

# GRADUATE ASSISTANT HANDBOOK

## Graduate Assistantships

### Requirements and Appointment Period

Each academic year, a number of graduate assistantships are available for interested and qualified students. To be eligible to apply, a student must be fully accepted into a graduate degree program at Salem State College and carry at least 6 credits per semester. Other academic requirements include a minimum 3.0 average in the undergraduate major field of study, a preferred minimum GMAT or GRE verbal score of 500, and a preferred minimum quantitative score of 500, if the applicant's major field of study is mathematics or science. In lieu of the GRE, a preferred minimum Miller Analogies score of 40 is required. If the student holds a Master's or Doctorate degree, the testing requirements are waived.

Each assistantship is awarded for the academic year (fall and spring semesters) and may be renewed. To be eligible for renewal, the student must have a minimum G.P.A. of 3.3 in his or her graduate field of study and must re-apply for the assistantship.

### Application

The priority deadline to apply for a graduate assistantship is April 1. Applications are accepted and waitlisted after the deadline. Remember, students must be fully accepted into their degree program by April 1 for priority consideration.

If you have any questions, please contact Janet Lundstrom at [jlundstrom@salemstate.edu](mailto:jlundstrom@salemstate.edu) or 978-542-6310 or her administrative assistant, Anne Fitzgerald-Clark at [afitzgeraldclark@salemstate.edu](mailto:afitzgeraldclark@salemstate.edu).

- [Application for Graduate Assistantship](#)

### Types of Graduate Assistantships

There are three categories of assistantships: Faculty Research Assistants, Academic Program Assistants and Administrative Program Assistants.

Faculty Research Assistants assist an individual faculty member with his or her scholarly work. This may include, for example, literature and article reviews/searches; data collection and encoding; collection of archival materials; and proofreading and editing for publications and presentations.

Academic Program Assistants provide academic support and service to programs. This may include, for example, tutoring and student support services to the Writing Center, Math Lab, and for MTEL exams; support to academic publications; website

development; data collection, analysis and reporting; program assessment; and academic outreach and communication activities.

Administrative Program Assistants provide administrative assistance to a College department such as the Center for International Education or the Graduate School. This may include, for example, coordinating and marketing events; support for project planning and proposal writing; editing and proofreading; managing College publications such as the Sextant or Soundings East; support for student advising, orientation and mentoring activities; and support for educational programs with local public schools.

- Graduate Assistantship Positions

### **Award Amounts: Tuition Remission and Work Remuneration**

Each full-time assistantship carries payment for work performed and an award of tuition remission in all courses except directed studies, thesis and consortia courses. The hourly rate of pay is \$12 an hour, based upon a 10-hour work week while classes are in session. Payment is bi-weekly. The approximate maximum earnings for fall and spring based on 15 weeks of employment each semester is \$1,800 per semester for a total of \$3,600. Graduate assistants are responsible for all associated course fees. The tuition remission is considered a financial resource in any financial aid award.

### **Holidays and Semester Breaks**

The Academic Calendar details the days that classes are in session and lists all official school recesses and holidays. Graduate assistants do not work on holidays and during recesses.

### **Sickness**

There is no sick leave. Graduate assistants are expected to make up any work sessions that are missed because of illness and, to the extent possible, notify their supervisor in advance so that the College's responsibilities may be met.

### **Reception for Graduate Assistants and Supervisors**

At the beginning of the fall semester, a welcoming reception is held to acknowledge and honor graduate assistants and their supervisors. It is an event to meet one another and the Graduate School staff and to answer any questions from recipients. Invitations are sent in late August to students' local addresses.

### **Graduate Assistant Survey**

Towards the end of the fall semester, graduate assistants will be asked to complete an e-mail survey to provide feedback to the Graduate School on their assistantship experience.

This information is helpful for planning and evaluation purposes to improve the program. All responses to the survey will remain confidential.

### **Performance Evaluations**

Prior to the end of the spring semester, the assistant and his or her supervisor are expected to review the work accomplished by the graduate assistant over the academic period and to complete a written evaluation. The evaluation process is designed to provide valuable feedback to the graduate assistant and the supervisor regarding the shared experience of both parties.

### **The Hiring Process**

The Student Employment Office is located in the Administration Annex, directly behind the Sullivan Building on the North Campus. Its hours are Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. General information regarding Salem State College's hiring processes and human resource policies can be found in the [Student Employment Handbook](#). Graduate Assistant recipients must complete hiring forms at the Student Employment Office including the federally required I-9 form; the completion of the I-9 requires specific documentation and must be done in person. Once all hiring forms are completed, the Graduate School will authorize employment. Employment may then begin no sooner than the first day of classes in the fall and ends the last day of classes in the spring. Any single semester award will be authorized for that one semester only.

