



MASTER OF ARTS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Graduate Assistant

Handbook

2015-16 Academic Year

Master of Arts in Higher Education
One College Avenue Suite 3024
Mechanicsburg PA 17055
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Welcome

The Master of Arts in High Education Program, the Student Employment Office and the Office of Human Resources would like to extend a warm welcome to you in your joining our community or continuing your time at Messiah. We hope that you find employment here very rewarding and wish you to have an employment experience that meets or exceeds your goals and expectations.

As part of the Messiah community, the Payroll and Financial Aid Offices want to meet your needs and expectations as well. During your time as a graduate assistant, the Payroll Office will be available to answer questions that you may have. Feel free to contact the Payroll Office by e-mail at:

Contact: Belinda Conrad, Student Employment Coordinator
Email: Payroll@messiah.edu
WWW: <http://www.messiah.edu/info/20243/payroll>
Phone: 717.766.2511 x.2900
Office: Old Main 114 (inside the Business Office on Grantham Campus)
Mail: Payroll Office, One College Avenue Suite 3010, Mechanicsburg PA 17055

Additionally, the Student Financial Aid Office is available with questions pertaining to federal, institutional, and international work and financial aid. The Student Financial Aid Office can be contacted at:

Contact: Carol Good
Email: FINAID@messiah.edu
WWW: http://www.messiah.edu/info/21313/financial_aid_for_graduate_programs
Phone: 717.691.6007
Office: Old Main 109 (on Grantham Campus)
Mail: Financial Aid Office, One College Avenue Suite 3006, Mechanicsburg PA 17055

Your contact person for anything related to the Higher Education program and your Graduate Assistantship is:

Contact: Tina Keul, Administrative Assistant Graduate Program for Higher Education
Email: tkeul@messiah.edu
Phone: 717.796.5077
Office: Boyer Hall 101E (in the Boyer Center Suite)
Mail: One College Ave Suite 3024, Mechanicsburg, PA 17055

Overview

The Graduate Assistant Employment Handbook is made available to graduate assistants and supervisors annually. This handbook is an important source of many aspects of the graduate assistant process—applying for an assistantship, accepting an assistantship, performing work duties, receiving pay for work performed, and ending job assignments.

Both graduate assistants and supervisors are asked to review and become familiar with all aspects of the graduate assistant employment process, as there will be accountability to the content within this handbook. In the event that this handbook does not provide an answer to one or more questions, please feel free to contact the Student Employment Coordinator.

Messiah College does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, ethnic/national origin, disability, race, gender or veteran status.

Important Dates 2015-2016

Current Graduate Assistants	
FALL Semester Evaluations	December 1
SPRING Semester Evaluations	May 1
GA Site Evaluations	May 1
Graduate Assistant Selection: 2015-2016	
Graduate Assistant Host Proposals Due	November 14, 2015
Graduate Assistant Positions Determined	December 9, 2015
Position Descriptions Posted	December 9, 2015
Priority Deadline for Applicants	February 28, 2016
Interviews Conducted	March 7 to April 15, 2016
Assistantship Offers Extended	Ongoing
Deadline to Confirm Acceptance	2 weeks from date of offer
Start Date	August 1, 2016

Graduate Assistant Qualifications

The Higher Education program seeks to attract individuals who have a strong academic record at the postsecondary level, who have extensive co-curricular involvement at the undergraduate level or full-time work experience at the collegiate level, and have professional goals that match the focus of the Higher Education program.

Graduate Assistant Definition

Graduate Assistants earn compensation as salaried, non-exempt employees for the performance of administrative services that benefit the College and also serve as part of the graduate assistant's academic and professional development. The service performed must be related to the student's academic program in order to qualify for an assistantship appointment. Graduate Assistants must maintain full-time registered, degree-seeking status (6 credits per semester, 15 per calendar year) and good academic standing (3.0 GPA) for the duration of the Graduate Assistant appointment. Graduate Assistants work approximately 20 hours per week during their appointment and no more than 800 hours per calendar year.

Eligibility

General Work Requirements

1. The graduate assistant must be eligible to work in the United States. This eligibility is confirmed via the I-9 Form (Employment Eligibility Verification Form) discussed later.
2. Available to work at the Grantham campus
3. The graduate assistant must maintain full-time registered degree-seeking status (6 credits per semester, 15 per calendar year) at Messiah College
4. Graduate assistants must maintain good academic standing (a minimum 3.0 GPA) in order to maintain their assistantships.
5. Assistantships are structured as 2 year appointments (if a student does not graduate in that time frame, they will not be offered a 3rd year assistantship).
6. Each assistantship requires a position description that supports 20 hours per week of work for 9 ½ -10 months. Generally graduate assistants do not work more than 20 hours per week during the academic year while classes are in session. However, weekly schedules may vary depending on the demands of the host department. A graduate assistant's hours cannot exceed 800 hours per academic year. Graduate Assistants may work up to 100 additional hours in any campus capacity outside the agreement period. Graduate Assistants are strongly encouraged to work with the supervisor to set up a regular work schedule.
7. Students may not count the same work experience in their graduate assistantships for internship experience. The graduate assistantship and internship(s) must be distinct experiences.
8. Graduate Assistants may not be employed on campus in any other capacity during the period of the graduate assistantship.
9. Complete an annual evaluation of the Graduate Assistantship and submit to the Higher Education Program Director.

