

## **CLAS Practices for Assistantship Offers [rev. 1-31-24]**

First, these elements should be included in any assistantship offer:

- Period of appointment (start date, end date)
- Amount of compensation
- Pay period information (monthly pay, for how many months)
- Benefits (tuition remission, insurance, department-specific items such as office space)
- Requirements for credit hours to be taken per semester; orientation, training, and practicum; fee and insurance payments; any else specific to the department
- If applicable, new employee paperwork requirements
- Assistantship responsibilities (including expectation for work or meetings in person as appropriate)
- Notice of 20-hour average weekly maximum
- Supervision (who, and how to contact them)
- Evaluation of performance (how, when)
- Eligibility for renewal (conditions, total maximum assistantship period)
  - 2 years total for MA/MS/MM
  - 3 years total for MFA
  - 4, 4.5, or 5 years total for PhD; if committing to less than 5 years, the offer may note the possibility of a 5<sup>th</sup> year under given conditions
- Disclaimer about any elements subject to change

Second, these practices should be followed when offering assistantships:

- Offer the assistantship in a letter separate from admission to the program
- Issue a reappointment letter for each period of appointment (academic year, usually)
- Require explicit written acceptance by the student

Third, because of UMaine's commitment to R1 status and the use of doctoral graduates as one of only two R1 metrics, the university is prioritizing assistantship support for PhD students. If your unit has a PhD program, please implement that prioritization when you make assistantship offers. As you consider how to fill lines:

1. Commitments made to continuing graduate students should be honored first.
2. Then, offers should be made to new doctoral students you wish to recruit.
3. If there are not enough new doctoral students to fill necessary and available lines, offers to new master's students should be made.
4. When offers are declined, in any unit, please consult with me before re-offering any lines at the master's level.

This guidance applies primarily to assistantships budgeted in the Graduate School, not to those funded by philanthropy, on grants, or in departments. Regardless of the funding source, though, the preference for doctoral students should be considered.