### **Payroll Procedures**

#### **Completion and Submission of Time Sheets**

Graduate assistants will be responsible for submitting weekly hours to their supervisor, or their department secretary designee, who will then submit them to the Payroll Office. This will initiate the student's bi-weekly paycheck. To meet Payroll Office guidelines, hours should be tracked on the [Student Employee Log](#). The log submitted by the graduate assistant should reflect total hours worked for each day of the week. Students are advised to retain a copy of the employee log for their records. Employment is limited to 10 hours a week. If you have any questions, please contact the Payroll Office at 978-542-6116.

#### **Paychecks**

Paychecks are produced by the Commonwealth's State Treasurer's Office and sent to the College on Fridays. Checks may be picked up at the Administration Building (North Campus), second floor, according to the schedule below:

On paydays	1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Monday following payday:	10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Paychecks will be distributed only from Administration and Finance Conference Room A outside of the Financial Services suite. A Salem State College student ID or a Driver's License must be presented to obtain a check.

Checks that have not been picked up by 12:30 p.m. on the Monday following payday will be mailed to the address that appears on the paycheck. Please be sure that the Student Employment Office has your current address. Address changes can only be made at the Student Employment Office.

HR/CMS (Human Resources Compensation Management System) is the Commonwealth's bi-weekly payroll system. This system allows you to have your paycheck deposited directly to your bank account. Direct deposit authorization forms are available at the Student Employment Office or the Payroll Office. Please notify the Payroll Office immediately (by telephone or in person) of any change or anticipated change in your bank account.

If you have been working for a different Commonwealth agency or college, you may have already provided direct deposit information for that job. Please let the Human Resources Office or the Payroll Office know if you are currently employed or have been previously employed at another state agency or college.

Your net payroll will be deposited to your bank account(s) bi-weekly on Friday mornings. Your "pay advice" will be mailed on Friday to your home address. The State Comptroller's Office will mail your W-2 Earnings Statement directly to your home.

### **Accessing Your Payroll Remittance Advice On-Line**

The Office of the State Comptroller (OSC) offers a secure website called PayInfo that allows employees and contracted employees (including students) paid through HR/CMS to access their payroll remittance advice on-line, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, anywhere in the world. You can view up to four of your most current remittance advices both in summary and detail.

To access PayInfo, go to [www.mass.gov/payinfo](http://www.mass.gov/payinfo).

Selecting 'Continue' will bring you to the Login page.

In the field labeled User, you must enter a user ID, which is your unique Employee ID, found on your HR/CMS payroll remittance advice. In the field labeled Password, you must enter a password. The initial default password is your Employee ID, followed by the last four digits of your Social Security number.

An example of a User ID (with the default password) for John Doe would be:

USER: 000001 PW: 0000019999. (The system will then prompt you to change your password.)

The PayInfo site also includes links to on-line information, including a printable brochure to assist you in utilizing the service. It provides information pertaining to your initial login, changing your password, and the resetting of your password, should you forget it.

The Salem State College Payroll Office will act as support for PayInfo for the resetting of passwords and for general questions about PayInfo. You may call Patricia Crowley at 978-542-7586 or Mary Ann Gachignard at 978-542-7026. We request, however, that you get your Employee ID from your payroll remittance advice, make a note of your password for your records, and utilize the information that is already on the PayInfo site in order to minimize phone traffic in our Payroll Office. Most questions can typically be answered through information already available on the site.

### **ACADEMIC YEAR 2008 – 2009 PAYROLL SCHEDULE**

	<u>Bi-weekly Payroll Period (Sunday - Saturday)</u>	<u>Payday</u>
Fall	August 31, 2008 - September 13, 2008	September 19, 2008
	September 14, 2008 - September 27, 2008	October 3, 2008
	September 28, 2008 - October 11, 2008	October 17, 2008
	October 12, 2008 - October 25, 2008	October 31, 2008
	October 26, 2008 - November 8, 2008	November 14, 2008
	November 9, 2008 - November 22, 2008	November 28, 2008
	November 23, 2008 - December 6, 2008	December 12, 2008
	December 7, 2008 - December 20, 2008	December 26, 2008
Spring	January 18, 2009 - January 31, 2009	February 6, 2009
	February 1, 2009 - February 14, 2009	February 20, 2009
	February 15, 2009 - February 28, 2009	March 6, 2009
	March 1, 2009 - March 14, 2009	March 20, 2009
	March 15, 2009 - March 28, 2009	April 3, 2009
	March 29, 2009 - April 11, 2009	April 17, 2009
	April 12, 2009 - April 25, 2009	May 1, 2009
	April 26, 2009 - May 9, 2009	May 15, 2009
May 10, 2009 - May 23, 2009	May 29, 2009	

**Information Technology User Support Acceptable Use Policy**  
**Email Communication Policy**  
**Confidentiality of Student Information (FERPA)**

There are three clearly defined levels of assistantships including faculty research, administrative and academic program support. There are no teaching assistant positions. College policy prohibits student WebCT access on behalf of faculty and the sharing of password information. The privacy of student information must always be maintained as defined by FERPA guidelines.