What Types of Graduate Assistant Opportunities Are Available?

Position descriptions for graduate assistants are created by the host department and approved by the Higher Education Program. The Higher Education Program works with departments/supervisors to regularly review and update position descriptions.

Accepting an Assistantship

Graduate students who are offered Assistantships are required to accept the work assignment by the date specified by the Higher Education Program Director. Failure to accept a Graduate Assistant position may result in a forfeiture of the offer.

Beginning an Assistantship

New

All graduate assistants who begin employment for the first time are required to complete and submit various forms to be authorized to work. Graduate Assistants should complete the required paperwork prior to arrival on campus and bring the required documentation to campus to avoid delays in beginning your assistantship.

You *may not begin* without the following:

- ✓ Valid Social Security Number
- ✓ I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification
 - May have up to three (3) working days to provide verification documents
- ✓ HR Employment Forms Packet
 - Graduate assistants and supervisors will be notified if these forms are not completed *by the pay date of the first scheduled payroll*
- ✓ Completed background checks
 - FBI (Cogent) Fingerprinting Check
 - Child Abuse clearance
 - PA State Police Check
- ✓ W-4 Employee Withholding Allowance Certificate (*federal tax withholding*)
- ✓ Residency Information Form (*local tax withholding*)

Direct deposit is available to all graduate assistants. Graduate assistants interested in direct deposit must complete the Direct Deposit Authorization Form.

To avoid any payroll processing delays, the Payroll Office encourages all required forms to be submitted by the first day of employment.

Continuing Graduate Assistants

Graduate assistants who have worked as an employee or student employee at Messiah College within the past year need not complete the new hire paperwork. However, continuing assistants must complete new paperwork for items such as a name change, address change, direct deposit change, or to re-certify eligibility in the event of expired work authorization documents on a prior I-9 form.

Employment law requires all employees who have a break in service of more than one year to re-verify employment eligibility by updating the I-9 information on file with the Payroll Office. Students **MUST** bring originals of employment verification documents to the Payroll Office prior to beginning the Graduate Assistant assignment.

Reasonable Accommodations Due to Disability

Messiah College is committed to complying with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable accommodations for any employee with a professionally-diagnosed disability. Employees requesting such accommodations are encouraged to contact the Student Employment Office who will subsequently work with Office of Human Resources, the Office of Disability Services, and the department(s) employing the Graduate Assistant to determine any accommodations.

Graduate Assistant's Rights

Your rights as a Graduate Assistant:

- To be treated fairly and equitably by your supervisor, the Higher Education program and Messiah College
- To know what is expected concerning your employment schedule, responsibilities, and other expectations
- To be informed about your performance through verbal communication and performance evaluations
- To be able to contact the Higher Education Program Director to express issues/concerns related to your Graduate Assistant assignment.

Graduate Assistant's Responsibilities

As a graduate assistant, you make a commitment to Messiah College, to the Higher Education Program, and to the host department that you will perform your job duties assigned to you to the best of your abilities. Consider your assistantship an excellent opportunity for professional development and for building professional competencies. In addition, your department supervisor can later serve as an employment reference.

Attendance and Work Schedules

We rely on the management skills of supervisors and the good judgment of graduate assistants to take all factors into consideration when establishing schedules. Supervisors and graduate assistants should ensure that academic pursuits are effectively balanced with graduate assistant commitments.

- The graduate assistant must arrange a suitable working schedule with the supervisor.
- No graduate assistant can work during time scheduled for class or more than 20 hours per week during the agreement period.
- If you need to miss work for any reason, request permission from your supervisor in advance.
- In case of an emergency, contact your supervisor as soon as you know you will miss work.

Attitude

Host departments count on graduate assistants to work and need the assistant to act in a professional manner concerning all aspects of work. Always perform your assigned duties to the best of your ability; the graduate assistantship is designed as an opportunity to build your professional capacity. As such respond positively to constructive criticism. Make every effort to establish good working relationships with the supervisor and other co-workers, including student employees and other graduate assistants.

Appearance

Graduate assistants are expected to follow the dress code established by the graduate assistant's department. In the absence of a departmental dress code, the acceptable dress code is defined to be business casual. If you are unsure about the appropriate attire for your employment, please ask your supervisor for clarification.

Conditions of Employment

Follow the policies and procedures of the College and the department in which you are working. Maintain enrollment as a full-time, degree-seeking graduate student (6 credits per semester, 15 per calendar year). Maintain satisfactory academic progress as defined by the College. Graduate assistants, as at-will employees, may be terminated at any time during the term or academic year.

Confidentiality

As a graduate assistant, you may have access to confidential information including but not limited to:

- Student Records (e.g. course grades, GPA, class schedules, cumulative academic records, transcripts)
- Financial information (e.g. student accounts, financial aid records, donor or parent financial data, bank and credit account numbers, credit histories, tax return data)
- Disciplinary records
- Social Security number or student identification number
- Address and phone numbers

It is of utmost importance that you uphold confidentiality.

DO NOT release or share confidential information about other students, parents, employees, guests, donors or applicants with anyone, including family members, either by phone or in person. Unauthorized release of confidential information is a serious violation of federal laws, including the Family Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act. Respect the records as if they contained your own personal information.

