

Guidelines for Hiring Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistant positions at MTSU are intended to provide students with supplemental income (in the form of a stipend) and work experience in their field of study while they further their education. The College of Graduate Studies' goal is for all students to be successful in completion of their advanced degree and, as such, ideally, prefers that they hold no employment positions at MTSU in addition to their assistantship. The reality of meeting financial need or career experience might demand otherwise. Consequently, MTSU will allow graduate students holding an assistantship to have additional employment at the University providing everyone honors the limitations of a maximum of 9 extra hours of employment weekly for graduate students holding a 1.0 FTE assistantship, or 19 additional hours maximum weekly for graduate students holding a 0.5 FTE assistantship. **Please note that a 1.0 graduate assistant may not be hired to teach a 4 credit hour class as an adjunct faculty member since this additional assignment will result in 30 clock hours per week.**

Because the assistantship positions and these additional positions are not intended to be benefits-eligible or retirement-eligible, employment of graduate assistants in positions in addition to their assistantship will require diligent communication. All stakeholders in the process of appointing graduate assistants and those hiring them for extra work will be responsible for monitoring the process as follows:

- **Responsibility of a Graduate Student**

All graduate students holding an assistantship have the responsibility to notify the MTSU department/ unit seeking to hire them for additional employment that they will be able to work only 9 or 19 hours maximum weekly, depending on the level of their assistantship. **The graduate assistant must work no more than the hours defined above (totaling no more than 29 hours per week) from all sources on campus.**

- **Responsibility of the Department Chair/Graduate Director**

All department authorities who hire a graduate student with an assistantship will be responsible to notify the student in writing using the attached form of the restrictions on total hours of work per week.

- **Responsibility of the Department/Unit of Additional Hire**

Graduate students holding an assistantship must notify any department/unit offering them a position in addition to their assistantship that he/she holds an assistantship (see "*Responsibility of a Graduate Student*" above); the department/unit must agree in writing to restrict employment to a maximum of 9 or 19 hours of weekly employment, depending on the assistantship level. The department/unit of additional hire will be responsible for written notification of the hire to the academic department where the student holds the assistantship using the attached form. If the department(s)/unit(s) of hire permit a graduate assistant to exceed the weekly maximum of 29 hours, the graduate assistant will become eligible for health and life insurance benefits and that department/unit, along with any other department(s)/unit(s) where the graduate assistant is employed, will be financially responsible for the cost of insurance benefits for the graduate assistant based upon the percentage of time worked for each department/unit.

Guidelines for Hiring Student Workers

Student worker positions at MTSU are intended to help support students as they pursue their education. Because these positions are not intended to be benefits-eligible or retirement-eligible positions, employment of student workers will require diligent communication. Since students may hold more than one position during a 10-month measurement period, the student and the employing official(s) must have a clear understanding that all employment opportunities accepted at MTSU need to be communicated between all department(s)/ unit(s) involved. Federal Work Study hours WILL NOT be included in the calculation of hours worked in any measurement period.

- **Responsibility of a Student Worker**

All students holding a student worker position have the responsibility to notify the MTSU department/unit seeking to hire them for additional employment that they will be able to work only a total of 29 hours from all sources on campus. The student must tell the department authority seeking to hire them for an additional assignment how many hours they currently work in their other assignment(s). **The student must work no more than a total of 29 hours per week from all sources on campus.**

- **Responsibility of the Department Hiring Manager**

All department authorities who hire a student worker will be responsible to notify the student in writing using the attached form of the restrictions on weekly employment.

- **Responsibility of the Department/Unit of Additional Hire**

Students holding a student work position must notify any department/unit offering them a position in addition to their current assignment that he/she holds an existing student labor position(s) (see "*Responsibility of a Student Worker*" above); the department/unit must agree in writing to restrict employment to no more than a total of 29 hours per week including the hours worked for the department(s) of original hire. The department/unit of additional hire will be responsible for written notification of the hire to any/all other department(s)/unit(s) where the student is employed using the attached form. If the department(s)/unit(s) of hire permit a student worker to average more than the weekly maximum of 29 hours in any 10-month measurement period, the student worker will become eligible for health and life insurance benefits and that department/unit, along with any other department(s)/unit(s) where the student worker is employed, will be financially responsible for the cost of insurance benefits for the student based upon the percentage of time worked for each department/unit.

Guidelines for Hiring Temporary Hourly Workers

Temporary Hourly positions at MTSU are intended to provide for emergency, short-term or seasonal (six months per year or less) needs of departments/units when sufficient full-time benefited positions are unavailable. Because these positions are not intended to be benefits-eligible or retirement-eligible positions, employment of temporary hourly personnel will require diligent communication. Hourly workers averaging more than 29 hours per week in any 10-month measurement period will become eligible for health and life insurance benefits which will become the financial responsibility of any/all department(s)/unit(s) employing the temporary hourly worker. **If the department/unit knows at the onset of employment that the assignment will be longer than 6 months and is expected to require more than 29 hours per week, health and life insurance benefits must be offered at the point of hire with the insurance benefits expense charged to the department/unit of hire. The department/unit must notify Human Resources of this expectation at the time of hire.**

- **Responsibility of a Temporary Hourly Employee**

All temporary hourly employees have the responsibility to notify the MTSU department/unit seeking to hire them for additional employment of the average number of hours they are working in their other temporary hourly position(s). **The temporary hourly employee must work no more than a total of 29 hours per week from all sources on campus.**

- **Responsibility of the Department Chair/Unit Head**

All department authorities who hire a temporary hourly worker will be responsible to notify the worker in writing using the attached form of the restrictions on weekly hours of employment.

