

GRADUATE STUDENT APPOINTEE INFORMATION: 2011–12

Western Michigan University

Service Requirement: The kinds of service required of graduate appointees vary among departments, each of which determines its own range of appropriate responsibilities subject to administrative review. The number of hours of service required per week is stated in the appointment letter and ranges from 20 for a full appointment to 10 for a half appointment. Assigned activities shall be relevant professional experiences. Graduate appointees can expect professional guidance and timely evaluation in the performance of their duties from their department supervisor.

Failure to fulfill any of the conditions listed in your letter of appointment shall result in the termination and/or adjustment (pro-rated in proportion to/adjusted relative to conditions satisfactorily completed) of your appointment award, including termination and/or adjustment of any University payment of credit towards salary, tuition award, fees, or other expenses (collectively: funds). The University also reserves the right to evaluate the circumstances involved for failure to fulfill the required conditions and to require repayment of any funds.

Notification and Verification of Status: At the time of appointment, graduate appointees shall be informed in writing of the specific conditions of the appointment by the department or unit funding the award. This notification shall include the amount of the award and any tuition award, details of the work assignment, the time period of the appointment, and any other conditions particular to an individual appointment. The appointee's signature on the letter of appointment constitutes agreement to the appointment's terms.

Eligibility Requirement: To be eligible to hold any type of graduate appointment, students must have regular admission status in a graduate degree program, remain in good academic standing, and meet the enrollment requirement for the term of appointment (see below). Appointments that do not meet these requirements will be cancelled by the Graduate College.

Enrollment Requirement: The minimum enrollment requirement for assistantships, associateships, and Thurgood Marshall fellowships each semester is **six** graduate credit hours. In a session, **three** graduate credit hours are required regardless of type of appointment. Individual departments *may* require an enrollment of more than the minimum number of credit hours. Appointees must be registered in semesters and terms during which they receive financial support. **Please note that undergraduate credit and Extended University Programs courses *may* satisfy the enrollment requirement only with prior approval from the hiring department. Tuition awards will not pay toward these courses unless the hiring department has given approval.**

All requests for underenrollment by graduate appointees must be approved by the Graduate College before the end of drops/adds or the student will not be paid the tuition award.

Enrollment Fee: Students registered for five or more credits in a semester (four or more credits in a session) are assessed, as part of the enrollment fee, prepaid student health center and recreation center fees that allow unlimited access to health center services and recreation center facilities. Students enrolled for four or fewer credits in a semester (three or fewer credits in a session) are assessed a smaller enrollment fee which continues to allow for services at the health center and ten visits per semester (5 visits per session) to the recreation center. Students in the latter example must pay an additional fee to enable them to have unlimited recreation center privileges.

Student Email Account: All WMU students receive a University email account (address@wmich.edu) at the time of creation of a Bronco NetID. The University frequently communicates with students via email. In the case of graduate appointees, important information regarding required training, health insurance enrollment, and other matters will be sent to students' email accounts. Appointees should begin checking their account for this information on a regular basis even before their appointment begins.

Graduate Appointee Training: ALL new graduate assistants and doctoral associates are required to attend the University-wide Graduate Appointee Training workshop that is presented by the Graduate College the week before the Fall term begins. For 2011–12, graduate appointee training is scheduled for Wednesday, August 31, 2011. All newly arrived international graduate appointees must attend an additional week of training and orientation in addition to the university-wide workshop. Departments will notify graduate appointees about additional department training, if applicable. Students will be contacted by email with more information about training times and registration.

Tax Implications: Detailed records of all your educational expenses (e.g., tuition, fees, books, and related expenses) and check stubs from any payment you receive from the University should be kept for tax purposes. For detailed information, you should review IRS publication 970, "Tax Benefits for Education." If you are an international student your salary may be eligible for exemption from taxation; international tax treaty information specific to WMU is posted at www.wmich.edu/payroll/international_employee.html. You should also review IRS publication 519, "U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens," for further clarification. All IRS publications are available on the IRS website at www.irs.gov/formspubs/ or by phone at (800) 829-1040.

Ethics: Graduate appointees shall adhere to the same standards of professional ethics as those of the faculty.

