

2007-2008
Information for Graduate Assistants with Half Time Appointments
Biology Dept.

Congratulations on your half-time Graduate Assistantship which you have been awarded for Fall and/or Winter and/or Spring Quarters of the 2007-2008 academic year. Below is information which specifies amounts paid, amounts waived, pay dates, etc. Please note that this assistantship may affect your eligibility for financial assistance. For further information, contact the Financial Aid Office, (360) 650-3470.

Every attempt is made to include accurate and consistent information in this handout. If changes in procedures, policies, or information arise, the Graduate School will notify students and departments.

Please refer questions to the following offices:

Assistantship Appointments	Graduate Office	(360)650-3569	OM 530
Billing Statements	Student Accounts	(360)650-2865	OM 360
Employment Information	Human Resources	(360)650-3774	405 32 nd St.
Paychecks, Direct Deposit, W-2/W-4	Payroll Services	(360)650-2991	405 32 nd St.
Financial Aid	Financial Aid Office	(360)650-3470	OM 265
Health Insurance (plans)	Graduate Office	(360)650-3569	OM 530
WWU Student Health Services	Student Health Center	(360)650-3400	HS 25
International Students	Int'l Programs & Exchanges	(360)650-3298	HS 24

1. What will I get paid (cash compensation) each quarter?

Because the assistantship is defined as a student job, the amounts listed below are exempt from social security, but not from income tax. Most students find their twice monthly gross to be about \$320 (total approximately \$640 per month); the net amount depends on how many exemptions you have claimed on your W-4.

<u>Quarter</u>	<u>Half-Time</u>
Fall 2007	\$1920
Winter 2008	\$1920
Spring 2008	\$1920
	\$5,759

2. How much do I pay out of pocket for tuition and fees each quarter?

The amount of tuition that is waived is a portion of the operations fee. If you register for 6 or more credits you will be responsible for the mandatory \$35 building fee, the \$94 recreation fee, the \$7 renewable energy fee, the \$17 technology fee, and the \$25 transportation fee. The \$63 health services fee will be paid for you. The dollar amount you are responsible for paying is indicated on this information sheet. If you register for 10-18 credits and audit a course, there is no additional fee. If you register for less than 10 credits, you are responsible for paying the \$10 per credit audit fee.

The quarterly tuition due date is available on the internet through the Registrar's Office at <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/registrar/dates/index.html> . You are responsible for paying your share of tuition, subject to change, by this date. NOTE: Tuition waivers are granted only for coursework leading to the graduate degree and listed on the approved plan of study.

If you are registered for:

You will pay per quarter:

	<u>Resident</u>	<u>Non-Resident</u>
10-18 credits	1,344.38*	3,046.15*
9 credits	1,222.49*	2,761.02*
8 credits	1,102.88*	2,473.24*
7 credits	983.27*	2,185.46 *
6 credits	863.66*	1,897.68*
5 credits	598.05	1,438.90
4 credits	478.44	1,151.12
3 credits	358.83	863.34
2 credits	239.22	575.56

* includes \$17 technology fee, \$35 building fee, \$94 recreation fee, and \$25 transportation fee.

3. Billing Statements and Tuition Waivers

Billing Statements

- a) Tuition is charged at the standard graduate rate. The billing statement will itemize the amount of tuition and fees charged and the amount waived. The Amount Due represents your portion of tuition and fees, based on your registration as of the date indicated, plus other personal charges you may have incurred. **Statements are not mailed to students.** Check your account status on WWU's Web4U at https://www.admin.wvu.edu/pls/wwis/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin
- b) The Health Services charge of \$60 will show on your statement as a current term charge. This will be waived by a TA/RA Health Benefit listed under current term credit after you have paid your portion of tuition and fees. Do not pay the \$60. If you are on Financial Aid, you must accept this aid type on your award letter in order for the waiver to apply on your student account. The \$60 charge will not be added onto your total loan amount. It is suggested that you check the box to accept this aid type, so that you do not pay the \$60 charge.

