Fall 2020 Options and Guidelines for Graduate Students with Assistantship Packages (GA/GRA Duties)

CCAS is committed to supporting our GAs and GRAs as they pursue their academic goals this fall. When it is permissible and effectively feasible, we will provide the option of remote engagement for GAs/GRAs who require accommodations or any of the other available options described below.

This document provides options and guidelines for graduate students who believe they will be unable to be on campus this fall to fulfill the teaching or research responsibilities that are part of their assistantship packages. Please read this document carefully, and follow the instructions included in the relevant section, if you need to request accommodations or adjustments to our GA/GRA duties this fall.

If you have questions about any of the options presented in the guidelines, you may direct them to the contacts or offices referenced in the relevant section of this document.

1. Requests to Undertake GA or GRA Duties Remotely Based on Inclusion in CDC’s High Risk Category. GAs and GRAs who are in the CDC’s classification of “People Who Are at Increased Risk for Severe Illness” or who are living with someone who falls within this classification may request to perform their GA or GRA duties remotely. (For more information on those at greater risk of severe illness, see: [https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/people-at-increased-risk.html)] To request an adjustment of their GA and GRA responsibilities to be completed remotely, students may complete the [Request to Complete All or Part of GA or GRA Duties Remotely](#) form and submit it electronically from their GW e-mail account to the CCAS Office of Graduate Studies at ccasfell@gwu.edu by Friday, July 24, 2020. (For international students located outside the US, please see items 6 and 7 below for additional considerations.)

2. Requests for Adjustments to the Schedule or Location of GA or GRA Duties Based on COVID-19-related Circumstances (Not Based on Disability or CDC High Risk Categories). GAs and GRAs who need to complete all or part of their responsibilities remotely due to COVID-19-related circumstances may submit a request for an adjustment to their schedule/location by completing the [Request to Complete All or Part of GA or GRA Duties Remotely](#) form and submitting it electronically from their GW e-mail account to the CCAS Office of Graduate Studies at ccasfell@gwu.edu by Friday, July 24, 2020. The CCAS Graduate Dean’s Office, in consultation with department chairs/program directors and, in the case of GRAs, the principal investigators (PIs) of the grants underwriting the assistantship package, will review each request by considering the student’s academic stage, needs, as well as:
   a. feasibility of effectively conducting remote teaching and/or research
   b. limited potential for revised responsibilities
   c. requirements of the funding source or award
   d. possibility of rescheduling times for on-campus duties
   e. limitations due to visa status or ICE requirements (for international students)
(For international students located outside the US, please see items 6 and 7 below for additional considerations.)
3. **Requests for Reasonable Accommodations to GA or GRA Duties Based on Disability.**
GAs and GRAs with disabilities who need an accommodation to their duties may submit a request for a reasonable accommodation to Disability Support Services (DSS). More information about how to request an accommodation based on disability can be found on the DSS website, [https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/](https://disabilitysupport.gwu.edu/).

4. **Request for Voluntary Leave of Absence.** Graduate students who would prefer to take a voluntary leave of absence may complete the “**Leave of Absence Application Form**” and submit it to their program’s director of graduate studies for processing and forwarding to the CCAS Office of Graduate Studies. All graduate students requesting such leave will be granted a leave of absence for a period not to exceed one academic year. Students need to discuss and understand how the length of leave can impact the type of funding that will be available at the end of the approved leave period. Students may initiate these discussions with their program’s director of graduate studies, or they may contact their CCAS student services coordinator at [ccasgradserv@gwu.edu](mailto:ccasgradserv@gwu.edu).
Because a leave of absence may affect visa status, international students contemplating this option should consult their advisor in the International Services Office (ISO) before submitting a request for such leave. Students who are approved for a voluntary leave of absence will be eligible for the GW Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) on a voluntary basis.

5. **Information about Assistantships for Newly Admitted Students Located in the United States.** Newly admitted students located in the United States will have the option to voluntarily defer admission rather than accept a GA/GRA award package in Fall 2020. Students should contact CCAS Graduate Admissions at [askccas@gwu.edu](mailto:askccas@gwu.edu) to discuss possibilities for alternate start dates and the effect of a deferral on their current funding awards and visa status, as appropriate.

6. **Information about Performing GA/GRA Duties for Newly Admitted Students Located Outside the United States.** Newly admitted international students located outside the United States for the fall semester will not be allowed to engage in teaching and research responsibilities of an assistantship. They will have the option to voluntarily defer their admission rather than accept a GA/GRA award package in Fall 2020. Students should contact CCAS Graduate Admissions at [askccas@gwu.edu](mailto:askccas@gwu.edu) to discuss possibilities for alternate start dates and the effect of a deferral on their current funding awards.

7. **Information about Performing GA/GRA Duties for Continuing International Students Located Inside or Outside the United States for Fall 2020:** Students with a current non-immigrant visa, Social Security number (SSN), and established U.S. bank account for direct deposit **may** be eligible for payment for conducting GA/GRA duties, including from a remote international location, on a case-by-case basis. To discuss their ability to perform GA/GRA duties remotely, students should contact the CCAS Office of Graduate Studies at [ccasfell@gwu.edu](mailto:ccasfell@gwu.edu).
8. **GW Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP):** Graduate students must be enrolled in at least one credit hour in order to be eligible for GW SHIP at the subsidized GA/GRA rate. (One credit of Continuous Research [CR] is permissible.) Graduate students who are approved for a voluntary leave of absence will be eligible for the GW Student Health Insurance Plan (SHIP) at the voluntary rate. Students can visit [https://healthcenter.gwu.edu/student-health-insurance](https://healthcenter.gwu.edu/student-health-insurance), email ship@gwu.edu, or call the Health Insurance Coordinator at 202-994-5300, option 4, with additional questions.