

Graduate Assistant Landing Page

Hello Eagles, Welcome to EMU!!!

Thank you for choosing Eastern Michigan University to pursue your dreams and to persevere on your path to success. One excellent opportunity to make this path easier financially, to increase your skills, and provide you with resume-building experience is a Graduate Assistantship.

Graduate Assistantship:

A Graduate Assistantship is a form of part-time employment for graduate students offering practical work experience along with a tuition waiver and stipend.

Benefits:

- Graduate Assistants acquire professional work experience and have the opportunity to create a network of connections with professionals in their field.
- **A full-time Graduate Assistantship (average 20 hours/week)** provides a financial award which includes up to 18 graduate credit hours of tuition waiver over an academic year (no more than 9 credit hours per semester) and a financial stipend. If there are any credit hours remaining in the 18 credit hour award (at most 6), the remaining hour(s) can be used for Spring/Summer courses in the same academic year.
- **A half-time Graduate Assistantship (average 10 hours /week)** includes up to nine (9) graduate credit hours of tuition waiver per academic year divided over the Fall (5 hours) and Winter (4 hours) semesters and a stipend. No tuition waiver is available during the Spring/Summer semester.

Note:

- Tuition waiver does not cover tuition beyond the credit hours allotted per type of Graduate Assistantship, registration fees, mandatory fees, late payment fees, new student record initiation fee, nor program fees.
- Courses taken below the 500 level will not be eligible for reimbursement under the GA tuition waiver benefit, unless included in the program of study for a 150-credit hour, dual degree, bachelor's-master's program.
- The start date for a GA position will depend on the needs of the department offering the position. This information will be communicated by the department during the application or interview process.

Types of Graduate Assistantships:

❖ **Academic Graduate Assistant:**

There are two categories of Academic Graduate Assistantships. They are:

- a) **Teaching Graduate Assistant:** These Graduate Assistants support faculty with preparation of course materials, lectures, proctoring exams, grading assignments/exams and assisting in lab sessions.

Example Departments: Computer Science, Computer aided Engineering, Accounting, Political Science, Philosophy, History, Communication.

- b) **Research Graduate Assistant:** These Graduate Assistants support research related activities in academic departments and on-campus research facilities. Activities usually include collection and analysis of data, literature review, and preparation of reports and other research related materials.

Example Departments: Clinical Laboratory Science, Biology, Chemistry, Polymers and Coating Technology, Women and Gender Studies.

- ### ❖ **Staff Graduate Assistant:** These Graduate Assistants work in on-campus departments that provide support to EMU students, a specific department, or the University as a whole. The Graduate Assistant may perform administrative duties such as answering telephone calls, emails, and drafting communications, reports, or other documents; creating and implementing student-centered programs; supporting departmental activities; representing departments at events; and executing a variety of tasks.

Sample Departments: Housing and Residence Life, Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS), Disability Resource Center (DRC), Women's Resource Center (WRC), Academic Advising Offices, University Advising and Career Development Center (UACDC), Campus Life, Admissions, Center of Race & Ethnicity, LGBT Resource Center, and many more.

How to Find and Apply for Opportunities

- Search the EMU Human Resources website:
<https://careers.emich.edu/jobs/search?page=1&query=>
- Under Employment Type, choose Graduate Assistant
- Identify which opportunities appeal to you **based upon your skills, interests, and relevant or transferable experience.**

- **Tip:** It is not advisable to apply to positions for which you have no relevant or transferable skills, nor for those in which you have no true interest.
- Create a unique cover letter for each position you are interested in
 - What's a cover letter?
 - A letter you write to a potential employer about a position that interests you. [Here is a sample with instructions.](#)
- Complete the online application and attach a cover letter and your resume or curriculum vitae (CV)
- Create a spreadsheet or other document to keep track of the positions to which you have applied. Be sure to keep a copy of the position description. Once the postings are closed, you will not be able to view the position description, which you will need in order to best prepare for an interview.