Schedule changes

- Your tuition and fee waiver applies to your account based on your current registration. A change in the number of credits you are registered for may affect your tuition, waiver, and balance due. Schedule changes within the 10-18 credit range will not affect tuition charges, but may create changes in applicable course fees. If you make a schedule change, do not forget to check your student account online for any concomitant changes.
- If you make schedule changes after the first billing date of the quarter, it is wise to check your account balance the day after making the changes. This can be done on WWU's Web4U (see link above).

4. Health Benefits

The state legislature has provided direct funding for WWU to provide health insurance to eligible graduate assistants, both half-time and full-time appointments. We anticipate the continuation of this program and will notify graduate assistants immediately if there are any changes. Information regarding the health insurance program is sent under separate cover. If you do not receive this information within six weeks prior to the start of your assignment, or receipt of your award letter, please contact the Graduate School immediately. The program also pays the quarterly student health services fee (\$63). You must pay your share of tuition before the health services waiver can be processed.

5. What are the credit loads and restrictions for GA's?

Most first-year graduate teaching assistants, whether holding full or part-time appointments, must be enrolled for a minimum of 8 regular Western credits each quarter an appointment has been awarded.

Some graduate TAs may register for as few as 2 credits. Generally only second year students in their 5th or 6th quarter of study will be eligible for the registration of less than 8 credits per quarter. Prior to registering for 2 to 7 credits, students must have an approved plan of study on file in the Graduate School office. (Contact your program adviser for information on the plan.)

Use these questions below to help you understand if you are eligible to register for as few as two credits during your status as a graduate assistant. (Please remember that two credits do not qualify a student for either loan deferment or financial aid; please confer with the Financial Aid office for details. <http://www.finaid.wvu.edu/finaid/>)

1. Have you registered for and completed all coursework on your plan of study with the exception of 690, 691 or other capstone, research, course?
If **YES**, then **you are eligible**. Email the graduate School at gradschool@wvu.edu for final approval.
If **NO**, continue below.
2. Are the remaining courses on your plan of study offered in the same quarter you are a TA?
If **YES**, then **you are not eligible**, because you must enroll in these required classes.
If **NO**, continue below.
3. Are the remaining courses on your plan of study offered in future quarters?
If **YES**, then **you are eligible**. Email the Graduate School at gradschool@wvu.edu for final approval.

For the graduate assistantship, all credits must be through regular Western registration, not credits through the Extended Education and Summer Programs (EESP), or other universities. If you are on federal or state-sponsored financial aid (receiving a Federal Direct Loan, for example), you must be enrolled for a minimum of 8 credits each quarter for full time aid. This is a condition of eligibility for financial assistance. A student who needs to defer loan payments should check with the lending agency or loan regulations to determine eligibility for deferment status based on the number of credits per quarter for which the student is enrolled.

6. What about other employment or salary from Western?

Students with academic year assignments (fall, winter *and* spring quarters) are in pay status from September 16, 2007, through June 15, 2008.

Full-time GAs work 20 hours per week within their department and, in accordance with University regulation at this time, are not allowed additional salary or employment from any other university office or program. Full-time graduate teaching assistants who become employed in other offices

during the quarter they have been awarded a TA jeopardize their standing as TA's.

Half-time GA's work 10 hours per week within their department. They may work additional hours, but not to exceed 20 hours per week, in accordance with University regulation at this time. Half-time graduate TA's who become employed in other offices *and* work more than 20 hours per week during the quarter they have been awarded a TA jeopardize their standing as TA's.

7. When and where do I get paid?

Graduate Assistants are on the same pay schedule as faculty and staff. Pay dates are generally the 10th and 25th of each month. A calendar of pay dates is posted in your department or available on-line at <http://www.acadweb.wvu.edu/hr/payroll/HRPayrollSchedule.pdf> . Your paycheck or earnings statement is available from the departmental secretary on pay day. You may also access this information on the WWU Employee Web.

