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**To:** Department Chairs, Associate/Assistant Deans, Departmental Admins  
**From:** Dean's Office  
**cc:** Michael and Lori Milken, Dean of Public Health  
**Date:** December 21, 2015  
**Re:** Assistantship Procedures Effective 1/1/16

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Effective **January 1, 2016**, the GWSPH will be implementing a new policy and procedure around graduate assistantships and fellowships. The terms of any appointments approved prior to the effective date of this guidance will be honored through the end of the current fiscal year (June 30, 2016).

The new policy and procedure will accomplish two goals:

- 1) Clarification of the appointment process at the GWSPH
- 2) Bring alignment between the School's policy and the policy of the Office of the Provost established in July of 2013

GWSPH will have two designations of assistantships: **Graduate Assistantship (GA)** or **Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)**.

The GWSPH will also have two categories of fellowships: **Graduate Fellows** and **Graduate Research Fellows**.

Clarification around Tuition Fellowships is also included in scope of the guidance.

The new policy and procedures statement is attached to this memo. A process workflow will reside on the School's intranet for future reference.

All questions regarding this document should be referred to the Associate Director, Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, & Financial Aid, Mark Justice ([mjustice@gwu.edu](mailto:mjustice@gwu.edu)).

The Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, & Financial Aid will also have the approved funding packages from the Dean's office for Spring 2016 for each department/program in January. All approvals for funding opportunities will be made by the Dean's Office. All questions related to packages should be directed to the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, & Financial Aid.

## Graduate Assistantships and Fellowships

The Milken Institute School of Public Health is committed to providing the best public health education experience possible for our students. Graduate Assistant (GA) and Fellowship appointments, a foundational piece of this commitment, are designed to provide valuable educational opportunities for GWSPH students, as well as financial support. GA and Fellowship appointments are made through a competitive selection process and an appointment as a Graduate Assistant or Fellow by the School's faculty and administration is a truly important honor for a GWSPH student.

The GA and Fellowship appointment process for the School is administered by the School's Office of Student Affairs, in cooperation with the GWU Office of Graduate Assistantships & Fellowships (OGAF). Effective **January 1, 2016**, the policies and procedures outlined in this manual will govern all future appointments of GWSPH students as Graduate Assistants and Graduate Fellows. The terms of any appointments approved prior to the effective date of this guidance will be honored through the end of the current fiscal year (June 30, 2016). After that date, any renewal of these positions will be governed by this guidance. These revised policies and procedures are designed with two goals in mind: first, to bring clarity to the appointment process at GWSPH and second, to better align School policy and procedures with the university policy established by the GWU Provost in July, 2013.

### Types of Graduate Assistant Appointments

All assistantship appointments will be part-time, and, consistent with University policy, will be for up to 20 hours per week (but no higher) during an academic year. The screening and selection process of enrolled and qualified students will be done by GWSPH Departments or Program Offices, which will develop formal recommendations for all appointments. These recommendations will be presented to the GW OGAF which will, after federally mandated screening, officially hire the GAs as "student employees", and arrange for them to be added to the GW payroll system. Payroll for GA appointees will be processed on a monthly basis.

Consistent with University, GWSPH will have two designations of assistantships: Graduate Assistantship (GA) or Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA). GA positions can be focused on either administration or teaching.

#### **Graduate Assistant (GA):**

***Administrative emphasis (GA-Administrative):*** A GWSPH student whose primary duties as a student employee are to administratively support the overall activities of an academic Department or a Program Office (e.g., the Communications Office). These duties may or may not have a direct relationship with a student's area of study. In generally supporting the activities of a Department or Program Office, a GAA is assigned to, specific duties may include helping prepare funding proposals, organizing events, preparing materials for use in Department/Office activities, or supporting the routine technical or other operations of a laboratory, plus any other similar work that the Department/Office needs done. The Department Chair/Departmental Administrator will assign a specific person to be the primary supervisor of each GAA.

