

**Academic/Support Unit Name**

118 College Drive #XXXX | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.XXXX | Fax: 601.266.XXXX | [www.usm.edu/XXXX](http://www.usm.edu/XXXX)

Graduate School Memorandum for Assistantship Award

Graduate Assistant’s Name: GA’s EMPLID:

Congratulations! We are pleased to offer you a Graduate Assistantship. These appointments are awarded to students who have excellent credentials. Below is information pertaining to your assistantship award.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Academic/Support Unit of Assignment |  |
| Area of Discipline |   |
| Begin Date\* |  |
| End Date \* |  |
| Stipend Amount  |  |
| # of Hours to be worked per week (not to exceed 20 hours per week) |  |

\*Dates are established by HR.

\*If you have been previously employed in a benefited position with USM, you must sit out 6 months before being hired as a Graduate Assistant.

*You are being awarded* ***type of assistantship***/***# of months).***

**Hiring dates for summer 2023 and fall/spring 2023/2024:**

**Summer dates:**

PAF Effective Start Date **May 17, 2023**

PAF Effective End Date **August 16, 2023**

*Stipend Distribution – Students will receive a prorated check at the end of May, full checks at the end of June – July, and a prorated check at the end of August.*

**Fall/spring dates:**

PAF Effective State Date**August 17, 2023**

PAF Effective End Date**May 16, 2024**

*Stipend Distribution – Students will receive a prorated check at the end of August, full checks at the end of September – April, and a prorated check at the end of May.*

**The following is included with your assistantship:**

1. [Insert Full/Partial] tuition waiver. *(Tuition waivers cover 9-13 hours per fall/spring semester and will be posted by the 10th day of classes. Hours over 13 are the sole financial responsibility of the student. Tuition waivers cover up to 3 graduate hours for the summer term. Tuition waivers do not cover course fees, special/student activity fees, international fees, lab fees, audit classes, capital improvement fees, etc.)*
2. Out-of-state tuition waiver (if applicable).
3. The University of Southern Mississippi requires that all Graduate Assistants have a qualified healthcare plan. To support that goal, the University offers a healthcare plan where GAs are auto-enrolled and must waive the plan if not needed. If the plan is waived, the GA must provide evidence of comparable coverage. All international GAs are required to maintain this health insurance unless specified by International Student and Scholar Services. There is a monthly cost associated with this plan.

 ***In order for a tuition waiver to be posted to your student account***, you must meet the following conditions:

1. Must be admitted with a **regular** admit status and matriculated into a degree program (Conditional Admits cannot hold an assistantship).
2. ***Must be registered*** in a minimum of **nine (9) graduate credit hours during the fall and/or spring term (1 hour during the summer, if working as a graduate assistant). GA’s not registered in the required number of hours will not have their assistantship paperwork processed; therefore, employment cannot commence.** Summer tuition waivers may be granted up to 3 graduate credit hours pending funding availability. If you plan to graduate during the summer term, additional hours may be requested by your academic/support unit and will be considered if funding permits.

­Has completed all required paperwork with the Human Resources (HR) Office (PAF, tax forms, I9, background check, etc.). GA acknowledges that working prior to HR approving the Background Check and I9 E-Verify process could result in termination. *\*All hiring paperwork must be completed prior to beginning work as a graduate assistant. If hiring paperwork is not completed prior to beginning work, suspension of work commensurate with prorating stipend and tuition waiver(s) will commence.\** Please go to <https://www.usm.edu/employment-human-resources/_files/redtail_new_hire_info_sheet_2023.pdf> for more information.

1. Has opted to purchase health insurance through the University at a reduced rate which is withheld from the student’s paycheck. Enrollment is automatic unless you provide proof of comparable insurance to the Office of Human Resources. Waivers are due by the date set by HR and must be completed each year. Failure to enroll or provide documentation of comparable insurance will result in the premium being withheld from the student’s paycheck and is **non-refundable**. Go to <https://www.usm.edu/employment-human-resources/ga-ra-international-student-information.php> for more information.

Continuing your assistantship appointment and the possibility for renewal requires the following:

1. Adherence to all University, Graduate School, and academic/support unit policies.
2. Satisfactory progress to degree and being in good standing (3.0 cumulative GPA).
3. Satisfactory execution of assigned duties (provided by your academic/support unit).
4. Available funding for assistantship stipend and tuition waivers.
5. Continuous enrollment in a minimum of required graduate credit hours. If during the course of the semester graduate enrolled hours falls below required minimum and/or you are terminated for any reason, tuition and health benefits will cease. Effective the termination date you will become financially responsible for any remaining pro-rated charges relating to tuition and/or out-of-state fees. If the assistantship is terminated for any reason and you have opted in for University Health Insurance, your final pay check will be assessed health insurance premiums for the remainder of the term.

*Student Breaks:* As an employee of the University, Graduate Assistants are required to work while the University is open. Breaks are at the discretion of each individual academic/support unit.

*Insert your academic/support unit student break policy here.*

Assistantship Remediation: In the event it is determined you are not meeting your assigned responsibilities, you will receive a written warning outlining steps required to complete in a 2-week period in order to continue your assistantship. At the end of the remediation period, you will undergo a review at which time the academic/support unit will determine if the assistantship will continue.

*Southern Miss Hotline/EthicsPoint: In order to maintain the highest standards of responsible behavior, you are encouraged to become familiar with the Southern Miss Hotline. This new initiative, in partnership with EthicsPoint, provides an easy way to discreetly and confidentially report activities that may involve criminal, unethical, or otherwise inappropriate violations of University policies. Although the Southern Miss Hotline is not a substitute for established channels of responsibility, it does provide opportunities for reporting behavior when those mechanisms are not suitable. The Southern Miss Hotline is operated 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and can be accessed at* [*https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/31502/index.html*](https://secure.ethicspoint.com/domain/media/en/gui/31502/index.html) *or by calling 877-310-0424.*

*CGS April 15 Resolution: By agreement of the member institutions of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), you may postpone your decision of acceptance of this assistantship until April 15th and/or change your decision before that date. An applicant will be required to inform a program of the withdrawal of acceptance of an offer (‘notification”)* ***in writing****, prior to accepting a second offer.* *More information on this resolution can be found at* [*http://www.cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution*](http://www.cgsnet.org/april-15-resolution)*.*

Please sign below your intent to accept or decline this support and return to our office by insert date but must coincide with CGS April 15 Resolution dates for fall hires (date cannot be before April 15th for fall hires only). If we do not hear back from you or receive a signed copy of this letter we will presume you have declined the assistantship offer and it will be withdrawn. *All offers of assistantships are contingent upon available funding pending the University’s final budget for the 20*23*-202*4*academic/fiscal year.* We recommend you keep a copy of this signed letter for your records. If you have any questions, please contact us at 601-266-XXXX or by email at XXXXXXx@usm.edu. Again, congratulations and we look forward to having you join us.

Assigned duties include (but are not limited to): - BE SPECIFIC IN LISTING DUTIES

1.

2.

3.

4.

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Sincerely,

Name

Title & Academic/Support Unit

 I accept the assistantship offer for the 2023-2024 academic year.

 I decline the assistantship offer for the 2023-2024 academic year.

Name & Signature Student ID Date