DO NOT discuss department issues with others.

DO NOT remove files or other materials from the work place.

A breach of such confidentiality or any act of dishonesty may be just cause for your immediate dismissal.

Hours

- A total of 20 hours of work per week is required of most graduate assistants. This standard will be adhered to whenever possible; realizing that some assistantship hours may vary during crisis or emergency situations. Hours include time spent in the office, student contact outside of the office, games and travel, and preparation and implementation time for special assignments.
- Orientation of the graduate assistant should also be included in hours.
- If the assistantship is one in which the graduate assistant performs "on-call" responsibilities, this time is generally not included in the 20 hours per week. However, "on-call" hours should not exceed the equivalent of two weekends per month.
- Graduate assistants hours may not exceed 800 hours during the period of the graduate assistant agreement.
- If you work more than 6 hours in one day you are required to take a 30 minute non-paid break.

Amorous Relationships

Amorous relationships between graduate assistants and students are prohibited, and amorous relationships between supervisors and graduate assistants are prohibited. As such, no graduate assistant shall engage in

an amorous relationship with a student. Likewise, no graduate assistant shall engage in an amorous relationship with another employee over whom he/she has any authority, power of evaluation or advisement. An exception to this policy may be with respect to an existing amorous relationship which pre-dates the graduate assistants' or student's affiliation with the College.

Failure to abide by this policy will be cause for disciplinary action which may include termination of employment.

Employee Alcohol Usage Policy

Messiah College prohibits the possession or consumption of alcohol by graduate assistants on property owned or controlled by the College with the exception of personal residences not used for student housing. Graduate Assistants are prohibited from consuming alcohol with students or furnishing alcohol to students. Graduate Assistants are expected to exercise professional discretion and judgment as to use of alcohol when on College business or in other business or social settings.

Tobacco-Free Workplace

Messiah College is dedicated to providing a healthy, comfortable and productive work environment for our graduate assistants. It is a tobacco-free environment. Smoking and the use of tobacco in any form is, therefore, prohibited in, on, or about all College-owned or leased buildings, grounds and property and College vehicles, whether or not on campus. In addition, those individuals who are issued College uniforms shall refrain from the use of tobacco products while wearing these uniforms.

The College will strongly encourage visitors and contractors to comply with the Tobacco-Free Workplace policy.

All employees share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing the policy. Any problems should be brought to the attention of the appropriate supervisor and handled through the normal chain of command. Graduate assistants who violate this policy will be subject to the same disciplinary actions that accompany infractions of other College rules, which disciplinary actions may include termination of employment.

Drug-Free Workplace

In compliance with the Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Act, Messiah College is committed to maintaining a healthy work environment. Accordingly, the College prohibits the manufacture, possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs by all employees.

The health risks associated with the use of illegal drugs and the abuse of alcohol are significant. The College desires and is prepared to help employees who have a drug or alcohol related problem. Employees seeking assistance will be provided with access to substance abuse programs, community resources for assessment and treatment, and counseling.

Sanctions for violation of this policy may range from written reprimand to termination of employment, although counseling or treatment may first be directed. The College may also involve local law enforcement officials when appropriate.

A complete statement of the College's policy is distributed annually to all Messiah College students and employees.

Weapon-Free Workplace

To ensure that Messiah College maintains a workplace safe and free of violence for all employees, the College prohibits the possession or use of weapons on College property. A license to carry the weapon does not supersede the College policy. Any graduate assistant in violation of this policy will be subject to prompt disciplinary action, up to and including termination. All members of the community are subject to

this provision, including contract and temporary employees, and visitors on College Property.

“College Property” is defined as all college-owned or leased buildings and surrounding areas such as sidewalks, walkways, driveways and parking lots under the college’s ownership or control. This policy applies to all vehicles that come onto college property.

Weapons include, but are not limited to, firearms, explosives, knives, pellet or BB guns, tasers, stun guns, wooden or metal batons, bows and arrows (sharpened or hunting tips) and other weapons that might be considered dangerous or that could cause harm. In addition, sports equipment derived from or similar to weapons such as baseball bats, fencing swords, bows & arrows, javelins, paint ball guns should be confined to sports facilities for their use or kept locked in a personal vehicle.

Messiah College reserves the right at any time to contact law enforcement authorities if there are reasonable grounds to believe that an employee or a visitor has a weapon on College property.

Jury Duty

Graduate Assistants who are required to serve as jury members must present a court voucher to their supervisors. Monies earned from the court for jury duty pay--both wages and mileage reimbursement-- may be kept by the employee.

The College does not pay for time off due to jury duty for temporary/occasional or graduate assistants.

Use of College Equipment and Facilities

The College prohibits the borrowing of College-owned equipment or materials for personal use. Exceptions to this policy will be made only in emergency situations or on compassionate grounds with prior written approval. Graduate Assistants are instructed to fill out a "College Property Use Form" available through the Department of Safety. The borrower is responsible to obtain all the required signatures. The borrower also assumes the responsibility for injury to themselves or others and/or damage to the equipment.

Outside employment undertaken by College graduate assistants should not require extensive use of College facilities or equipment. The College reserves the reserves the right to limit a graduate assistant’s personal use of College resources as necessary.

Graduate Assistants found in violation of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination of employment.

