

## RA CONTRACT CERTIFICATION

In signing my RA Contract Form, I understand that my research assistantship and academic obligations constitute a full-time commitment. In exchange for my per-semester support stipend, I agree to work a minimum of 20 hours/week if the semester falls within the academic year, and 40 hours/week if it falls within the summer term. I must have prior *written approval* from my research advisor before undertaking any other employment, either inside or outside the University. Because this appointment requires service to the University, I am aware that taxes may be deducted from the stipend portion of my award. I also agree to sign the University's standard patent agreement form. I further understand that as an RA, I will receive a tuition scholarship for credits leading toward my degree during my period of employment. I will obtain written approval from my advisor if I wish to register for coursework in excess of 8 credit hours per semester. I understand I must register for each semester in a timely manner and complete required payroll forms with my department. I also understand that I may only work under one Research Assistant contract at a time.

### International Students:

I understand that my visa and work-permission status must be up to date before I can begin work. I further understand that US visa regulations prohibit *any additional work*, either on or off campus, during the duration of my RA appointment.

### U.S. Citizens and Permanent Residents:

I understand that my scholarship is a form of financial aid and that it may affect my eligibility for certain need-based funds, including but not limited to: Direct Loans, Federal Work-Study, and Perkins Loans. I also understand that if I have already received need-based funds prior to my RA appointment, the terms of my financial aid package may be adjusted.

**Note:** Research Assistants are paid by the semester in four installments issued at the end of the month. Fall semester paychecks are issued from September through December; Spring semester paychecks are issued from January through April; Summer semester paychecks are issued from May through August. If your RA contract does not include the summer semester, you will not receive a paycheck in May and should budget your funds accordingly.

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## GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH ASSISTANT AWARDS

- This form should be used for **continuing students** who have matriculated prior to the semester of the RA offer. An **offer of RA appointment letter** should be prepared by the Department for **new, entering students**. This letter must be signed by the Principal Investigator, the Department Graduate Associate Chair, and the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies.
- All RA contracts should be submitted no later than July 1 for the Fall term, November 1 for the Spring term, and April 1 for the Summer term. RA contracts must be renewed at least once yearly.
- The minimum rate of pay for RA students is equivalent to the Graduate Teaching Fellows rate, as noted on the front side of this form. If the base GTF rate changes, all RA contracts will be grandfathered for that academic year only. PI's are expected to make adjustments on the salary lines of their grants to accommodate the increase in the RA stipend for following academic years.
- The following guidelines are suggested guidelines for the timing of pay increases for Research Assistants. Each department determines its own schedule for implementation which may differ from the following:

-First Increment: A 5% stipend increase above base will be awarded when the student has passed all qualification examinations leading to the Ph.D. degree.

-Second Increment: A 5% stipend increase above base will be awarded when the student has successfully completed a Ph. D. prospectus defense.

A new RA contract need *not* be submitted for students who earn a stipend increase during the contract period.

The stipend indicated on the front of this form should be the amount to which the student is entitled at the time of the issuing of the contract.

I have read and understand this document in its entirety.

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_