of all graduate employment categories at Georgia State University.
- Graduate assistants do not qualify for overtime and are not legally covered by overtime provisions.
- Graduate employees graduating from the University may work as graduate assistants until the last day of regularly scheduled final exams or as scheduled by supervisor. Please consult the University's Academic calendar for these dates. The only exception to this policy is for international graduate employees. International graduate employees have established work authorization expiration dates that may end prior to the last day of final exams for the effective term(s) of employment. International Students Scholars Services- J-1, F-1 employment requirements, [url. http://iss.gsu.edu/](http://iss.gsu.edu/)

## Enrollment Requirements

- Students awarded a full-tuition waiver must enroll in a minimum of nine credit hours, during the fall or spring, or six credit hours during the summer term.
- Students awarded a half-tuition waiver must be enrolled for a minimum of six credit hours, during the fall or spring, or three credit hours during the summer term.
- International students must verify summer semester registration requirements with International Student Scholar Services.

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## Non-Law Students

Non-law students must have the permission of their degree program to hold a graduate assistantship in the College of Law, and may not exceed their program's limitation on the number of hours to be worked. These students must meet the same requirements as law students with the exception of having to complete the first full-time program.

## Graduate Assistant Payroll Setup

All new employees must complete a new hire packet and I-9 verification by the first day of employment. Failure to do so will delay your first paycheck. New employees are also required to sign up for the OneUSG Connect for personnel management.

## Concurrent Appointments

Graduate assistants may work concurrently in other departments per the provisions of their appointment status and as long as they don't exceed a combined total 2.5 appointments. Graduates may not, however, work in two concurrent employment categories (i.e. graduate assistants cannot work as both a graduate assistant and free-based graduate assistant simultaneously). This includes appointments across the University System of Georgia.

## Multiple Assistantships

Students generally may hold the equivalent of up to 50% FTE (approximately 20 hours per week). With the written approval of the student's dean, a student (except foreign national students) may be permitted to hold more than a 50% FTE.

## Compensation

Salaries for graduate assistants should be based on both the employment type and the complexity of duties assigned to the graduate. It is the department's responsibility to establish job duties and consider budgetary provisions to ensure that graduate employees are compensated appropriately and equitably for the work assigned.

## Tuition Waivers

To remain eligible for tuition waivers, a student must have submitted completed appointment forms by:

- Fall semester: August 1
- Spring semester: January 6
- Summer semester: June 1

It is the student's responsibility to verify that a tuition waiver has been applied to his/her account by the dates above. Waivers will not be applied to student registration records after these dates.

Note: Not completing your hiring packet with the Office of Human Resources (HR) may result in a delay in compensation or a loss of appointment.

## Time Reporting/How Graduate Employees Get Paid

### Time Reporting

Time tracking is mandatory for University System of Georgia employees. In accepting your GA appointment, you have agreed to the departmental time tracking policy. This includes a monthly accounting of hours worked by submitting a paper time sheet to [lawgra@gsu.edu](mailto:lawgra@gsu.edu). All time sheets **MUST** be submitted by the deadline.

For general pay dates please refer to the *Graduate Assistant Stipend* section at <https://insidelaw.gsu.edu/human-resources/graduate-assistants/>

### Direct Deposit/Lost or Destroyed Paychecks

It is the policy of Georgia State University that all employees including Graduate Assistants participate in electronic direct deposit.

## Benefits/Parking/Workers' Compensation

Graduate Assistants do not accrue vacation, sick or holiday credit and are not eligible for employee transportation. Graduate assistants may become eligible for health benefits depending on graduate assistant classification.

If a graduate employee suffers an injury on the job or due to his/her job, the graduate assistant is entitled to Workers' Compensation benefits. Graduate employees must immediately notify their supervisor (regardless of the perceived need of medical attention), the College's Human Resources Officer, or the University's Safety & Risk Management Workers' Compensation Specialist at 404.413.9549.

