To: School/Division HR Officers and Secondary Contacts
               Business Managers
               Student Services Managers

From: Elizabeth Mayer-Davis, Dean
               Beverly Wyrick, Assoc Dean, Finance/Operations
               ConnectCarolina HR/Payroll Representatives

Date: May 23, 2024

Re: Hiring Graduate Students 2024-25

This memo contains information about hiring graduate students, including guidelines, helpful reminders, and suggested effective dates. Graduate students may be hired for a semester, academic year, calendar year, or other periods as needed. Each campus unit may establish varying effective dates to meet their business needs.

Starting January 2024, a change was made to prorate partial month salary based on the workday methodology instead of the calendar day methodology. This change means that for any partial month payments, the payroll will be based on the number of weekdays (Monday through Friday) during the partial month. Holidays and other leave types are not considered different than a worked day. For employees working the full month there is no change. The graduate student stipend calculator has been updated to reflect this change.

The stipend calculator tool can assist users in determining the monthly flat rate amount to enter on the ePAR form. Use the dates suggested at the end of this memo and the calculator stipend tool to determine the correct amount of pay and to ensure the minimum stipend is met for students who receive tuition and fee awards for purpose of GradStar award entries.

HIRING ACTIONS
Appointments in academic versus hiring units

While there is no formal policy on who should enter actions for students, the *usual* practice is that graduate students are hired by their academic unit, which is considered their "home" department. This practice ensures consistency and support from the student's perspective and helps the academic department to be in a better position to manage their students' workloads and responsibilities. However, in cases where students are funded and hired by other units, please carefully consider the following:

- Hiring units should coordinate the appointment with the academic unit before ePARS are initiated and awards in GradStar/GSHIP are done.
- Is the appointment a short term or longer-term work/funding arrangement (one semester or one academic year?)
- Coordination of enrollment in the Graduate Student Health Insurance Plan (GSHIP), if applicable

- Security is applied to the department that enters the action and they would have access and management of the student's position and job, and overall management of reporting relationships, FTE changes, compensation amount, payroll data, etc.
- Work location is important for accuracy, space planning etc., so having it reflect where the student is physically located would be beneficial and improve reporting.

For GradStar purposes, it does not matter which unit enters the ePAR to hire the student. The department who does the award entry will see the ePAR in GradStar as "view only" and the tuition awards will apply to the budget of the user's department who enters the award.

FTE and Job Titles

FTE should be listed based on hours required per week relative to a typical full-time 40-hour workweek. For example: If a student is expected to work 20 hours per week in the appointment, they should be listed as .5 FTE (even if the appointment is only for one semester). If the expectation is 10 hours a week, they should be listed as .25 FTE. Please adhere to limitations on student work hours discussed in this Student Employment FAQ and in The Graduate School's student handbook, accounting for all concurrent student appointments

Students should only be hired as a "Graduate Teaching Assistant" or "Graduate Teaching Fellow" if they will be assigned to a course in Connect Carolina. Typically, a "Fellow" is only used for those that are the only Primary Instructor on the lecture component of a course. "Graduate Teaching Assistant" is used for those that are assigned to lead the recitation component of a course or other support relating to grading, tutoring, or teaching for a course. "Graduate Assistant" or "Graduate Research Assistant" are other common titles to use if no course assignment is appropriate. For more information regarding instructor workload options and how they relate to instruction, staff are encouraged to review the Instructor Role, Access, and Workload guidance on the Registrar's website.

Short Work Break Information
- Students should be returned from work break if they will be returning to their appointment. Or, if they will not be returning, then they should be terminated.
- When completing the ePAR to return a student from work break, do not check the box to bypass compensation and funding. Instead, be sure to include compensation and funding on the action. This will allow the originator and all approvers to confirm the compensation and funding are accurate.
- Please be advised, if a student is transferring from a job that is on Work Break into a new appointment, they must first be returned from Work Break.
- When submitting hires, returning from work break, and termination, always be mindful of payroll deadlines.

Multiple Jobs Summary and UNC Employee Information

- Use the Multiple Jobs Summary and UNC Employee Information pages in the HR Work Center to review the student's employment and job status prior to taking any action. These pages provide the following information:
  - HR and Payroll status, which helps determine if the employee is active or on a work break.
  - Appointments and their expected job end date.
  - Department, job code, and FTE.
- These pages can also help departments avoid hiring a student into the same job twice, as well as avoid term/re-hires or transferring the student out of the wrong appointment.

Other

- Students who need to complete an I-9 must have a hire date that remains in compliance with Form I-9 guidelines. Section 1 of the Form I-9 must be completed on or before the date of hire and completion of Section 2, including the in-person meeting to view employee's I-9 supporting document(s), must occur within three business days of the hire.

