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HIRING STUDENTS Best Practices

Background and Purpose

On a sponsored project, a most important aspect of getting underway is hiring students. Student employment allows students to gain professional experience. Doctoral, masters, and undergraduate students may be hired for positions based on specific criteria and regulations. Limitations for student employment include the number of hours a student can work, the registration status of a student, and may include restrictions based on the student's funding or institutional support.

Common student employment positions related to sponsored projects include:

- Research assistant – assists faculty member with aspects of research
- Graduate research assistant – Ph.D. students who carry out research, normally as part of pre-doctoral training

Student employment is processed through the Boston University Student Employment Office (SEO).

Work hours

The Office of the Provost guides the number of hours students can work based on their registered designation, as follows:

- i. All full-time students may work no more than 1,500 hours in University employment during a fiscal year.
- ii. Undergraduate and all part-time students should not work more than 20 hours per week while attending classes and should not work more than 40 hours per week during official University break periods, such as Intersessions, spring break, and summer.
- iii. Full-time graduate students should not work more than 20 hours per week during any academic period and not more than 40 hours per week during official University break periods or during an academic period in which a student is not classified as full-time.
- iv. Faculty and staff cannot be paid as student employees.

International students must adhere to limitations and requirements based on immigration status and authorization from the [International Students and Scholars Office](#) (ISSO).

Budget Considerations

The hiring and paying of student employees have structural and budgeting cost implications. As you consider the appropriate hiring needs, you will also need to determine the resources available to hire student employees and evaluate the hiring impact on your budget.

The expectation is that all units should identify their needs and budget appropriately *before* hiring student employees. If there is a need to hire additional student employees, the first step is to discuss the matter with your department director and chair, establish a funding source for the position, and ensure that there are sufficient grant funds available to support a student employee.

Students are hired using Business Link in BU Works. International students are only allowed to work if they have checked in with ISSO and completed work authorization paperwork. If you are hiring a new international student, the first thing they need to do is go to ISSO. Once ISSO approves the paperwork, the student can be hired.



Required Forms (note: each college/school may have additional required forms):

- [Confidentiality Policy](#) – All student employees must review and sign the University’s Student Employment Confidentiality Policy. Students must agree to respect the confidentiality of work-related and student record information outlined in the policy.
- [Intellectual Property Policy](#) – Any student involved in University-supported research must-read Boston University’s patent policy and sign the agreement form.

Abbreviations

| Abbreviations | Meaning |
|----------------------|--|
| DA | Department Administrator |
| IPP | Intellectual Property Policy |
| ISSO | International Students & Scholars Office |
| PI | Principal Investigator |
| SA | School Administrator |
| SEA | Student Employee Authorization |
| SEO | Student Employment Office |

Process Flow

1. The PI connects the DA/SA and provides information on the position requirements. If the PI has a specific student in mind to hire, they provide initial details on that student.
 - There are 3 different categories to hire a student:
 - Hourly rate - verify the current MA minimum wage rate.
 - Weekly stipend - verify the department’s weekly rate. Please note that not all departments have the same stipend amounts.
 - Work study – If specific person is unknown, post a job in student employment. If there isn’t an existing job description that matches the PI’s needs, go here: <http://www.bu.edu/seo/supervisors/posting/posting-fws/>
2. If the student is known, or after a student is identified, DA/SA works with student to collect information on [Student Employee Authorization](#) (SEA) Form
3. DA/SA notifies student to complete I-9
4. Once the information above is complete, in BU Works, select Business Link, Student Employment and “New Hire/Rehire” in the Hiring Process Functions section. Follow instructions on the SEO website.

One Time Payment

Students who work on a one-time basis (i.e., a special project) can receive a one-time payment, i.e. ‘Piecemeal’ payment. The employment duration for a one-time payment cannot exceed one week. International students can receive piecemeal payments only for work done during approved break periods; they must be paid either hourly or weekly salaried for all other employment.

Missing Student Time Entry

If the student is unable to enter their hours or forgets to enter their hours, the DA/SA can process it.

Key Things to know

- Students are paid each Friday for the week previously worked.
- For hourly students (both departmental and work-study), the supervisor needs to approve hours on Mondays, the week after the student works. Some departments assign the PI, Lab Technician, or Postdoc as the supervisor (supervisor designation is done when the DA sets up the job). Other



departments assign the DA to do weekly time approval.

- Work study job can only be filled by a student who has a federal work study award. Grant only pays 30% of the total salary for a work study job.

Roles and Responsibilities

| Role | Responsibility |
|-------------|--|
| DA | Work with identified student on documentation needed and accurately set up student in BU system. |
| PI | Alert the DA/SA that they need to hire a student under one of their grants and provide position details and student information, if known. |

Reference Documents

- Student Employment Office - <http://www.bu.edu/seo/>
- International Students & Scholars Office - <https://www.bu.edu/isso/>