- **Responsibility of the Department/Unit of Additional Hire**

Temporary hourly employees must notify any department/unit offering them a position in addition to their current assignment that he/she holds an existing hourly position (see "*Responsibility of a Temporary Hourly Worker*" above); the department/unit must agree in writing to restrict employment to no more than a total of 29 hours per week including the hours worked for the department(s) of original hire. The department/unit of additional hire will be responsible for written notification of the hire to any/all other department(s)/unit(s) where the temporary hourly worker is employed using the attached form. If the department(s)/unit(s) of hire permit a temporary hourly worker to average more than the weekly maximum of 29 hours in any 10-month measurement period, the temporary hourly worker will become eligible for health and life insurance benefits and that department/unit, along with any other department(s)/unit(s) where the temporary hourly worker is employed, will be financially responsible for the cost of insurance benefits for the temporary hourly worker based upon the percentage of time worked for each department/unit.

Guidelines for Hiring Adjuncts

Adjunct faculty positions at MTSU are intended to provide for extraordinary circumstances when full-time benefited faculty positions are unable to meet demand. Because these positions are not intended to be benefits-eligible or retirement-eligible positions, employment of adjunct faculty will require diligent communication. To calculate the weekly clock hour load for adjuncts based on adjusted credit hour assignments, the IRS uses a factor of 2.25 per credit hour. MTSU, however, has decided to use a factor of 2.5 per **Adjusted Credit Hour** which includes class time, class preparation time, grading of papers/tests, and time to meet with students. Students enrolled in courses taught by adjunct faculty shall be assured of adequate access to faculty members through office hours, telephone contact, or electronic access. Availability to meet with students shall be clearly communicated to students. Since we do not unilaterally provide offices for adjuncts, there are no prescribed "office hours" requirement for adjuncts. But, instructional faculty do routinely meet outside the classroom with students to answer questions, discuss issues that arise in the classroom, etc. When offices are provided to the adjunct faculty member, department heads should not require office hours exceeding one hour per week for each 3 credit hour course taught by the adjunct. Translated to a typical 3 credit hour class, this means that 2.5×3 credit hours = 7.5 clock hours per week broken down as follows:

- 2.75 hours (class time using 55 minutes per session for a MWF class)
- 3.75 hours (class preparation/grading papers)
- 1.00 hours (outside classroom meet times/office hours)
- 7.5 hours per week

Academic departments should not require adjunct faculty to attend regular faculty meetings (beyond an orientation or end of semester meeting), participate in departmental service projects, or maintain regular office hours (greater than 1.0 hour per week per 3 adjusted credit hour class). We must carefully limit and monitor any required work outside of the classroom.

Adjuncts are occasionally hired for non-instructional work and compensated based upon an adjusted credit hour assignment. When this occurs, particularly when it is in addition to an instructional assignment(s) for the term, the department(s)/unit(s) of additional hire must carefully consider the clock hours required to accomplish the non-instructional task when paying the adjunct on an adjusted credit hour basis.

Please note that a 1.0 graduate assistant may not be hired to teach a 4 credit hour class as an adjunct faculty member since this additional assignment will result in 30 clock hours per week.

- **Responsibility of an Adjunct Faculty Member**

All adjunct faculty have the responsibility to teach no more than a total of nine (9) credit hours per semester for MTSU regardless of the number of academic departments hiring them to instruct classes. **The adjunct faculty member must work no more than a total of 29 hours per week (including temporary hourly assignments) from all sources on campus.**

- **Responsibility of the Department Chair/School Director**

All department authorities who hire an adjunct faculty member will be responsible to notify the adjunct in writing of the restrictions on credit hour instructional loads and/or any combination of instructional, non-instructional, and temporary hourly assignments.

- **Responsibility of the Department/Unit of Additional Hire**

Adjunct faculty must notify any department/unit offering them an additional position (either as an instructional, non-instructional, or temporary hourly assignment) of their current assignments regardless of type (see "Responsibility of an Adjunct Faculty Member" above). The department/unit must agree in writing to restrict employment to a maximum of 9 credit hours as an adjunct faculty member from all MTSU sources or a combination of no more than 29 clock hours if hired as both an adjunct faculty member (note conversion factor based on credit hour load) and a non-instructional adjunct or temporary hourly worker. The department/unit of additional hire will be responsible for written notification of the hire to the academic department(s)/unit(s) where the adjunct is also assigned using the attached form. If the department(s)/unit(s) of hire permit an adjunct faculty member to average more than the weekly maximum of 29 hours in any 10-month measurement period, the adjunct will become eligible for health and life insurance benefits and that department/unit, along with any other department(s)/unit(s) where the adjunct is employed, will be financially responsible for the cost of insurance benefits for the adjunct based upon the percentage of time worked for each department/unit.