**Teaching emphasis (GA-Teaching):** A GWSPH student whose primary duties are to assist a faculty member in the conduct of an in-person or an on-line course by helping organize the syllabus, posting course materials in a timely manner, grading quizzes, taking attendance, etc. Note that while serving as a GAT is generally a mandatory requirement for PhD and DrPH students as part of their doctoral program, it is possible for other graduate students to serve in this capacity, very often jointly with a PhD/DrPH student who is fulfilling a teaching requirement.

Per the guidance of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and the SPH Faculty Handbook, students serving as a Graduate Assistant (Teaching) may be hired on a part-time basis (0.25 FTE), with a salary of \$2,500.00 per semester to assist with 1 course.

**Graduate Research Assistant (GRA):** A GWSPH student whose primary duties are to support the research activities of a faculty member who is serving as the Principal Investigator (PI) for an externally or internally funded research project, or someone the PI designates as his/her agent for the conduct of the research. The PI (or his/her designee) will supervise the work of a GRA and review the work products produced by the GRA. A distinctive feature of a GRA's work is that, like all research, it is designed to produce generalizable knowledge; this differentiates a GRA's work from the work of a GAA or GAT.

### **Types of Fellowship Appointments**

The School will align our existing Milken Scholars program and other current or future fellowships (e.g., doctoral research training grants) with the Fellowship definitions provided in this document. Definitions for each type of Fellowship are provided here and are consistent with GW terms. Brief guidance is provided on the Fellowship Appointment process later in this document.

**Graduate Fellows** – Graduate Fellows are graduate students who are in a pure training/education role, that is, there is no requirement for involvement in a research project. Graduate Fellowships may be funded by the university or an external grant-making body. Graduate Fellows receive educational assistance, such as tuition fellowships or stipends, as appropriate, to support them. If their educational assistance is funded by an external entity, the funding instrument may call for a specific type of training experience, and the training experience should be explicitly described in the proposal to the funding agency. Graduate Fellows are not expected to provide services to the university; that is, they are not university employees.

**Graduate Research Fellows** – Graduate Research Fellows are graduate students who are supported by specific internal or external funding sources and who are engaged primarily in original research. Graduate Research Fellows may receive educational assistance, such as tuition fellowships, financial stipends, and other types of support as appropriate, to support their training. If their educational assistance is funded by an external sponsor, the type of support will depend on the specific features attached to the funds. If, for example, assistance is funded by a specific external sponsor, the funding instrument will generally call for a specific type of training in an advanced research area, and the content of the research experience may be described in some detail either in the proposal for funding or in the award. As part of their training in research methods and activities, Graduate Research Fellows may, but will not necessarily, engage in activities that benefit a pre-existing university research project; in general, they are not mandated to provide research services to the university.

## Tuition Fellowships

Tuition Fellowships, such as the existing Milken Scholars Program, are provided to acknowledge excellence within the student body and to foster academic achievement in recipients. Tuition fellowships may be granted with or without a stipend award. These awards cover full or partial cost of tuition for course work that is credited toward the student's degree program, up to the total amount of the award (normally no more than nine tuition credits per semester, for a maximum of 18 tuition credits per academic year). Tuition fellowship funds are credited to the student's account at the beginning of each semester after the student has registered for the required credits.