You may choose to have your paycheck deposited directly into your bank account. (This is separate from financial aid direct deposit. See Student Accounts for information on direct deposit of financial aid.) When you sign up for this option, your net paycheck is automatically deposited into your bank account on pay day. This will continue with your employment each year at WWU until you request otherwise. If you are a continuing employee (whether as a GA or in another student employment category) and have already requested Direct Deposit, you do not need to complete the Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) form (<https://west.wvu.edu/admcs/forms/Payroll/elecFundsTrans.htm>) again. If you want Direct Deposit, please complete and submit the EFT form to the Graduate School or directly to Payroll Services.

2007-2008 Pay Schedule:

Fall Quarter:	Paid twice a month, October through December
Winter Quarter:	Paid twice a month, January through March
Spring Quarter:	Paid twice a month, April through June

8. What forms or paperwork do I need?

I-9 The Employment Eligibility Verification is required for employment purposes by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. Your departmental administrative assistant will complete this form with you in person if you are a new employee in the department. (Note: If you are an international student, this form will be completed with you in the Graduate School Office, OM 530.) The I-9 should be completed at least one month prior to starting work and must be completed no later than your first day of work. The original is kept on file in the Graduate School office. This form is required prior to payroll processing. You will not be paid if this form is not on file. Delay in submitting it to the Graduate School may mean a delay in receiving your pay check.

W-4 Return form to your departmental administrative assistant. Please give your permanent address or the address where you want your W-2 to be mailed in January. A completed W-4 form with valid social security number, or note of verification if you are applying for a social security number, is a condition of employment at WWU. Human Resources requires this form prior to payroll processing. If your assistantship or employment from a previous year is continuing, the W-4 is already on file. If you wish to change the number of exemptions, please submit a new W-4 to Human Resources. If your W-2 address changes, submit an address change form online from your Web4U account at https://www.admin.wvu.edu/pls/wwis/twbkwbis.P_WWWLogin . (Note: This is the same site at which you can change your mailing or permanent address.) If you need a duplicate W-2,

you will be charged a fee of \$6 (subject to change).

SPECIAL NOTE TO INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Obtaining a U.S. Social Security Number

To hold a graduate assistantship, international students must have a U.S. Social Security number. If you already have a U.S. Social Security number, you do not need to read further in this section; however, you must provide the Social Security number when you complete the W-4 form, described previously.

If you need to obtain a Social Security number, please contact International Programs and Exchanges Office (IPE), College Hall 104, (360)650-3298. Please have your assistantship award letter available to show IPE. That office will provide a confirmation memo for you to take to the Social Security Administration office where you must apply for the number. The memo states that you are a full time student and in status.

Take the IPE Confirmation memo, your I-20, and your passport with visa and I-94 to the Social Security Administration office. If Canadian, take your Confirmation memo, I-20, passport and I-94. In Bellingham, the Social Security office is located in the Federal Building, Room 109, 104 Magnolia Street (corner of Cornwall and Magnolia Streets). The application form, available at the Social Security Administration office, is brief and simple to complete.

When you have completed and submitted the application form, ask for a “note of verification” from the Social Security Administration office. This note provides verification that you have applied for the Social Security number. Attach the note of verification when you submit the W-4. It usually takes two weeks to receive your Social Security Card.

Contact Human Resources (x650-3326) with your Social Security number as soon as you receive it to complete the employment requirement.

You should apply for the Social Security number as quickly as possible after you have been awarded the graduate assistantship. The Social Security number is a condition of employment. Official employment cannot begin until you have obtained the Social Security number (or have a note of verification) and the I-9 is completed.

Tax Treaty Information

The United States has entered into tax treaties with many countries that may limit or modify the amount of federal withholding income tax you will have deducted from your paycheck. Please contact Payroll Services, (360) 650-3565, 405 32nd St., immediately upon or prior to employment to ensure your tax status is correct.