

Villanova University Graduate Assistant Stipend Rates and Procedures
2026-2027
Effective June 1, 2026

Overview

Graduate Assistants (GAs) are an integral part of the Villanova community. Graduate assistantships attract talented student-scholars to Villanova, and these positions provide significant support to faculty research and scholarship, program offices, and academic course delivery. Graduate Assistantships constitute an employment relationship between the University and GA, and accordingly are subject to prevailing Villanova policies and procedures related to [student employment](#) as well as legal and regulatory guidelines. GAs are supported through unrestricted operating, entrepreneurial, and sponsored award funding.

GAs may not begin working or receive stipend compensation until they have completed all onboarding requirements. Delays in work authorization will likely result in pro-ration of the payment schedule. The benefits associated with a Graduate Assistantship are contingent upon the following: completion of the mandatory orientation program, satisfactory submission of all legally required employment documents and background checks as determined by the Office of Human Resources, making satisfactory academic progress towards degree completion, and adhering to the University's [student code of conduct](#). GAs are required to maintain a high level of professionalism, consistent with Villanova's community standards and the expectations of their supervisor and department.

In accepting a funding offer, GAs agree to the terms and conditions contained within their offer letter. Appointments are at-will, and the terms are subject to change upon written notice.

In all cases, academic programs will provide graduate students with official offer letters of assistantship with information about expectations, responsibilities, and compensation. Stipend rates are differentiated by the GA student status group (see table).

GAs or Tuition Scholars (TSs) must be enrolled in a graduate degree program to be eligible for their position. Graduate students enrolled in a certificate program or taking classes as a non-matriculated student are not eligible for a GA or TS position.

Stipend Rates*+

GA Student Status Group	Bi-Weekly Rate	19 Bi-Weekly Pay Stipend (Fall & Spring Semesters), 8/24/26-5/16/27)	26 Bi-Weekly Pay Stipend (12-month), 8/24/26 – 8/22/27)
MRA	\$1,107.00	\$21,033.00	\$28,782.00
MTA	\$1,107.00	\$21,033.00	\$28,782.00
MPT	\$1,107.00	\$21,033.00	\$28,782.00
DRE1	\$1,293.00	\$24,567.00	\$33,618.00
DRE2	\$1,435.00	\$27,265.00	\$37,310.00

DRE3	\$1,435.00	\$27,265.00	\$37,310.00
DRH	\$1,645.00	\$31,255.00	\$42,770.00
DTH	\$1,645.00	\$31,255.00	\$42,770.00
DRN	\$1,473.00	\$27,987.00	\$38,298.00

*Additional appointment durations (for instance, between 19 and 26 bi-weekly periods) may be structured to align with program requirements or effort expectations, in consultation with and subject to the approval of the Grad Center.

+Some departments utilize Half-Graduate Assistantships. Typically, the Half-GA will receive 50% of the standard bi-weekly stipend rate aligning with the corresponding GA Student Status Group category in exchange for 14 hours per week of work.

Additional Categories of Assistance for Graduate Students

Tuition Scholarship (TS): In some cases, academic or university departments may offer a graduate student a TS. Students in this category will receive tuition remission for a set number of credits (as predetermined by the college or university department). Typically, tuition remission will not exceed 48 credit hours over the course of a consecutive two-year period. In exchange for tuition remission, a Tuition Scholar will provide 7 hrs/week of service to their department during the academic year. TSs do not have an employment relationship with the University and are therefore not onboarded through Human Resources or required to submit employment paperwork.

Graduate Assistant Hourly (GAH): Graduate students who are hired for fewer than 20 hours per week as temporary graduate assistants or to assist on temporary special projects, must be hired in a Graduate Assistant Hourly (GAH) student worker position. These position requests must be submitted to Human Resources for review. The hourly rate will be at the approved degree level (\$18/hr for master's level students; \$21/hr for doctoral level students). Tuition remission is not included as part of GAH positions, but may be combined with a Tuition Scholarship if the student holds multiple roles.

Students may work on different projects with their efforts funded proportionally across several funding sources (represented by indexes in the university system). The relevant indexes and proportions should be indicated at the time of onboarding, or through the Electronic Personnel Action Form (EPAF) if funding sources or distributions change after onboarding. Students, including GAs, may not work more than 20 hours/week across all jobs while classes are in session. Graduate students may also not hold more than one graduate assistantship.