### Specific Criteria for Graduate Assistantship Eligibility

Students must meet the following eligibility criteria in order to apply for, accept and retain a graduate assistantship:

- Graduate Assistants must maintain full-time student status in their degree program as defined in the GWSPH student handbook.
- Students appointed to graduate assistantships with a salary of \$16,000.00 or more per academic year may serve in only 1 GA position at a time and may not hold a GA position concurrently with other employment at GW.
- Students appointed to any GA position at 10 hours per week (0.25 full time equivalent/FTE), may hold a second GA position at an additional 10 hours per week (0.25 FTE), provided that they are approved to do so through the procedures outlined later in this manual.
- All Graduate Assistants are limited to working a total of 20 hours per week for any GW employment during an academic term.
- Graduate Assistants must obtain permission through the exceptions process outlined within this manual if they plan to hold full or part-time employment **outside of GW** concurrent with their assistantship appointment.
- First-time GA appointees must complete the appropriate tax forms and Employment Eligibility Verification program form (Form I-9) with the University Human Resources office no later than three business days after their start date. International students must hold an appropriate F-1 visa to serve as a Graduate Assistant.
- First-time appointees must agree to a limited background check, and a criminal background check in addition to a check of the sex offender database and acknowledge that failure to pass these screenings may result in revocation of the appointment.
- First-time Graduate Assistant (Teaching) appointees must complete the Graduate Assistant Training Program through the GW Office of Graduate Assistantships & Fellowships prior to their first day.

Failure to meet the eligibility criteria established for Graduate Assistantship positions may result in cancellation of one or more components of the assistantship as determined by the hiring Department/Office and the Office of Student Affairs.

### **Additional Factors Related to Accepting a GA Position**

Graduate Assistants should contact the School's Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid to report any other current or new sources of funding (scholarships, grants, fellowships, and GW employment) during the term of his or her GA appointment. Federal and School policies may restrict the type and/or the amount of total resources a student can receive. For example, accepting a tuition fellowship or stipend as part of a GA position may reduce a student's eligibility for Federal Student Aid. All students are encouraged to review their specific situation with the School's Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid prior to accepting a GA appointment to ensure that they understand the impact on other sources of funding.

Students should be encouraged to review the tax implications of their package to determine their liability. Liability will vary based on the specifics of the package and the student's particular situation. GWU provides information on this topic at <https://taxdepartment.gwu.edu/student-tax-issues><sup>1</sup>

### **Package Guidelines**

Compensation levels for Graduate Assistants closely follow the NIH graduate fellowship stipend scale. Graduate Assistants currently are paid a salary of \$20,000.00 - \$30,000.00 per academic year for doctoral level appointments and \$16,000.00 - \$26,000.00 per academic year for master's level appointments. These compensation levels are set with the expectation that each student will devote 20 hours per week to accomplishing the duties of the specific GA appointment. Students may be authorized to work in a GA position during the summer term if funding is available and salaries will be based on a proration of the above guidance. For example, a GA hired for the 8 month academic year with a salary of \$16,000.00 could be offered a salary of \$8,000.00 for a 4 month summer appointment (May 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>).

### **Health Insurance**

Graduate Assistants enrolled in the GWU student health insurance plan receive a reimbursement or student account credit of \$750.00 per term (fall and spring only) for health insurance costs. The School's Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid will work directly with appointed students to process the appropriate reimbursement or credit. Information on the cost and availability of the GW student health insurance plan is administered separately from GWSPH and is published at: <http://studenthealth.gwu.edu/student-health-insurance>. GA positions do not receive any other GW benefits.