- Typically, students should not be hired before August 1 or end work after December 31 for fall semester and should not be hired before January 1 or end work after July 31 for spring semester for purposes of qualifying for tuition awards in GradStar.

- Newly hired students may receive access to Canvas for course planning but will not see their class roster until the hire action is fully executed and the effective date of the hire is reached. For questions on access submit a service request.

- Students hired to teach a course may begin course planning before the first day of class, so you may adjust the ePAR dates to include that time as compensation. Be sure to use the stipend calculator when adjusting recommended dates.

- Adjust summer appointments as needed to reduce errors such as over/underpayments for fall or spring semester appointments.

GRADSTAR CONSIDERATIONS

To be eligible for tuition and fee awards, graduate students must be appointed as a Teaching or Research Assistant and earn the minimum stipend. The Graduate Assistant job code is not included as part of the minimum eligibility for these awards. The hiring unit and academic unit should coordinate to ensure tuition and fee awards are provided to eligible students. Instate and remission funding are provided by The Graduate School to the academic home of the student, however, if the hiring unit is not the academic department, the hiring unit should initiate conversation with the academic unit BEFORE an offer is made to ensure funding is available. See The Graduate School website for more information.

If you are transitioning a student from Graduate Assistant to Graduate Research Assistant or Graduate Teaching Assistant, you can either 1) submit a hire ePAR and transfer the employee into a position with a GradStar qualifying job code OR 2) update the current position's job code via the Position ePAR, then once executed submit a hire ePAR and transfer the employee into the same position.

For more information, please view the Tips and Tricks for GradStar Load Success microlearning. In addition, please visit the Student Employment website for more information for hiring supervisors, managers, and students.

HELPFUL REMINDERS AND TIPS

- Training materials and other information for student originators can be found here, Student Originators.
- The expected job end date for the Hire or Edit Existing Job ePAR should always be one day greater than the Pay-through date.
- Be sure to review the instructions on placing and/or returning EHRA students from short work break here Short Work Break

- Lump sum payments for graduate students are not allowed. This decision was made by the Graduate School and OHR Benefits in response to Affordable Care Act (ACA) requirements for tracking benefits eligibility. Lump sums payments do not allow reporting offices to get an accurate count of student employees and the hours they work.
- The EHRA student auto term process runs daily from the 1st through the 14th of the month. During this timeframe anyone with an Expected Job End Date of that day or before will be auto-termed. Then on the 15th of the month, the catch-all for the whole month is run with dates within that same month. The process continues to run daily to terminate anyone with an expected end date within the month (except during payroll lockout).
- Use the **Job: Expected End Date** report to manage reappointments for students in addition to other available reports.

HR/Payroll dates and deadlines calendars
- [HR/Payroll calendars:](#) Calendars are subject to change. Please review on a regular basis to ensure you have the most up-to-date information.
- TIP: you can pull the Payroll Deadline calendar into your Outlook calendar and view it side-by-side or as an overlay to your personal calendar. For step-by-step instructions, visit this website: [Combine outlook calendar.](#)

SUGGESTED DATES FOR EPAR

9-Month Appointments

The dates below are recommended for standard 9-month appointments. You may use different dates, but it is strongly encouraged to use the [stipend calculator](#) to ensure the intended amount of pay and to ensure the student receives the minimum stipend amount for tuition purposes.

	Start Date	Pay-Through Date	Expected Job End Date
Fall Only	08/19/2024	12/31/2024	01/01/2025
Spring Only	01/01/2025	05/13/2025	05/14/2025
Academic Year	08/19/2025	05/13/2025	05/14/2025

12- Month Appointments

Units who choose to pay graduate students at an annual rate may also use varying dates to meet their business needs. A best practice is to align hire dates to coincide with the insurance policy year which is August 1 through July 31.

Summer Appointments

For any student teaching through the Summer School program, refer to the Summer Handbook for date information. Appointment dates for summer terms are provided for guidelines only.

Please note that graduate students teaching during summer session II should not have an expected job end date before 08/03/2025 to allow for grading access so you may need to adjust the end date in these cases.

	Start Date	Pay-Through Date	Expected Job End Date

Summer I	05/14/2025	06/24/2025	06/25/2025
Summer II	06/23/2025	08/17/2025	08/18/2025
Summer I & II	05/14/2025	08/17/2025	08/18/2025

QUESTIONS

For **policy** questions:

Contact your dean's office or business office first for policies specific to your school/division.

You may also contact The Graduate School: Beverly Wyrick, Associate Dean of Finance and Operations, bwyrick@email.unc.edu, or Alicia Rogers, Graduate School HR Director, alicia_rogers@unc.edu.

For **process** related or technical questions, submit a service request.