Privileges and benefits available to graduate appointees:

Appointment Validation: Upon verification of appointee status, the appointee will become eligible to receive certain privileges from Parking Services, WMU Bookstore, and the University libraries. Appointees with academic year (both Fall and Spring) appointments may continue to have access to certain privileges (e.g., library borrowing privileges) during the summer sessions if they pre-enroll for the upcoming Fall semester.

Tuition Award: Graduate appointees shall, at the discretion of the University, be granted a full or partial tuition award depending on their degree level and type of appointment. Any such tuition to be awarded will be described in the appointment letter. Students who are granted a tuition award and subsequently withdraw from a class after the refund period and/or cancel the appointment may be required to repay the portion of tuition that was granted as a benefit of the appointment.

Tuition awards will not pay toward undergraduate and Extended University Programs courses unless your hiring department has given approval and approval is also granted by the Graduate College.

Your tuition award amount will be credited to your student account before the beginning of the term. Any overpayment or underpayment due to a change in your enrollment will be corrected after the end of the drop/add period through an adjustment to your student account. **Any unused tuition award is forfeited and cannot be paid to the student or carried forward to another term.**

Tuition Payment Deferral: Appointees may enroll in the University installment payment plan at <http://gowmu.wmich.edu>. Select the Payment and Account Information link, then the Payment Plan tab. The usual \$30 enrollment fee for this service will be charged at the time of enrollment. Once your graduate assistantship award pays to your student account, the \$30 enrollment fee will be credited back to your student account. Delinquent accounts are subject to all University collection procedures, including referral to an external collection agency. All tuition and fees must be paid or arrangements for payment made prior to registration for the next semester/session.

Health Care: Appointees will be offered opportunities in Fall and Spring to enroll in the University's student health insurance plan at reduced cost. The University has worked to design a cost-effective health insurance plan to provide for students' basic health care needs and protect them from catastrophic health care costs. The policy covers the majority of charges incurred due to illness and injury when treated at the Sindecuse Health Center (SHC) and a smaller portion of costs elsewhere when receiving services in- or out-of-network. For information on the student health insurance plan, see www.wmich.edu/healthcenter/insurance/student.htm.

The University pays a portion of the premium cost for graduate appointees who enroll in Fall or Spring. **However, students must enroll through the Graduate College each academic year to receive this benefit.** Enrollments take place online during the first three weeks of the Fall and Spring semesters. Appointees who are first appointed in a Summer session may enroll through Sindecuse Health Center for a student health insurance plan at regular cost; the premium subsidy is available only to Fall and Spring enrollees. For more information, or if you have not received enrollment information by August 15, check the Graduate College website at www.wmich.edu/grad for graduate appointee health insurance enrollment information.

Parking: Graduate appointees are exempt from paying the motor vehicle registration fee but must register their vehicle with Parking Services and present their letter of appointment.

Appointees with a teaching classification shall have the option of a graduate hang tag (good for the entire academic year) or temporary sticker parking permit. Appointees with research or non-teaching classifications shall be given a temporary sticker parking permit, and do not have the option of a hang tag. The temporary sticker parking permit is valid for one semester only. A new temporary sticker parking permit must be obtained from Parking Services each semester on appointment, if needed.

Bookstore: In the term(s) they hold an appointment, graduate appointees shall receive a 10% discount at the WMU Bookstore in the Bernhard Center on books and supplies (excluding class rings and sale items) purchased for personal use. To receive this discount, appointees must identify their status as graduate appointees at the service desk before purchases are made.

Library: Appointees will receive certain privileges at the University Libraries when they identify their status as graduate appointees before checkout. The borrowing period for graduate appointees is one semester. Appointees may borrow up to 50 items, and are exempt from ordinary overdue fines. The exemption does not include fines for overdue recalled items, or replacement and processing charges for lost items. Details are available at the library circulation desk.

University Housing: Graduate appointees will be accorded priority in securing University housing in residence halls or family housing apartments (if deadlines are observed and vacancies permit).

Facilities: Graduate appointees will be accorded the use of University facilities (e.g., offices, research facilities, etc.) authorized by the director of the facilities on the same basis as faculty. This does not include the West Hills Athletic Club.

It is your responsibility to report any errors in your compensation to your department office. In the event of an underpayment, a correction will be made to provide you with the amount due. In the event of an overpayment, your University account will be debited in the amount of the overpayment.