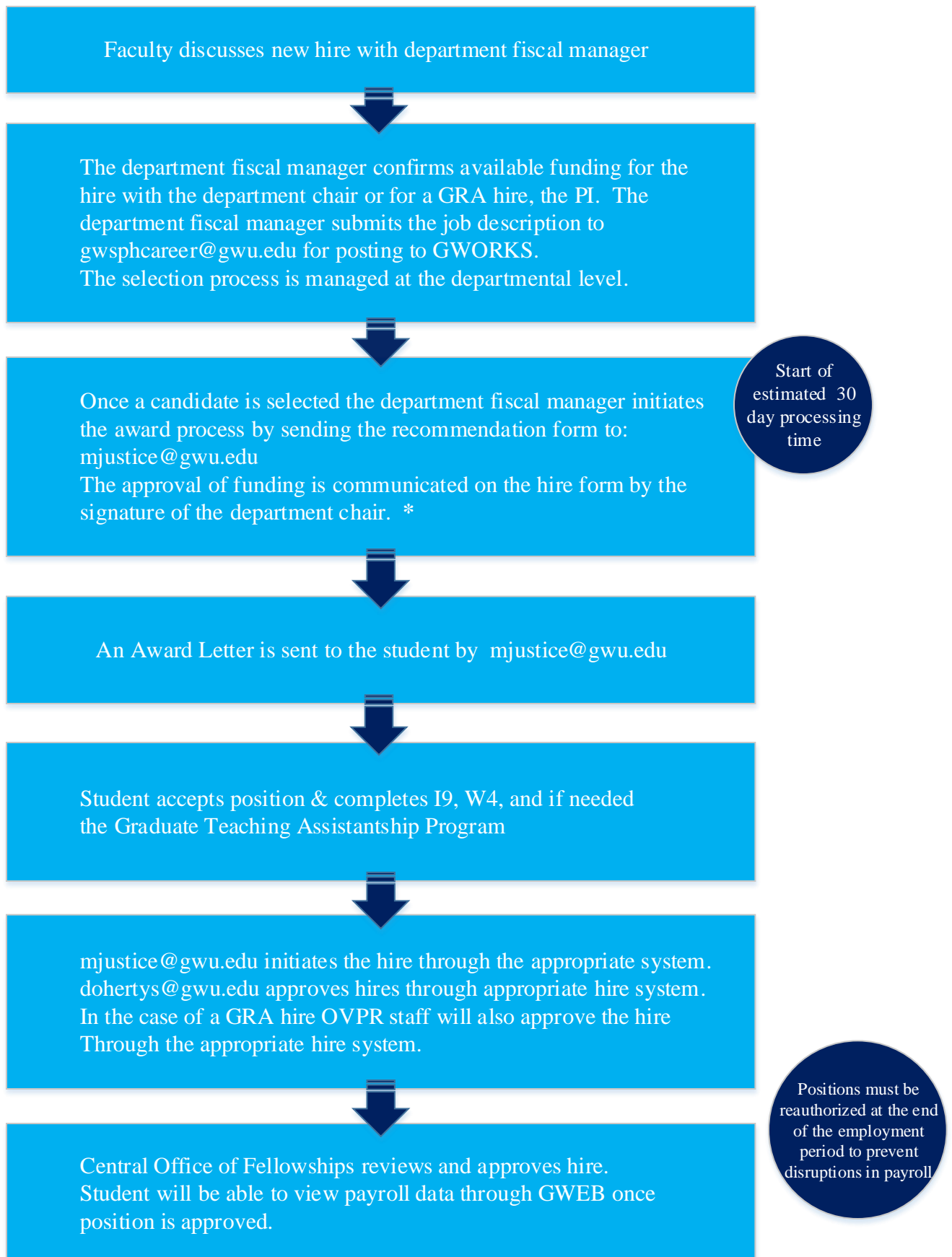
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<sup>1</sup> This information is provided as general guidance only. The University cannot offer individual tax advice.

### **The Appointment Process**

The GA appointment process is administered by the School's Office of Student Affairs, in cooperation with the GWU Office of Graduate Assistantships & Fellowships (OGAF). Within the School's Office of Student Affairs the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, & Financial Aid will be the primary point of contact for the GA appointment process as well as the liaison to the GWU Office of Graduate Assistantships & Fellowships. Figure 1 outlines the appointment process for an enrolled GWSPH student.

Figure 1. Hiring an Enrolled Student as a Graduate Assistant: 30 Day Timeline



\*Approval of funding from the Dean's Office must be documented with an email from the Dean or Finance Director. This approval should be submitted to mjustice@gwu.edu with the recommendation form. Recommendation forms for GRA appointments must be signed by the appropriate OVPR staff prior to submission to mjustice@gwu.edu.