Employee Social Media Policy

Messiah College recognizes that social media is a relevant means of communication that is worthy of graduate assistants thoughtful, purposeful engagement to promote the College and its people, programs and priorities.

Graduate Assistants are encouraged to utilize social media in a way that supports the work and mission of Messiah College and are reminded that all content they create is expected to reflect the ethical, moral and professional standards of Messiah College. Graduate Assistants should additionally abide by the College's [Computing Access Policy](#) and refrain from overuse of personal social media channels while working.

When using social media, Messiah College expects graduate assistants to use respectful communication and sound professional judgment. Because everything posted in social media is instantly and permanently public, graduate assistants should review and implement [Messiah's best practices for social media](#).

This policy recognizes that some college programs and departments (i.e. the nursing department) require

their students and employees to additionally adhere to more specific social media usage protocols to honor the privacy or professional requirements of their particular field or governing/accreditation body. Employees unsure of whether their department has such a social media policy should consult with their supervisor or department head.

Safety

Graduate Assistants are required to follow all established safety policies and procedures and to cooperate with safety and security personnel of the College. Such policies have been established and posted in conjunction with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). The Safety Committee shall periodically review safety and health matters on campus. Copies of safety policies are available through the Office of Human Resources.

Graduate Assistants must comply with safety practices relating to their work and can contribute to the safety of all by:

- a. Reporting any unsafe or unhealthy conditions or practices to their supervisor.
- b. Reporting crimes or suspicious activity to the Department of Safety.
- c. Reporting all on-the-job accidents/injuries to their supervisor and completing an incident report form.
- d. Seeking treatment in the event of an on-campus accident/injury requiring immediate attention.

Supervisor's Responsibilities

Supervisors play a key role in making a graduate assistant experience a valuable asset for future employment.

Supervisors are expected to:

1. Develop a learning agreement with the graduate assistant that includes: (a) provision for instruction from you, the field supervisor, on carrying out the duties of the assistantship; (b) a statement of the educational goals and objectives the graduate assistant can expect to achieve through the professional assistantship; and (c) a written assistantship description of duties.
2. Find ways to recognize that the graduate assistant is a full-time student as well as a staff member. For example, we encourage you to show a reasonable amount of flexibility in assigning or adjusting the graduate assistant's workload to accommodate academic obligations.
3. Be aware of Higher Education Program Mission and Learning Outcomes in order to enhance connections between graduate assistant's academic and administrative work.
4. It is recommended that you hold one-on-one supervisory meetings with your graduate assistant for a minimum of 30-60 minutes per week. These meetings provide a good opportunity for you to provide positive feedback as well as suggest areas for improvement related to the graduate assistant's performance. This time may be greater at the beginning of the term, and may gradually decrease as the semester progresses. Initially, sessions may cover such topics as orientation to the work place, start-up work on outlined activities, and review of the student's plans for the development of competencies. As the field experience progresses, this time should be spent reviewing the assistant's progress in achieving these competencies, consultation about the graduate assistant's progression of projects undertaken, discussion of professional concerns as they affect the workings of the office, or other relevant topics. The time is designed to provide the assistant with feedback on her/his performance and for the practicing professional to share her/his insights and experience with the assistant.
5. Complete a semi-annual evaluation of the graduate assistant and submit to the Higher Education Program Director (December and April)
6. Offer a two-year experience for the graduate assistant – assuming, of course, that the graduate assistant performs his or her duties adequately and there is continued funding available. Please contact the assistant's advisor or the program director in the event that you need assistance navigating performance

challenges with the GA and/or if you will not be offering the assistantship to that student for a second year.

7. Keep a copy of the ACPA – College Student Educators International Statement of Ethical and Professional Standards on file. Assistants, faculty, and assistantship supervisors are encouraged to consult these Standards as they apply to their specific settings and situations, to adhere to these Standards, and to demonstrate high levels of professional and ethical conduct in their educational responsibilities. However, many ethically problematic situations are not directly addressed in these Standards. We encourage you to consult with your colleagues, the Higher Education faculty, or others in such situations. (The ACPA Ethical Standards are included in the Appendix.)
8. A total of 20 hours of work per week is required of most graduate assistants. If the required hours of your assistantship differ, students should be informed of this when they interview and prior to signing a contract. This standard will be adhered to whenever possible; realizing that some assistantship hours may vary during crisis or emergency situations. Hours include time spent in the office, student contact outside of the office, games and travel, and preparation and implementation time for special assignments.
9. Orientation of the graduate assistant should also be included in hours.
10. Graduate assistants' hours may not exceed 800 hours in an academic or calendar year.
11. Assistantship sites are expected, whenever possible, to provide the graduate assistant with a desk, access to a telephone, adequate clerical support to carry out the duties of the assistantship; and a computer and access to email. Graduate assistants should have ready access to an office or conference room that permits the graduate assistant to meet privately with staff or students.
12. Complete the Student Employment Resignation/Termination Form for all students who are resigning from a job assignment. Use the New Hire and Resignation/Termination Checklists to assist in these processes.
13. Assist the Payroll Office in abiding by the hiring requirements outlined under Graduate Assistant's Responsibilities and in the collection of required employment and tax-related forms. Do not allow a graduate assistant to begin work without a completed Form I-9 and a Student Employment Work Authorization Card.
14. Define the graduate assistant's duties and explain the job as thoroughly as possible, providing the assistant with a copy of the job description. Providing the necessary training, guidance, and understanding to graduate assistants is an important part of the supervisor's responsibility.
15. Notify the Student Employment Office if there is a need to accommodate an assistant with a disability, as all graduate assistants are covered under the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Student Employment Office will initiate discussions with Disability Services, the graduate assistant, and the department as appropriate.
16. Assure reasonable supervision of graduate assistants during the work assignment to monitor safety and work of the assistant. Graduate assistants should not be left unsupervised for extended periods of time.
17. Manage the graduate assistant disciplinary process, consulting with Payroll where needed.
18. Notify the Payroll Office immediately when a graduate assistant has given notice of leaving an assigned position using the Student Employment Resignation/Termination Form.
19. Monitor pay periods and the number of hours worked by each assistant within the pay period.
Supervisors are responsible to see that assistants do not exceed 800 hours.
20. Follow the guidelines established by the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938, as amended. FLSA establishes guidelines including, but not limited to: (1) the prohibition of employers from accepting voluntary services from any hourly-paid employee; and (2) the requirement to record and pay for all time worked for hourly employees, including any overtime due.

