

Memo To: Administrators of Programs Employing GSI's or GSSA's

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Subject: Faculty/Supervisors' Guide to the Appointments of GSIs and GSSAs

Date: August 26, 2009

The terms and conditions of employment of Graduate Student Instructors (GSI's) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSA's) are subject to the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement (*contract*) between the University of Michigan and the Graduate Employees' Organization (AFT-Michigan Local 3550). Under terms of that contract, the GEO union distributes printed copies of the agreement to new GSI's and GSSA's. Copies of the 2008 Agreement are available for academic departments and supervisors from Academic Human Resources and the document is also available on-line at:
<http://hr.umich.edu/acadhr/grads/AHR%20GEO%20booklet%20web.pdf>

Like all labor contracts, the GEO agreement defines the context and many specific rules and regulations governing the employment of affected employees (i.e. GSI's and GSSA's). To facilitate effective administration of the contract, the parties agreed to provide a joint communication summarizing some of its important features for supervisors and faculty appointed to courses that employ GSI's. The attached document fulfills that purpose. Please distribute the document to supervisors and faculty appointed to courses that employ GSI's within your unit(s). Information about graduate student appointments is also available from Department Chairs, Deans, and Directors, or their designated representatives.

Please note the new information and clarifications made to this year's guide, particularly concerning posting practices (**Item 2**), **GSA rights (Item 6)**, and **termination procedure (Item 9)**.

While we hope that the attached summary comments are helpful, the UM-GEO Agreement itself remains the definitive source of information about contract. Additional information about administration of the GEO contract is available from the Office of Academic Human Resources (763-8938 or via e-mail at hr-acadhr@umich.edu). GSI's and GSSA's, of course, can also contact the Graduate Employees' Organization (995-0221 or via email at: umgeo@umich.edu).

Attachment

Faculty/Supervisors' Guide to the Appointments of Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSAs)

Article references are from the UM-GEO collective bargaining agreement

1. **LABOR CONTRACT:** The hours, wages and all working conditions of employment for Graduate Student Instructors (GSIs) and Graduate Student Staff Assistants (GSSAs), are governed by the March 25, 2008, Agreement between the University of Michigan and Graduate Employees' Organization. Refer to that agreement for detailed information.
2. **POSTING:** The posting of available GSA positions has been required since 2002. Units that customarily employ only their own students should establish a system whereby eligible graduate students are able to locate relevant information locally. As of 1/1/09, units that customarily employ GSI's or GSSA's from other academic units must list information regarding such opportunities via the listserve created for that purpose at gsi-gssa-postings@umich.edu (note that prior authorization from Academic HR is needed to submit information). Finally, units should assure that information about their posting practices is included on the university web site at: <http://www.hr.umich.edu/acadhr/grads/postings.html>. (Art. IX, Sec. A)
3. **FRACTION CALCULATIONS:** Both GSI's and faculty supervisors should be given a copy of the GSI's fraction calculation form (#30010) which describes the work expectations for each term. Faculty supervisors are not authorized to increase work expectations beyond those indicated on the form. If a GSI or GSSA believes their appointment fraction is too low, the grievance begins at Step I (faculty supervisor) within twenty (20) days following reasonable knowledge of the concern. (Art. X, Sec. D)
4. **ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS:** To be appointed as a GSI or GSSA, a graduate student must be in good standing in their degree program and for Terms I and II, must be registered for not less than six (6) credit hours. With written approval of the student's faculty advisor, five (5) credit hours may be acceptable. (Art. VIII)
5. **CLASS SIZE:** Each department should have a class size policy for classes to which GSIs are assigned. The class size policy will be provided to any Employee upon request. No GSI shall be required to accept enrollees in excess of the maximum class or section size. Should a GSI wish to add enrollees beyond the established maximum, there will be no presumption of a change in appointment fraction. (Art. XVII)
6. **GSA RIGHTS:** Employing departments must provide resources (e.g. telephone and computer access, desk surface, etc.) as necessary for the fulfillment of the Employee's assigned work obligations. Please note that this also includes printing and photocopying privileges. (Art. XXI)
7. **GRIEVANCES:** The first step of the grievance procedure is a meeting between a supervising faculty member and an individual GSI or GSSA. The topic of the meeting may be one or more areas of the contract including wages, hours or working conditions. The goal of the meeting is to resolve the concern of the GSI or GSSA if possible. Contact your Department/Program Chair or Dean's Office. (Art. XIV)
9. **TERMINATION:** Prior to termination or reduction of duties, the matter should first be discussed with the Employee. Retracting a position after an offer has been accepted by a GSA requires that they be provided with the compensation they would have received during employment. Termination of GSI or GSSA is a serious action and should not be undertaken without consultation with your Department/Program Chair and Dean's Office. (Art. VIII & Art. IX).
10. **PARENTAL ACCOMMODATION PERIOD: MEDICAL LEAVE, JURY DUTY/IMMIGRATION HEARINGS AND BEREAVEMENT LEAVE PAY** have been combined into a single article. Units are responsible for locating temporary replacements for individuals who are absent consistent with the provisions of this three articles. However, an involved Employee should make reasonable efforts to assist in arrangements for another to meet his or her employment obligations. GSI's who are assigned by a department as substitutes for absent GSI's will be compensated by the department at a rate of \$23.27/hr. (Art. XIII)