The Department Administrator for each academic Department will serve as the primary point of contact for requesting GA hires by that Department. These responsibilities will begin with determining a compensation package and a source of funding.

1. Department Administrators will also be responsible for coordinating with faculty and staff to submit a job description to the Office of Student Affairs where the Career Consultant is available to assist them with posting the position to GWORKS.
2. A guide is provided in the appendix of this manual to assist GWSPH faculty and staff in creating job descriptions based on GWORKS requirements.
3. Each Department/Office will be responsible for reviewing , determining eligibility and ranking the applicants for an open position.
4. The GWORKS database will maintain official records of total applicants per position and applicants selected to interview.
5. After a finalist is selected, the Office of Student affairs will be notified and that Office’s Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships and Financial Aid will prepare a formal offer letter to the selected candidate. If the candidate accepts the offer, the Associate Director will initiate the formal GW hiring, including the background check and payroll processes<sup>1</sup>.

As indicated in Figure 1, the estimated timeframe between notifying the Office of Student Affairs of an appointment and the completion of the final steps is 30 days. While it will be possible to move students through the appointment process more quickly in many cases, the 30 day estimated timeframe is reflective of processing delays that can occur within each step.

Administrators will be asked to adhere to established appointment periods when submitting a recommendation form to the Office of Student Affairs:

<b>Appointment Period</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
Semester Appointment (Fall or Spring)	September 1 or January 1	December 31 or April 30
Academic Year Appointment	September 1	April 30
Fiscal Year Appointment	July 1	June 30
Custom Appointment	1 <sup>st</sup> day of any month	Last day of any month through June 30

### **Additional Guidelines for GRA Appointments**

The distinct nature of GRA appointments requires that department administrators note several additional guidelines. As indicated in Figure 1, the GW Office of the Vice President for Research (OVPR) is involved in the approval of recommendation forms for GRA appointments and approval through the GW Faculty Hire System. The scope of OVPR oversight for GRA appointments by the School is to assure that salary amounts are consistent with the technical and financial requirements of all relevant external

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<sup>1</sup> GW currently utilizes the ‘Faculty Hire’ system for both faculty and Graduate Assistant hires.



