GETTING STARTED IN GRAD





Preparing for Your Assistantship

November 4, 2026

Types of Appointments

Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA)

Assists faculty with classes or responsible for teaching

Graduate Research Assistant (GRA)

Assists faculty with research

Graduate Assistant (GA)

Provides operational and administrative support to non-academic units

Hiring Process

1. Position offer at time of admission – position details come from employing unit
2. Arrive to campus to complete paperwork
   - Completed with Human Resources (HR) liaison/budget officer in employing unit
   - Must have social security number (provide social security card) ***Obtaining SSN can take several weeks***

Make sure you have all required documents before traveling to K-State

Hiring Process – International Students

- **Need Social Security Number (SSN) to be on payroll**
  - Must first arrive to U.S. to get SSN
  - Wait 10 calendar days before completing SSN online application – **very important to wait full 10 days**
- **Follow instructions on ISSS website** (https://www.k-state.edu/isss/resources/socialsecurity.html)
  - Make sure your name in the SSN application matches exactly with name on all immigration documents (passport, Visa, I-94, and I-20/DS-2019)

Very important to arrive as early as allowed by law and to follow instructions exactly as stated to avoid delays in processing

You may arrive in U.S. as early as December 9 for Spring 2027 semester

Navigating Expectations and Responsibilities

- Review your assistantship offer/position details closely
- Discuss responsibilities with supervisor before getting started
  - Assistantship supervisor might be same as academic faculty advisor or someone different
  - Work with supervisor to document expectations (for you and supervisor)

Ask questions early and often

Job Duty Preparation

- Training provided by your employing unit
- Ethics or safety training (e.g., IRB, IACUC, IBC, FERPA)
- Orientation coordinated by your employing unit
- Orientation for new GTAs hosted by the Teaching and Learning Center (TLC)—January 14

When do I work?

- Varies by appointment type and based on responsibilities
- Not necessarily 8:00am – 5:00pm work hours
- Appointments may require work outside of regular business hours (i.e., evenings, weekends, holidays)
  - Research and teaching does not function on a business schedule
- Do I have to record work hours?
  - GTAs and GRAs – usually not
  - GAs – Yes
  - Consult with your hiring unit for details

Work Hour Limitations

Fall and Spring

U.S. Students

30 hours of work during weeks when classes or final exams are in session three full days or more

F-1 and J-1 students

Limited to 20 hours of work per week

Summer & University Breaks

ALL students

- 30 hours per week when enrolled in 4 or more credit hours
- Allowed 40 hours per week when enrolled in 3 or less credit hours.

When employed in more than one department concurrently, the sum of hours worked in all departments may not exceed these maximums.

When and how do I get paid?

When

- Pay periods begin on Sunday and are two weeks (https://www.k-state.edu/finsvcs/payroll/pay-dates/)
- The paycheck for a pay period is disbursed two weeks after the end of the pay period
  - Your first paycheck will be disbursed four weeks after you begin your assistantship, as long as all payroll paperwork was processed on time

How

- GTA/GRA – paid a stipend
- GA – paid hourly, must record hours
- Via direct deposit to your selected bank account

Do I get vacation? Do I work on holidays?

- Graduate assistantships are **not** benefits-earning positions—you do not accrue official leave time
- Discuss with your supervisor how to "take time off"
- Assistantship are not "benefits-earning" positions and do not receive paid holidays
  - Know the difference between student holidays (no classes) and university holidays (univ. offices closed, work may still be required)
  - Discuss with supervisor whether or not you are expected to work during holidays

Benefits

- Financial support
- Health insurance
- Parental leave
- Free K-State ID card
- Faculty/staff parking permit (GRAs and GTAs)

Financial Support Benefits

Tuition support

- Waiver of non-resident tuition charges
  - For 0.4 FTE (full-time equivalency) appointments
  - Employing unit submits non-resident tuition waiver request each semester
- Tuition remission (GTAs)
  - Up to 10 credit hours of tuition paid by the university
- Tuition support for GRAs/GAs determined by employing unit
  - Consult with your employing unit about how the support is provided

Financial Support Benefits

- Tuition payment deferment
  - Spring semester payment due date is delayed to March 15
  - Applies after hiring is completed

- Parental leave
  - Up to six weeks paid leave to welcome a child by childbirth, adoption, or foster care

Health Insurance

Am I required to have health insurance?