It is of utmost importance that the graduate assistant experience be a mutually rewarding one; therefore, it is crucial that students perform duties within their job description and in accordance with College guidelines. If the Graduate School becomes aware of infractions to College policy, those infractions will be taken seriously.

*Updated: January 07, 2008*

**Acceptable Use Policy**

It is the policy of Salem State College (SSC) to maintain access for the college community to local, national and international sources of information and to provide an atmosphere that encourages access to knowledge and sharing of information. The College works to create an intellectual environment in which students, staff and faculty may feel free to create and to collaborate with colleagues both at Salem State College and at other institutions.

It is the policy of the College that information resources will be used by members of its community with respect for the public trust through which they have been provided and in accordance with policy and regulations established by the College and its operating units and in accordance with local, state, federal and international laws.

Salem State College provides network and computer services for currently enrolled students, faculty, administrators, support staff, and appropriately approved community members who contribute to the educational mission of the College. Since the SalemNet facilities are shared by many people, all users need to be aware of the policies for using information resources. Users have the responsibility to use the SalemNet facilities in an effective, efficient, ethical, and legal manner.

**Security**

Although SSC makes a reasonable effort to protect information from being accessed by anyone other than authorized individuals, SSC can not guarantee the confidentiality of any information stored on user's computers. Basic precautions such as secure, private

passwords are the first and best line of defense. Up to date anti-virus programs run routinely provide another important level of security. Lastly, the installation of file-sharing applications is not permitted except for educational use. For more information on security, please review the Salem State Network Usage and Security Policy [PDF 47KB].

## **Privacy**

The SalemNet records information about each user session, including the username associated with the session, the login and logout dates and times, and the amount and kind of computer resources used during the session. This information is used for the technical management of the system as well as to research and identify users who have violated accepted policy and/or applicable laws. The staff strives to ensure that the systems are maintained to protect the privacy of each user's files.

If the College has reasonable belief that system security has been compromised or it has been used for unauthorized activities, the College reserves the right to review all information on the system including routine backups. Only in extraordinary circumstances will a user's files be reviewed by an Information Technology System Administrator.

The Internet is not a secure medium; any files or printouts in public places are likely to be seen by others. Similarly, the transmission of information across the Internet is not secure unless some security protocol is implemented. The most common of these are VPN and SSL. SSL is a common secure transmission used by Internet commerce sites.

## **VPR (Virtual Private Network)**

Use of the Salem State College VPN is for official and approved College business only. All information is monitored daily. Sharing of accounts and information such as passwords is forbidden and will result in suspension of login privileges. You are responsible for any misuses of your VPN account, even if the action was performed by a friend, family member, guest or other employee. You may not use your account to attempt to gain unauthorized access to another network or server. All machines that connect to the system are subject to the College Acceptable Use Policy as if their machines were located on campus at Salem State. By signing this acceptable use policy, you are agreeing to abide by the College's security rules and understand that VPN usage is and will be logged and monitored.

## **Other Networks**

As a user of the SalemNet, you may be allowed to access other networks (and/or the computer systems attached to those networks). Each network or system has its own set of policies and procedures. Actions which are routinely allowed on one network/system may be controlled, or even forbidden, on other networks. It is the user's responsibility to abide by the policies and procedures of these other networks/systems. The fact that a user can perform a particular action does not imply that that action should be taken.

## **Computer Abuses**

The use of the network is a privilege, not a right. Confirmation of inappropriate use of resources may result in suspension or termination of access, expulsion, termination of employment or other disciplinary action. Systems Administrators will, when necessary, work with the Department of Public Safety in the resolution of problems.

Examples of abuses include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Use of another person's password
- Unauthorized access to another person's computer account
- Using the system to access any other computer system without authorization
- Deleting or copying files from another person's computer account
- Taking advantage of another user's naiveté to gain access to his/her files
- Preventing someone from using his/her account by unauthorized access of the account or changing the password
- Sending intimidating or harassing messages or repeated unsolicited communications
- Sending mass-communications without proper authorization
- Abusing the networks to which SalemNet belongs
- Using the College's resources for personal financial gain or illegal activities
- Performing activities that interfere with the rights of others
- Distributing chain letters
- Downloading, copying and/or distribution of copyrighted material except what is permitted by law
- Installing any server – file, print, web, etc. – except where prior written authorization has been granted
- Creating and/or disseminating computer viruses

## **Additional Resources**

- Salem State College Email
- User Support Help Desk
- Computer Labs
- Computers in the Dorms (ResNet)

January 2009