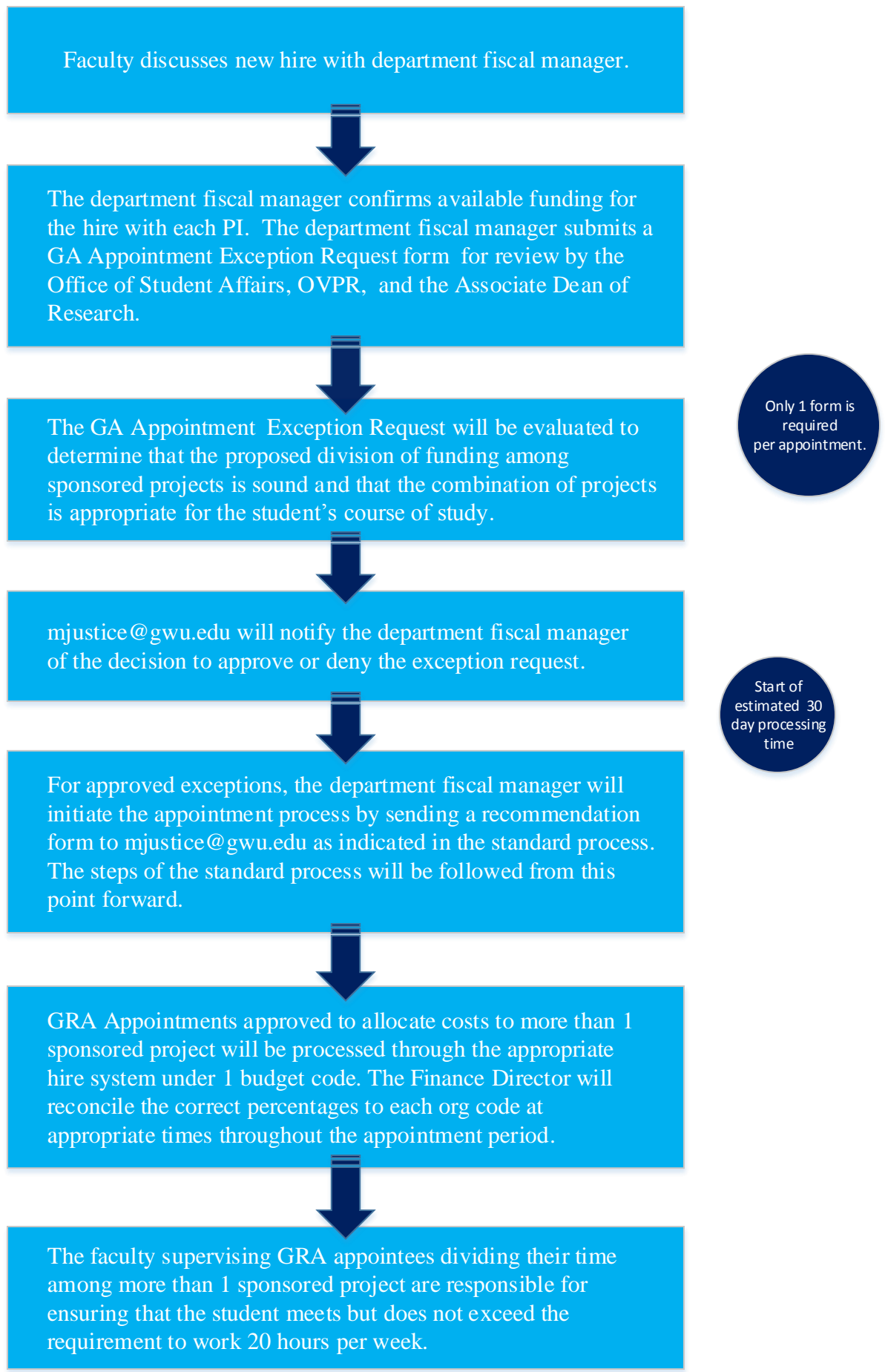
grants. If the PI and the Department Administrator have done the appropriate analysis of the funding source(s), experience has shown that the OVPR review is generally completed very quickly.

OVPR Contacts for the School are as follows:

<b>OVPR Contact</b>	<b>Department Assignments</b>	<b>Contact Information</b>
Myrna Alonzo	Health Policy & Management	E: mcalonzo@gwu.edu P: 202-994-1079
Begai Johnson	Environmental & Occupational Health Global Health Prevention & Community Health	E: johnsonb@gwu.edu P: 202-994-2698
Natalie Linear	Epidemiology & Biostatistics Exercise & Nutrition Sciences	E: ndlinear@gwu.edu P: 202-994-2908

Effective January 1, 2016, the cost of GRA appointments can be allocated to more than one sponsored project during a single academic year. This is a new option at the School and Department Administrators will need to work closely with the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid to initiate these appointments. The modified appointment process is outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Allocating GRA Cost to Multiple Sponsored Projects



### Requesting an Exception to an Established GA Eligibility Requirement

The School has established a process by which students and department fiscal managers can request an exception to established requirements for a Graduate Assistantship appointment in cases where the approval of an exception would not place the School at a compliance risk or violate institutional values such as academic standards. A student or department fiscal manager can request an exception by submitting a GA Appointment Exception Request Form to the Office of Student Affairs. Copies of this form are available in the appendix of this manual. All GA Appointment Exception Request Forms will be screened by the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid to ensure the request meets the guidelines for review. Approved forms will be forwarded to the appropriate Associate Dean for a final review and approval. The below table outlines the types of exceptions available and the initiation and review guidelines.