## How to Handle an Overpayment

If for any reason you have received an overpayment please notify the College Human Resources Office, Georgia State University College of Law immediately by phone 404.413.9277 or email at [lawhr@gsu.edu](mailto:lawhr@gsu.edu). If no positive action is taken within 30 days of being notified, Georgia State University will start a repayment process.

## Federal Direct Loans Program?

A law student who needs financial assistance is expected to work for and borrow a reasonable portion of the funds needed to meet expenses. Georgia State University participates with the federal government in the Federal Student Loan Program. Eligible students may borrow funds from the Federal Subsidized Direct and Federal Unsubsidized Direct Loan program.

The university will determine eligibility for each of these programs, originate and disburse the loans directly to the student. <https://sfs.gsu.edu/>

## Student Off-Campus Employment

The College of Law Center for Professional Development offers placement services to students without charge. Listings are maintained for part-time, full-time, temporary and seasonal employment with employers in the greater Atlanta area. Information is available at the College of Law Center for Professional Development, Room 148.

General information on how to review and apply for positions can be found at [https://law-gsu-csm.symphlicity.com/students/?signin\\_tab=0](https://law-gsu-csm.symphlicity.com/students/?signin_tab=0).

## Orientation and Training

The immediate supervisor has overall responsibility for ensuring that new graduate employees receive a full new graduate employee orientation and any necessary training while employed as a graduate assistant. Orientations and training may vary from department to department.

## Name and Address Changes

The Payroll Services should be notified of name changes immediately. The Graduate Assistant must present an original and official document indicating his/her new name.

Graduate Assistants can update his/her address with the University's Payroll Department: Electronically through OneUSG Connect. When updating his/her address the graduate employee should always use a permanent address.

## Graduate Assistant Responsibilities and Rights

### Conduct

All Graduate assistants are expected to follow acceptable business and professional principles in matters of business and personal conduct. Georgia State University expects all graduate employees to adhere to the following general principles:

- Observe the highest standards of professionalism at all times.
- Perform responsibilities in a manner consistent with the university's values and ethical standards.
- Comply with all laws applicable to the institution.
- Treat others, including customers, graduates, and other employees with respect.

Unsatisfactory performance, work habits, or overall attitude, conduct or demeanor; violation of institutional policies, procedures or guidelines or any other behavior or conduct deemed inappropriate by the university or supervisor may lead to termination of employment.

## Confidentiality

Some graduate assistants may have access to sensitive and proprietary information. The protection of confidential business information is vital to the interests and the success of the College of Law and Georgia State University. Confidential information should not be removed from the institution or used for any purpose other than University business. Graduate assistants who improperly use or disclose confidential business information will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment and legal action.

## Dress Code

A graduate assistant should dress in clothing that is appropriate for the graduate employee's particular position of employment. Graduate assistants should not wear clothing that would not be acceptable in a professional business setting. The graduate employee should check with his/her direct supervisor to find out what the appropriate attire is for his/her employment.

## Absences

Unforeseen absences due to illness or other uncontrollable circumstances should be reported immediately. Planned absences should be arranged in advance and approved by the supervisor.

## Personal Telephone Calls

Personal telephone calls are discouraged and should be made during breaks or lunch time. However, it is recognized that there are times when they are necessary during business hours. Departments should use discretion when allowing graduate assistants to make personal telephone calls.

## Parking

Graduate assistants who wish to park on campus must purchase a graduate parking permit. Graduate assistants are not eligible to park in employee parking lots/spaces.

## Accidents

On the job accidents and/or injuries must be reported to a supervisor immediately whether or not medical attention is required.

## Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is prohibited by Georgia State University, the University System of Georgia and by state and federal law. Sexual harassment is a form of prohibited sex discrimination. Georgia State University is firmly committed to maintaining a work environment free of sexual harassment and does so by providing training for all employees explaining the definition of sexual harassment, how to report sexual harassment and the consequences for sexually harassing a member of the University community. Sexual harassment of any member of the

University community is prohibited and will subject the offender to disciplinary action which may include termination.

For the full definition of sexual harassment, please refer to the Classified Employee Handbook (section 101.3a).