Timeline for Applications, Interviews, and Offer Letters

- Opportunities will be posted to the [HR website](#) from February through April
- Apply early to increase your chances of being interviewed
- If you are qualified, the campus department will contact you for an interview
- Interviews will happen in March
- Departments wishing to offer you a GA position will email or call you to extend a verbal offer
 - If you accept the position, an offer letter will be generated. Once you sign and return the letter to Human Resources, additional steps will be provided by Human Resources.
 - If you decline the offer, the process ends with that department.
- **Offers must be declined or accepted by April 20, 2023**

INTERVIEW TIPS

Before Interviews, General Preparation

Understand the position description and how your skills and experience qualify you for the job
 Know how to respond to typical interview questions such as:

- “Tell me about yourself”
- “What do you know about our department and why did you apply to this position?”
- “What is one of your weaknesses?” or “Describe something you struggle with at times”
- “Tell us about a time when you have had to juggle priorities.” Or “How do you decide between competing priorities?”

- This is a **“Behavior-Based” interview question**. To prepare for questions like this, think of situations you’ve experienced that relate to the question.
 - The purpose of the question is to understand your past behavior in order to predict your future performance.
 - Answer this type of question using the **STAR** method. Describe the:
 - **Situation**: provide the context of the story
 - **Task**: what were you or the team responsible for?
 - **Action**: what action did you take during the situation?
 - **Result**: what was the end result of the action you took?

Prepare 3-4 questions to ask the interviewer about the department or the position, such as:

- What does the training period entail?
- How frequently will I be provided with feedback about my performance?
- What is the start date for the position?
- Are there any aspects of my resume or my interview with you today that I need to clarify?
- Know the location of the interview, how to get there, and where to park.

Consider driving to the site the day before to establish how long the commute will take and determine parking options

- Make copies of your resume and reference list in case you meet with more than one interviewer

Day of/During the Interview

Online Interviews via Zoom or Google Meet, special considerations

- Ensure a strong internet/Wi-Fi connection
- Reduce extraneous noise and distractions – silence email and chat notifications, silence phone, distract pets and children and noisy roommates
- Check your background – no piles of clothes or clutter
- Have light source placed in front of you – do not sit in front of a window with a lot of light coming in
- Center yourself in the camera frame
- Arrive 3-5 minutes ahead of time
- Have the contact’s phone number available in case of a power failure or other disconnection issue

Phone Interviews, special considerations

- Ensure a strong phone signal and plenty of battery life to last at least 30 minutes
- Have the contact’s phone number available in case of a disconnection issue
- Reduce extraneous noise and distractions

- Have the job description, your resume, and your list of questions for them printed or on a computer screen in front of you so you may refer to them as needed
- Have a notepad and pen or pencil ready to take notes from the information provided to you

In Person Interviews, special considerations

- Allow more than enough time to arrive to the interview 10 minutes early; have the department phone number available in case something unavoidable happens to cause you to be late
- Greet the receptionist and anyone you meet with a smile and respect
- Greet the interviewer(s) with steady eye contact, a smile, and address them as Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.
- Do not act casually—sit only when invited to sit, don't use casual language (“like,” “you know,”)

Day of/During the Interview, General Advice

- Practice your questions and answers; remind yourself of the qualifications you are bringing to the table (they wouldn't have selected you for an interview if they thought the position was beyond your capabilities)
- Take several deep breaths to relax while waiting for the interviewer; visualize yourself as being poised and confident
- Sit up straight to project confidence and enthusiasm (one of the key things the interviewer will be looking for is your overall motivation: make sure you demonstrate that you are positive and achievement-oriented)
- Pause before answering a question to give some thought to what's being asked; ask for clarification if needed.
- In a panel interview (more than one person is interviewing you), make good eye contact with each person in the room or on screen throughout the interview.
- Refrain from speaking negatively about your former job, supervisor, coworkers, or company
- Answer questions as concisely as possible and avoid making self-deprecating comments; i.e., “I'm not very good at...”
- Be a good listener—don't ask questions that have already been addressed, and don't interrupt others
- At the end of the interview, make sure you know the next steps—how soon will they have a decision? Should you contact them or will they contact you?
- Don't ask questions about salary and benefits until an offer has been made or a second interview has been scheduled.

After the Interview

- Within 24 hours, send an email to thank the employer for the interview and to reiterate your interest in the position
- Evaluate your performance, making notes for things to do differently at future interviews; commend yourself for things done well
- Contact the interviewer if you don't hear back from them within the stated selection timeline