Type of Exception Requested	Who Initiates Request?	Initial Approval	Final Approval
Permission to work on or off campus in a part-time or full-time position in addition to a GA appointment	Student	Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Permission to maintain a GA appointment while enrolled at less than full-time status	Student	Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Permission to allocate GRA costs to more than 1 sponsored project	Department Fiscal Manager	Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid  OVPR (see pg. 8 for contact info)	Associate Dean for Research

### Fellowship Appointment Process

The Fellowship appointment process is administered by the School's Office of Student Affairs. Within the School's Office of Student Affairs the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, & Financial Aid will be the primary point of contact for the Fellowship appointment process. The appointment process will vary depending on the funding source and details of a specific fellowship opportunity and as such faculty and staff are encouraged to contact the Associate Director of Graduate Assistantships, Scholarships, and Financial Aid to plan the appointment of a fellow. In most cases, the appointment process will closely mirror the steps outlined for the GA appointment process.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ GWID Number: \_\_\_\_\_ AY: 20\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Department/Program: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree: \_\_\_\_\_

Country of Citizenship: \_\_\_\_\_ If International, Visa Type: \_\_\_\_\_ TOEFL/IELTS/Pearson's Score: \_\_\_\_\_  
(600-p; 100 i-b/7.0 overall/68)

New Admit? Yes **-OR-** Current Student: New Award Renewal

Please Select One: Full Academic Year Full Calendar Year Other  
Fall Only Spring Only Summer Only

Please Select One: Full-time Study Required? (Minimum of 9 credit hours per Semester) Yes No

Please Select One: Non-Renewable Renewable for: \_\_\_\_\_ additional years No Mention

Please Select One Assistantship or Fellowship:

**Check Award Type(s):** Graduate Assistantship (GAA) Graduate Research Assistantship (GRA)  
(Up to 20hrs. per week) (20hrs. per week required)  
Graduate Assistant Teacher (GAT) Fellowship

If GRAship, Faculty Supervisor, or PI: \_\_\_\_\_

**Funding Source:**

**A. Payment involving services (salary):** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Duties:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Estimated hours per week:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Payment involving services (salary):** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Duties:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Estimated hours per week:** \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Stipend (living allowance):** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date: \_\_\_\_\_ End Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If stipend without salary, Payment Characterization Check list **MUST** be attached.

**D. Tuition Award:** Credit Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ **-OR-** Dollar amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Tuition Award:** Credit Hours: \_\_\_\_\_ **-OR-** Dollar amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

If, second source.

**Note:** Tuition and/or stipend awards, alone or in combination, may **NOT** be awarded in exchange for work. A tuition award is not required for GA positions.

**Funding Sources:** School GSS; R Fund; Endowment; GSAF; Sponsored Project

If Sponsored Project \_\_\_\_\_ \*Full F&A recovery? Yes No  
(Banner Index)

\*For GRAs on sponsored projects, GWSPH will provide 66.67% of tuition if the sponsored project has full F&A recovery.

**Initiator:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Dept. Chair Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**SFC Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(School Fellowship Coordinator)

**Research Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(For Sponsored projects only)

**GSAF Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

(If GSAF or Endowment-funded)

## GA Appointment Exception Request Form

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Student GWID: \_\_\_\_\_

Is the student currently serving as a GA at GWSPH, or a candidate for a GA position at GWSPH?

Current GA  GA Candidate

Please list the type of GA position (GAA, GAT, or GRA) and Department/Office overseeing the position:

\_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the name and email of the appropriate staff member to notify of the outcome of this request. The student will also be notified.