Students seeking approval to work in excess of 20 hours per week—taking into consideration all of a student's university work commitments—may request an exception to this rule. If an exception is granted, they may work up to 25 hours per week during the fall and/or spring semesters. To receive an exception, the student must petition the Graduate Dean or Associate Dean of Graduate Studies in their college. International students with F-1 or J-1 visas are prohibited from working more than 20 hours per week during the fall and spring semesters and are therefore not eligible to apply for additional hours.

Graduate Assistant Onboarding

The Grad Center hosts a mandatory Graduate Assistant Orientation program. Among other things, this program provides community building activities, acclimates students to life at Villanova, ensures GAs are properly onboarded through Human Resources, and introduces GAs to Responsible Conduct of Research. A formal invitation with more details is communicated to students via email.

GAs are also responsible for attending any mandatory orientation or training programs offered through their department, college, program, or lab with which they have an employment relationship.

Any conflict between the university-wide Orientation program hosted through the Grad Center and an individual department orientation should be worked out in advance and communicated to all parties.

New GAs may be eligible for a \$500 startup grant. This grant is distinctly separated from employment and is intended to defray living expenses as students transition to Villanova. The Grant application will first be available to students at the Graduate Assistant Orientation program, but will become available subsequently to students unable to attend orientation due to unavoidable conflicts or otherwise excused absences. The Grant is taxable income, and reporting is the responsibility of the recipient. There are no withholdings for U.S. citizens and approximately 16% for international students (except for students from countries with applicable [tax treaties](#)). Tuition Scholars and Graduate Assistant Hourly workers are not eligible for the Startup Grant.

Graduate Assistant Schedule

GAs are required to provide service to their department or other unit of the University from the first day of the first pay period for which they are onboarded and approved to begin work through the last day of their final pay period. TSs should expect to provide their hours of service to their department from the first day of class through the end of the semester.

Schedules vary by department and service may be required during university breaks, depending on the nature of the work needed. The student should consult with their supervisor to determine the distribution of these hours throughout the semester.

Neither GAs nor TSs are entitled to paid vacation or sick days. In the event that a GA or TS cannot perform their assigned duties, they must communicate their absence clearly to their supervisor and settle on a mutually agreed upon make-up plan. This plan should be made in writing.

If a GA or TS wishes to take summer courses, they may use some of their tuition remission credits (typically from 3 to 6). The number of credits taken during the summer is included in the total credits awarded during each academic year. In most cases, GAs on a consecutive two-year award may only take summer classes between their first and second years. Tuition remission is

given in return for services to the respective departments. The waiver of tuition for one or two summer courses requires 35 hours of service for each three-credit course over the summer, at the discretion of the student's supervisor or department. The ability to use tuition remission during the summer is not a guarantee and is not available in all departments. Students must make this request and determine the feasibility, work schedule, and other necessary arrangements with their supervisor at least 3 months in advance of the start of the summer session.

Additional Considerations for Graduate Assistants funded by Sponsored Awards/External Grants

During the summer months, graduate students supported on external funding may be hired as a GAH and may work up to 35 hours per week.

Students supported on external grants may qualify for tuition remission through the Office of the Provost. Remission requests must be submitted in a timely fashion prior to the beginning of the academic term.

GA Student Status Group and Definitions

GA Student Status Group	Description of primary responsibilities
MRA	Master's Graduate Research Assistant – 20 hours/week. Eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research
MTA	Master's Graduate Teaching Assistant – 20 hours/week. Eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/teaching, classes, labs, grading
MPT	Master's Graduate Professional Traineeship – 20 hours/week. Eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist professional staff offices to gain professional experience
DRE1	Doctoral Research Assistant-I (Pre-Qual) Engineering – 20 hours/week – eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research while taking mandatory doctoral classes
DRE2	Doctoral Research Assistant-II (Post-Qual) Engineering – 20 hours/week – eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research as a full-time research student
DRE3	Doctoral University Research Assistant Engineering – 20 hours/week eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research as a full-time research student
DRH	Doctoral Research Assistant Humanities – 20 hours/week - eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research as a full-time research student

DTH	Doctoral Teaching Assistant Humanities – 20 hours/week – eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/teaching including teaching sections as lead instructor
DRN	Doctoral Research Assistant Nursing –20 hours/week – eligible for need-based health benefit subsidy. Assist faculty w/research as a full time research student

Student Employment Policy

Please review the [Student Employment Policy](#) for additional information.