Messiah College Support Services

Cashing Checks

The Falcon Exchange counter personnel will cash checks up to a maximum of \$100 during the regular counter hours.

Notary Public

The services of a Notary Public, excluding automobile services, are available to employees of the College without charge. Currently, the Benefits Manager, the Executive Assistant to the Vice President for Operations, and the Executive/Accounting Assistant to Vice President of Finance & Planning are commissioned Notary Publics.

The Campus Store and Textbook Express

All trade books, office supplies, computer supplies, art supplies, clothing, health and beauty items, greeting cards, imprinted gifts and many other items are available in the stores. Services such as postal, UPS shipping locations and special orders, etc. are also available. FedEx shipping is available for a fee. Textbooks can be purchased at the Textbook Express or online at <http://www.messiah.edu/bookstore/>. MasterCard, VISA, Discover and Falcon Dollars are accepted forms of payment.

Career Guidance and Coaching

The Career Center primarily exists to provide employment services to the students and alumni of Messiah College. However, some services are also available to employees. For example, FOCUS, an online computerized career exploration and assessment program, assists with identifying interests and skills. Additionally, all resources in the Career Center Library and on the Career Center website – from occupational information to graduate school materials – are available to graduate assistants. Initial contact is handled by the Administrative Assistant in the Career Center.

College Press

The Messiah College Press is Messiah's centralized source for printing, duplicating, bindery, finishing, publishing, bulk mail services, and print warehousing. College Press maintains a fleet of satellite copiers where convenient, low volume and urgent copying is required. Office consumables such as copier paper, laser paper, general office forms, and College stationery are available through College Press.

Copy Facilities

The College Press maintains a satellite copier fleet on campus as a convenience to students, faculty and staff. These copiers provide quick turnaround copies for copying needs under 50 copies. All types of work, College and personal, may be done on a self-service basis during office hours. Employee ID Cards are needed to operate copiers. Your supervisor will have your ID card enabled to print for your department. Copies are charged at a per page rate. For larger jobs, the College Press also has an online copy form found in the MC Square Quicklinks and offers delivery back to Hoffman building (LTS) or your administrative assistant's office. By submitting your copy order online, the College Press will copy it at a lower copy rate than the satellite copiers, and return the job back to your office area. This not only saves the department budget money, but also reduces the service costs on the satellite copiers. More information can be found on line at: http://www.messiah.edu/info/20180/online_copy_order

Health Services

Health Services, located in the Engle Center for Counseling and Health Services, provides certain services to graduate assistants. Consultations with the College nurses are available free of charge. Medical providers (nurse practitioner and physician) are not available to graduate assistants. A variety of services are available at no charge, while certain services are available for a small fee. Inquire with the Engle Center administrative assistant for details. Health Services is open from 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. It is closed June through mid-August.

Library

The Murray Library houses the College library, Learning Technology Services, the Brethren in Christ Historical Library and Archives, and the Ernest L Boyer Center Archives. All College employees enjoy library borrowing privileges, including interlibrary loan services. Orientation and instruction in the use of the library are provided by the professional staff by appointment.

Lost and Found

All lost and found items are to be turned in to the Dispatch Office in Eisenhower Campus Center. All valuable items will be logged in and will be held for a period of 30 days and every attempt will be made to contact the rightful owner(s). After 30 days, all unclaimed items will be donated to charity or discarded. All money turned in will be donated to summer missions projects if unclaimed.

Mail Service

The Campus Post Office is responsible for mail distribution to the campus community. Students have mailboxes in the Eisenhower Campus Center, and faculty and staff get their mail delivered to either a mailbox in the Campus Center, or their department administrative assistant (or designated department personnel) may pick it up for further distribution within the department. Mail for Old Main is delivered daily by a campus postal employee. Postal Services is responsible for distribution of US Mail, UPS, FedEx, DHL, and Airborne Express packages, as well as campus mail.

Personal Counseling

The Engle Center counselors, while primarily responsible to provide services for students, are available on a limited basis for personal counseling to graduate assistants. This service is provided to graduate assistants at no charge for up to four sessions, and strictest confidentiality is maintained. Appointments are coordinated by the Engle Center administrative assistant.