\_\_\_\_\_

- Permission to work on or off campus in a part-time or full-time position in addition to a GA appointment.** In the space provided below, please explain the reason for your request and your strategy to maintain academic excellence while making meaningful contributions in more than one employment position.
- Permission to maintain a GA appointment while enrolled at less than full-time status.** In the space provided below, please explain the reason for your request and whether you plan to remain enrolled at less than full-time status for more than one academic term.
- Permission to allocate GRA costs to more than one sponsored project.** In the space provided below, please explain the reason for your request including the alignment between the proposed division of responsibility between specific sponsored projects and the student's academic goals.

Submitted by (Please print full name and contact information): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approved by:

Office of Student Affairs: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Dean for Research: \_\_\_\_\_

Associate Dean for Academic and Student Affairs: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed forms should be submitted to [mjustice@gwu.edu](mailto:mjustice@gwu.edu). The office of Student Affairs may request additional information in order to review your request.

**To Post a Position:**

Click on the "Jobs" tab at the top of the page. This will take you to the "Job Postings" page. Click on the box labeled "Add New." The following guide will help with important information on what to include when posting a position.

**Position Type:** Graduate Assistantships (GA)

**Title:** Be sure to specify what the position is - GA, GAA, or GRA. This is the title the student will see when searching positions.

**Job Description:** Here is an example of items to include in this section.

Position: Graduate Assistant

Department of \_\_\_\_\_

Assignment Timeline: Include the specific start and end dates of the assignment.

Hours: 15 per week

Role:

The Graduate Assistant is responsible for \_\_\_\_\_. This individual will have an opportunity to participate in \_\_\_\_\_.

Responsibilities:

- Be sure to describe all of the job duties for the GA/GRA

**Compensation Type:** This is where you will select Hourly, Stipend, Unpaid, etc. If there are additional compensation or benefits, please be sure to add them in the "More Information" or "Additional Information" sections.

**Location:** Washington, DC USA

**Resume Submission Method:** "Email" - Include an email for students to send their applications to. Also include details such as, "Please send applications to Bob

Anderson at email@email.com. Write GA Department of \_\_\_ in the subject line.” Always click “Accumulate Online.” This will allow us to keep track of who is applying for the position. If you do not wish to use email and/or need to add additional information, select the “Other” option to enter specific information on where to submit applications.

**Optional Documents for Submission:** There are choices here for you to select everything that you need the applicant to include. Once you click an option, be sure to click it again in the “Required Documents for Submission” section. This will ensure the student sees it as a required item. If you choose “Other Documents” this will allow you to specify any additional information.

**Automatic Application Packet Generation:** Departments have the option to have a packet PDF sent to their email when a job expires. This is optional and not required. You will be able to login and view resumes at any time.

**Posting Date:** First date the job is available.

**Expiration Date:** The day you would like the position to be taken down.

**Display Contact Information to Students:** Optional. If chosen, it will disclose your email & phone number to the applicant.

**Target Schools:** Always be sure to select “Milken Institute School of Public Health”

**Restrict Applications:** Select No.

**Qualifications:** Please be specific on the qualifications required for the position. For example;

- Must be currently enrolled in a Graduate program for \_\_\_\_\_.
- Must have excellent communication skills.
- Have the ability to work independently.
- Proficient in Microsoft Office

**Desired Majors:** Employers have the option to select the desired major for the position. This is entirely optional and not a requirement. Desired majors should always be specified in the “Qualifications” section.

**Desired Work Authorization:** If the position requires Legal Authorization to work in the US or Sponsorship, please select that option here.

**Desired Degree Level:** For all Masters/Graduate positions, be sure to select "*Masters/Graduate.*"

**Click "Submit."** Once submitted, the position will be reviewed and then approved. If there is additional information needed for approval, the department will be contacted as needed. You will receive an email when the position has been approved and posted.

**You can log in at anytime to:** Deactivate/Edit Current Positions, Repost/Edit an Expired Position, View Student Resumes, Generate a Resume Book, & Update your Employer Profile.

For all questions & troubleshooting, please email [\*\*gwsphcareer@gwu.edu\*\*](mailto:gwsphcareer@gwu.edu).