U.S. students

No

F-1 or J-1 visa holders

Yes

Health Insurance

- Injury and sickness plan, United HealthCare Student Resources
  - Medical only
  - Separate dental and vision plans available for purchase
- Any K-State student may enroll in one of four options:
  - 1 – U.S. citizens who are not eligible for options 2 or 3
  - 2 – Health science students (only applies to the physician assistant master's program)
  - 3 – Graduate students on a 0.5 FTE GTA, GRA, or GA or combination appointment for at least 8 consecutive weeks during the coverage period
  - 4 – International students who do not qualify for option 2 or 3

Health Insurance – Option 3 – GTA, GTA, or GA

- Benefit to GTAs, GRAs, GAs with 0.5 FTE appointment
  - Responsible for only 25% of premium cost for your coverage (does not apply to premium for dependents)
  - Hiring must be complete before you enroll
  - Must be on the assistantship appointment for at least 8 consecutive weeks during the coverage period
  - Must enroll each term you want coverage

Health insurance

2026-2027 dates and costs

SEMESTER	OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD	COVERAGE PERIOD	Student Cost 2026-2027	University Cost 2026-2027
Fall 2026	July 9 - October 1	August 1 -December 31	$286.00	$858.00
Spring 2027	December 1 - March 1	January 1 - May 31	$286.00	$858.00
Summer 2027	May 1 - July 1	June 1 - July 31	$115.00	$344.00

Enrolling in GTA/GRA/GA plan – All Students

1. Complete the hiring process
2. Apply for GRA/GTA/GA health insurance at https://www.k-state.edu/hr/benefits/insurance-programs/graduate-health-insurance/
3. Receive payment link from UnitedHealthcare – MUST MAKE PAYMENT WITHIN 5 DAYS
4. Make ONLINE payment (check if your bank allows such charges)

Enrollment Form is only open from

December 1 – March 1

Health Insurance – International Students

- Required for all students on F-1 and J-1 visas at K-State
- Once you enroll in classes, you will see the insurance charge (premium fee) on your KSIS account for the Basic Plan. If you want K-State UHCSR Basic Plan, you will pay the full amount.
- Conditions to waive the basic plan
  1. Covered with another qualified health insurance
  2. Eligible for GRA/GTA/GA plan

Health Insurance – International Students

- **Basic plan charge** - ISSS removes the Basic Plan charge from your KSIS account after receiving a report from UHCSR that you enrolled in the GRA/GTA/GA option
- Coverage requirements for dependents
  - Enrollment for dependents is separate from student plans. It must be done directly through UnitedHealthcare online.
  - F-2 dependents are not required to have health insurance if not enrolled
  - J-2 dependents are required to have health insurance by the Department of State

Health insurance is <u>strongly</u> encouraged for all family members due to high cost of medical care.

Direct questions to International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
isss@ksu.edu
https://www.k-state.edu/isss/students/health_insurance/

Health Insurance – International Students

More information provided at
International Student Orientation
January 11

Free K-State ID card

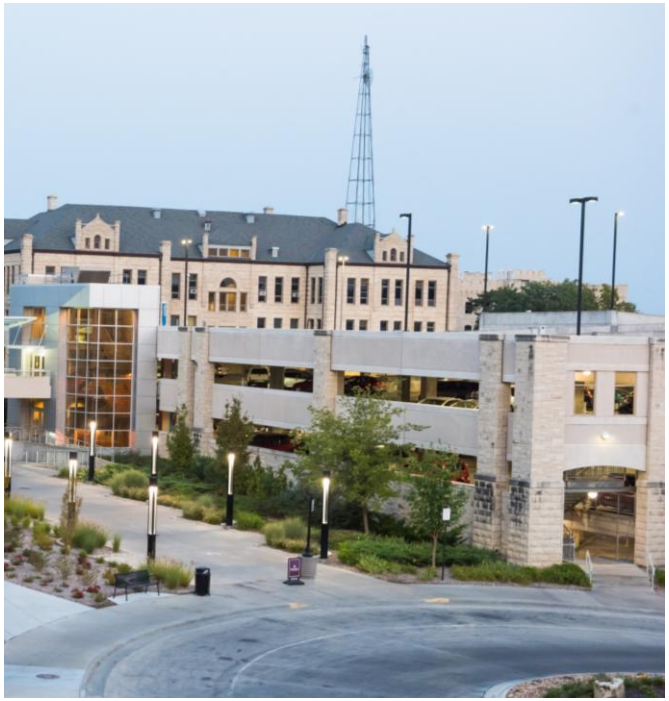
Show a copy of your assistantship offer letter to the K-State ID center to receive your Wildcat OneCard at no cost



https://union.k-state.edu/shopping-services/id-center

Faculty/staff parking permit upgrade (GTA & GRA)

- If you need to park on campus, first purchase a student permit
- Get acquainted with campus to determine if the faculty/staff upgrade is beneficial for you
- After hiring process is complete, inquire with Parking services about the faculty/staff upgrade
  - Does not apply to parking garage



https://www.k-state.edu/parking/

Resources

- Assistantship checklist and tutorial
  https://www.k-state.edu/grad/admissions/incoming-students/getting-started/
- Assistantship supervisor
- HR liaison/budget officer in your employing unit
- International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS)
  https://www.k-state.edu/isss/