Employee Discount Program -- Personal Purchases

A number of local businesses offer various discounts for personal use. A discount purchasing program has been developed and the details may be viewed on the Messiah College website at <http://www.messiah.edu/discount>. To receive each discount you must show your Messiah College photo identification card at the point-of-purchase. Please note that each business has different discounts and restrictions.

Telephone/Fax Services

College telephones are provided for the conduct of College business. Therefore, local personal calls should be limited in length and number. Long distance personal calls and faxes are prohibited.

The College has the capability of printing logs of all telephone numbers, local and long distance, called to or from campus. In the event of perceived abuse, these records may be used to conduct appropriate investigations.

Emergency Closing Procedure, Grantham Campus

In the event that weather conditions or other emergencies should cause the College to close or delay the workday, an announcement will be communicated on the College's:

- Home page (www.messiah.edu)
- Text Alert System

Car Registration

All vehicles that are regularly parked on the campus must be registered with the Department of Safety; this is completed by submitting the Employee Parking Permit Registration Form. Parking permits are issued by this office to employees, who will be issued one mirror-hanging permit per person. If an employee has more than one vehicle, they must register all owned vehicles however will only receive one permit. The

employee is required to move that parking permit onto the vehicle being driven and parked on campus. Temporary permits for visitors and guests are available at the Dispatch Office as well. The Parking Policy Rules and Regulations, the Traffic Code, and the Employee Parking Permit Registration Form is available at: http://www.messiah.edu/documents/safety/Vehicle_and_Parking/TestRegistration.pdf. Persons leaving employment with Messiah College must surrender their parking permit to the Department of Safety or to their supervisor who is then required to return it to this department.

Personal Business and Cell Phones

While at work you are expected to concentrate on your work. The following behaviors are not acceptable in the work place and do not reflect a strong and committed work ethic:

- Extended personal phone calls, accepting excessive personal calls (via a desk phone or your own cell phone), and/or use of instant messaging while working
- Having friends drop by for visits to the workplace
- Conducting personal business such as paying bills during work
- Reading/writing personal emails, blogging, texting, tweeting, or joining chat rooms while working

In addition, you need to check with your supervisor as to whether or not it is acceptable for you to have a cell phone in the work place. Due to matters of confidentiality, your supervisor has the right to determine that cell phones are not appropriate in the work place.

Job Terminations

Generally, graduate assistants who are employed in an assignment will be given the opportunity to continue in that assignment for two years. Exceptions to this general rule include reasons not limited to a departmental staff restructuring or a disciplinary process. Graduate assistants are employed at will and are NOT guaranteed a job assignment for any specified length of time.

The HIED Program Director and/or Host Department may terminate a student's graduate assistantship if the graduate assistant is no longer enrolled and attending classes (e.g., withdrawal, suspension, medical leave).

Below are examples of behaviors that will result in disciplinary action, including the possibility of immediate dismissal by the supervisor/department. Eligibility for future employment will be evaluated based upon the reason for termination from an assignment.

1. Excessive tardiness or absences without a legitimate excuse
2. Sloppy or unclean appearance
3. Carelessness or lack of attention that results in injury to property, person, or public relations
4. Inappropriate conduct including profanity, physical violence, sexual misconduct and harassment
5. Discourtesy or failure to work harmoniously with fellow employees
6. Breach of confidentiality
7. Theft
8. Being under the influence of drugs or alcohol
9. Falsification of time reports
10. Incompetence or poor attitude on the job
11. Willful misconduct

Disciplinary Process

In the event of a behavioral, disciplinary, or similar issues, the supervisor/department, graduate assistant, and Higher Education Program, will follow the steps outlined below:

1. **FIRST OCCURRENCE** → The graduate assistant is given a verbal warning by his or her supervisor. The supervisor discusses the problem with the graduate assistant and suggests ways of improvement during a specified time period. The Student Employee Disciplinary Notification Form should be completed by the supervisor and a copy sent to the Payroll Office.
2. **SECOND OCCURRENCE** → If the problem still exists after the specified time period elapses, the supervisor conducts a disciplinary interview with the graduate assistant. The Student Employee Disciplinary Notification Form should be completed by the supervisor and a copy sent to the Payroll Office.
3. **FINAL OCCURRENCE** → If the graduate assistant remains uncooperative after the second warning, the graduate assistant's work assignment will be terminated. This termination notice should be put in writing. It should include the nature of the offense and the dates of the first two warnings. A copy of this termination notice should be submitted to the Payroll Office to be placed in the graduate assistant's file.

Termination of Employment

All departing graduate assistants must promptly return all property of Messiah College, including, but not limited to, keys, identification card, Visa purchasing cards, media equipment (cell phones, laptops, iPads, library materials). These must be surrendered to the appropriate supervisor on or before the graduate assistants last day of employment.