Any employee who feels that he/she has been the victim of harassment is encouraged to use the University's internal procedures to resolve complaints. The supervisor is also responsible to report any knowledge of harassment. The complainant may elect to use any of the three University procedures. The complainant may consult informally with a counselor (employees contact Faculty and Staff Assistance), with the University Ombudsperson, or the complainant may submit a formal complaint with the Opportunity Development/Diversity Education Planning Office. *Complainants should note that informal resolution through the Ombudspersons Office or Faculty and Staff Assistance does not constitute "putting the University on notice" of sexual harassment.*

Formal complaint procedures through the Opportunity Development/Diversity Education Planning Office focus on investigation and discipline. A complainant may use any of the procedures initially, and may move among them as the situation dictates. Employees may also file harassment complaints with the appropriate state or federal agencies under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972.

## **Equal Employment Opportunity/Affirmative Action**

Georgia State University stipulates that no person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, sex, religion, creed, age, sexual orientation, gender, disability, or national origin, be excluded from employment or participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity conducted by Georgia State University or any of its several departments now in existence or hereafter established.

It continues to be the policy of Georgia State University to implement affirmative action and equal opportunity for all employees, graduates and applicants for employment or admission without regard to race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, veteran status or disability.

The university's affirmative action program and related policies are developed in compliance with Executive Orders 11246 and 11375, as amended; the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Sections 503 & 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Title 11) and their implementing regulations; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, as it amends 38 U.S.C. 4212.

In conformance with the federal regulations listed above, Georgia State University does not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment or against any graduate or applicant for admission with regard to any opportunity for which the employee or graduate is

qualified. Persons wishing to file complaints under the provisions of this policy should contact the AVP of Opportunity Development/Diversity Education Planning, 10 Park Place SE Suite 460, Atlanta, Georgia 30303-3085, 404.413.2567.

## **Discriminatory Harassment Policy and Non-Discrimination Policy Statement**

Georgia State University allows the free inquiry into all ideas and the free expression of opinions by those within it as a part of the basic process of education. In the presence of harassing behavior, a person's learning or working ability may be impaired. This discriminatory harassment policy acknowledges protection for free speech, which is guaranteed by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, while at the same time requiring that the dignity and worth of the individual be nurtured and protected.

The University will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual identity, age, disability, national origin or religion. Every graduate and employee in the University community has the responsibility not to engage in any unlawful discrimination.

Complainants who believe that they are victims of discriminatory harassment are encouraged to use the University's internal procedures to resolve complaints which are listed under Section 700 of the Classified Employee Handbook. They may also file discriminatory harassment complaints with appropriate state or federal agencies under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

The complainant may elect any of several internal procedures. The complainant may seek an informal resolution by:

- Conferring with the University Ombudsperson;
- Consulting with administrators who oversee the respondent;
- Initiating formal procedures through the Opportunity Development/Diversity Education Planning Office;
- Obtaining personal counseling through Faculty and Staff Assistance; such counseling lies outside the University's mechanisms for resolving complaints of discriminatory harassment, and is intended solely for the personal benefit of the individual.

## **Termination Guidelines**

Termination of an employee is a response to serious misconduct or failure to satisfactorily to correct problem performance and/or conduct issues. Georgia is an "employment-at will" state, which means that an employer or employee may generally terminate an employment relationship at any time and for any reason.

### Involuntary Termination for Graduate Assistants

Graduate Assistants may be terminated for cause. Georgia State University encourages all supervisors to follow progressive discipline process; however, there are certain offenses that warrant immediate termination. Those offenses should be discussed with employees by their supervisor. When notified of termination, the employee must return University issued to the in conjunction with their appointment(s).

### Resignation

Resignation is voluntary relinquishment of employment by an employee. An employee should submit written notification of termination a minimum of two weeks prior to his/her last day worked. Before leaving, the employee must return all University property including electronic devices and/or keys. Employees who resign for any reason are requested to give as much notice as possible.

### Questions Regarding this Policy

Questions regarding this policy should be directed to the College Human Resources Office, Georgia State University College of Law, P. O. Box 4037, Atlanta, Georgia 30302-4037, 404.413.9277.