Resignation

Graduate Assistants who wish to resign are asked to give a minimum of two weeks advance notice. Whenever possible, more advance notice is preferable. The resignation date indicated by the graduate assistant is to be the last day physically working on campus. Resignations shall be submitted in writing to the immediate supervisor and a completed Notice of resignation shall be filed with the Department of Human Resources. A Payroll Change Form should be completed by the Supervisor and forwarded to the Department of Human Resources

Termination of Employment for Willful Misconduct

All employees of the College are expected to refrain from willful misconduct. Examples of willful misconduct (referenced from the Human Resources Employee Policy & Procedure Manual) which may lead to termination of employment include:

- a. Insubordination
- b. Neglect of duty
- c. Dishonesty
- d. Fighting or threats of violence
- e. Theft, attempted theft or willful destruction of College property
- f. Sabotage
- g. Falsification of payroll, employment, or other College records or information
- h. Unapproved absence of three consecutive days
- i. Harassment
- j. Using College IT equipment/infrastructure in a manner that is not in compliance with the ethical and moral standards of the College
- k. Intentional violation of the principles embodied in the "Community Covenant"
- l. Serious violation of Messiah College policies
- m. Other serious wrongdoing, including that which may harm persons or property

This list is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to be illustrative of the sorts of serious misconduct which, depending on the circumstances of the conduct, may result in a range of actions from the progressive disciplinary process to suspension or immediate termination of employment.

In the event that a Department Director determines that immediate termination of employment is warranted, the termination shall not occur until the Department Director has obtained the approval of Human Resources and the appropriate Vice President or Provost. A Department Director should assure that a witness is present when an employee is notified of immediate termination.

Timesheets and Reporting Time Worked

Graduate Assistants must complete a bi-weekly record of hours worked. Timesheets are to be completed accurately, neatly, and in adherence to the established deadlines for a given payroll period. Timesheets are then scanned or given to the M.A. in Higher Education Administrative Assistant as a record to track hours worked and assess the time commitments of graduate assistants. It is the supervisor's responsibility to assure a graduate assistant does not exceed 800 hours per academic or calendar year. Stipends will be the same independent of number of hours worked.

Graduate assistants may not volunteer their time. Unpaid time includes items such as lunch breaks, holidays, vacation, sick, or personal time, snow/emergency days, jury duty, etc.

Official payroll-issued timesheets must be used and these timesheets may not be altered.

Pay Schedule

Graduate Assistants are paid on a fixed bi-weekly payment schedule. The payment processing schedule is available online at http://www.messiah.edu/info/20243/payroll/387/pay_schedules.

College Emergency/Closed Policy

The College may, on occasion, be delayed or closed in the event of an emergency, including snow delays/cancellations. Graduate Assistants generally are not required to report to work during—and will not be paid for—times in which the College is operating under a delay or closure

Payroll and Tax-Related Documents

Information presented in this section is current at the time of publication. Forms, additional information, and all updates will be communicated via the Payroll Office via e-mail, memo, and/or the Payroll Office website.

I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification Form

Graduate assistants may complete the I-9 form prior to the actual first day of work, as long as the assistant has been offered and accepted a job assignment. Section 1 of the I-9 form must be completed prior to beginning the first day of employment. Graduate Assistants are not authorized—and therefore are NOT allowed to begin work—until the completion of Section 1 of the I-9 form, including the returning of the form to the Payroll Office. Failure to have a completed I-9 form within three (3) work days of beginning a

work assignment will result in the graduate assistant being unable continue work until the I-9 form has been completed. Specific details regarding the presentation of an application for required documents are outlined on the I-9 form.

More information on the I-9 form can be found at: <http://www.uscis.gov/>.

W-4 Employee Allowance Withholding Certificate

The federal W-4 form is a required form for calculating federal tax withholding. The form also includes worksheets (which are optional) and instructions—both for the employee’s use only. Only the section of the W-4 below the dotted line on page 1 is required to be completed and submitted to the Payroll Office.

More information on the W-4 form can be found at <http://www.irs.gov>.

Residency Information Form

The Residency Information Form is a required form for calculating local tax withholding. Local tax withholding is based on a graduate assistant’s permanent residence. In the case of most assistants, this would be the assistant’s “home” residence and not their Messiah College address. For local tax withholding purposes, international students may specify the United States address to which mail will be delivered while in the United States, rather than an international address.

More information on the Residency Information form can be found at: <http://www.cumberlandtax.org/>.

Background checks

House Bill 435, now ACT 153 of 2014, expanded the definition of background check requirements for employees and volunteers who work in higher education. This means that in order for you to work at a college or university in the state of Pennsylvania as of January 1st, 2015, you must have completed the following background checks

- **FBI (Cogent) Fingerprinting Check**
- **Child Abuse clearance**
- **PA State Police Check**

If you currently have the above background checks, and if they have been conducted within the last 3 years, they will be accepted with your hiring paperwork. If you do not have current background checks, or if your checks are older than 36 months, **you will need to start this process immediately** as the clearances can take a number of weeks to be completed and returned. **We also request that you submit all three complete and official clearances together to Human Resources** (not as you receive them – this is in order that we may keep all of your information together). Please see below helpful links in order for you to begin this process.

<http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt?open=512&objID=4451&PageID=458621&mode=2>

This is the Pennsylvania State Police check which can be processed online and the results typically are available immediately or within the same business day. You will need to print the clearance results to include with the other two clearances. This requires a visa card and the cost is \$10.00.

<https://www.pa.cogentid.com/index.htm> The FBI Check is a two-step process. First, you must go online, **choosing the Department of Public Welfare option** and complete the necessary online forms. Then you will be instructed to print the receipt. Second, take the receipt to a fingerprint facility (sites listed online). After submitting the form at the fingerprinting site, the clearance will be mailed to

your home or by email. You will need to include this with your other two clearances. This requires a visa card and the cost is \$28.00.

<http://www.dhs.state.pa.us/findaform/childabusehistoryclearanceforms/index.htm> This form requests personal information, including extensive address history. The completed form is sent directly to the department of welfare, and typically takes 4 – 6 weeks to process. The results are also sent to your home address, and again, you will need to include this with your other two clearances. This requires a check and the cost is \$10.00.

Practitioner Professional Skills Model

Reflective Practice

The reflective practitioner makes explicit the **philosophy and assumptions** that undergird his/her practice in higher education. Reflectivity in practice suggests the following:

- a **thorough understanding and continually updated knowledge** of theory, research, and practice related to teaching, learning, and administration are central to the ability to ask good questions about the complex situations we encounter as practitioners;
- an understanding at the deepest level that **decisions are neither simple nor linear**, and that we need great sophistication and wisdom to understand the implications of all we do;
- an ability to bring **multiple aspects** of prior experience, educational background, and professional judgment to bear in all situations we encounter;
- an understanding that our **professionalism** is based on the ability to act and react using our distinct knowledge as the foundation for interactions with constituents in the university setting.

Source: Schoen, D.A. (1983). *The reflective practitioner*. New York: Basic Books.

Critical Reflection in the Assistantship

As the assistantship supervisor, you play a key role in helping graduate assistants accomplish the following:

- think about issues that enhance their skills as;
- become familiar with the professionalism of critical reflection in higher education administration;
- appreciate their unique personal and professional strengths;
- identify areas for personal and professional growth.

Appendix A – HIED Learning Outcomes

1. To equip leaders to transform various higher education contexts, including colleges/universities, professional associations, and higher education agencies. As a result of completing the Master of Arts in Higher Education program, graduates will:
 - a. Understand the purposes of higher education within a global context.
 - b. Demonstrate awareness of the unique administrative, organizational, governance issues, and structures present in higher education and be prepared to skillfully operate within multiple cultural environments.
 - c. Demonstrate the ability to assess organizational culture in order to navigate organizational structures and demands in a manner that allows them to work effectively within them.
 - d. Demonstrate an understanding of the theoretical and practical principles for effective leadership, including the articulation of a personal philosophy of leadership and the ability to foster leadership in others.
 - e. Exhibit the capacity to assess questions of access and quality in order to achieve inclusiveness within higher education organizations as well as toward advance reconciliation in and through higher education communities.
 - f. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the various program areas usually included under the rubric of intended professional context.

2. To prepare practitioners to make effective, strategic, and innovative decisions to assure excellence in educational programs and mission-driven initiatives. As a result of completing the Master of Arts in Higher Education program, graduates will:
 - a. Demonstrate proficiency in development, promotion, implementation, and assessment toward excellence in educational programs and mission-driven initiatives.
 - b. Exhibit a comprehensive understanding of higher education finance and funding structures as well as the ability to understand, construct, and manage institutional as well as departmental budgets.
 - c. Understand the principles and practices of program assessment, including the ability to incorporate assessment findings into program review and improvement.
 - d. Comprehend legal and ethical issues in higher education in order to comply with regulations and impact ongoing legal questions.
 - e. Embody a commitment to excellence through participation in professionally-oriented internship opportunities and practice-oriented pedagogy.
 - f. Demonstrate the ability to utilize technology systems and their applications in administering higher education functions.
 - g. Demonstrate the capacity to apply content knowledge to real-world strategic decisions in ways that enhance institutional effectiveness.

3. To develop scholars who advance the field of higher education and its contribution to society. As a result of completing the Master of Arts in Higher Education program, graduates will:
 - a. Understand the contours of higher education within its theological, philosophical, and historical contexts and demonstrate the ability to discern significant implications of these foundations.
 - b. Demonstrate research proficiency sufficient for the purposes of program assessment, innovation within higher education, and advancement of knowledge in the field.
 - c. Demonstrate knowledge of significant issues and trends in higher education, including understanding methods of identifying and evaluating contemporary developments.

- d. Display capabilities for research, writing, and presentation in the investigation of specific topics, including the ability to use writing to advance matters of consequence within internal and external constituencies.
4. To nurture leaders with a professional identity rooted in the ethical and vocational sensibilities of the Christian tradition. As a result of completing the Master of Arts in Higher Education program, graduates will:
- a. Be prepared to meet the ethical responsibilities associated with their roles as higher education professionals.
 - b. Demonstrate integrative thinking about ethical and moral issues in higher education.
 - c. Integrate effective practices and wisdom of higher education specialty areas with a Christian perspective.
 - d. Advocate and model a holistic approach to the person in higher education settings.

4. Are there any other comments with respect to the ratings you would like to share with us about the graduate assistant?

5. On the following scale how would you rate your overall level of satisfaction with your graduate assistant's performance this semester?
(1=unsatisfactory, 2=mostly satisfied, 3=dissatisfied, 4=neutral, 5=satisfied, 6=mostly satisfied, 7=very satisfied)
Overall Rating: _____

Supervisor Signature _____ **Date** _____

I have read this evaluation and have discussed the contents of this evaluation with my supervisor.

GA Signature _____ **Date** _____

Please return to:

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