

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

FOR

GRADUATE RESEARCH AND

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

IN THE

SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL AND

COMPUTER ENGINEERING

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to provide policy and procedure information for Georgia Institute of Technology graduate students who have been offered support as Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) on funds managed through the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering.

Some of these policies are specific to the school; others are broader and apply throughout the Institute. All must be followed to assure proper payment of the stipend and eligibility for the fee reduction.

This manual is not intended to be an exhaustive set of rules. The policies and procedures of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, as well as those issued by the central administration of the Georgia Institute of Technology, supersede the information contained in this document.

THE APPOINTMENT PROCESS

Applying for Assistantships

- Applicants for admission into the ECE graduate program are considered for assistantships based on information supplied via the online admission application. **Important:** Returning GTAs must submit a GTA application, each semester, to maintain the GTA offer listed in their original offer letter.
- Students who have GTAs are contacted by email before the start of the next term and asked to indicate their interest in continuing employment.
- A GTA application must be filed by the deadline specified in the email to be considered for a teaching assistantship.

Assistantship Offers

- **All** ECE assistantship offers are made through the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.
- Although faculty members may recommend students to be considered for Graduate Teaching Assistantships, the ECE Graduate Affairs Office determines which students will receive GTA offers.
- A faculty member who wishes to hire a student as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) must submit the GRA hire request via Georgia Tech's GradWorks hiring system.
- Once approved by the faculty member's accountant and the ECE Graduate Affairs Office, an offer letter is prepared and presented to the student.
- **No assistantship offer is valid** until an offer letter, signed by the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs, is received.
- Any student whose GTA appointment has been terminated for any reason must file a new GTA application before they can be rehired. In the case of a GRA, the hiring faculty member would also have to file a hiring request in GradWorks so that a new offer letter could be generated.
- Students who have been employed at Georgia Tech and have had a termination in their service must complete new hiring paperwork with the Office of Human Resources when hired into a new position.

Decision Information

- Included in this manual (the final two pages) are forms which must be completed to accept (or decline) an assistantship **after the official offer is received.**
- It is important that these forms be completed and returned to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office as soon as the decision to accept or decline the offer is made.
- Timely decline notices permit ECE to make offers to other deserving students, while timely acceptance notices avoid complications with stipend payment and fee assessment.

Academic Progress

- Students supported as GRAs or GTAs are full-time students and part-time employees.
- Students supported as GRAs/GTAs are **expected to make good academic progress and complete their degrees within the times delineated in the ECE Graduate Handbook.**
- The duties assigned to the assistantship appointment should not interfere with the academic program or progress toward completing the degree.
- M.S. students must maintain overall grade point averages (GPA) of **2.7** to remain in "good" academic standing. PhD students must maintain a **3.0** GPA.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Workloads

The School of Electrical and Computer Engineering offers Graduate Research and Teaching Assistantships on a one-third time and one-half time basis.

- Students with one-third time appointments work 13 to 15 hours per week.
- Students with one-half time appointments work 20 hours per week.
- Since one half-time appointments place a greater demand on the graduate student in terms of performance hours expected, most graduate students in their first year are usually appointed to one-third time positions.
- No Georgia Tech graduate student is permitted to work more than 50% time.
- Immigration regulations prohibit any student on an F1 or J1 visa from working more than 50% time, regardless of Georgia Tech policies.

Stipends

- Students employed as Graduate Research or Teaching Assistants are paid on the last business day of the month.
- Georgia Institute of Technology requires that all employees (including student employees) arrange to have their stipends/salaries paid to them by direct deposit.
- The Office of Human Resources provides the documentation needed to arrange direct deposit along with the other forms processed at the time of hiring.
- ECE stipend rates are classified as “Basic” and “PhD increment.”
- Specific stipend amounts are included in the offer letter that is generated by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.
- All assistantship offers to entering students are normally offered at the “**Basic**” level.
- To qualify for the PhD increment, one must have passed the PhD Course Work Qualifier courses and have selected a research advisor.
- Approval of the PhD increment is not automatic. It is subject to budget constraints and approval of the research advisor.
- Research advisors decide whether their students who pass the Course Work Qualifier will receive the PhD increment.
- Research advisors file a revised hiring request to initiate the process of change a GRAs stipend from the “Basic” increment to the “PhD” one.
- When approved, the PhD increment becomes effective at the beginning of the next term.
- Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA’s) are paid at the basic rate.
- **ECE permits faculty members whose students obtain fellowships may withdraw or reduce the GRA appointments to be able to fund additional students in their research groups.**

Other GRA/GTA Opportunities

- ECE students are permitted to accept teaching or research assistantships with other academic or research units on campus.
- Other Georgia Tech academic or research units (for example: Georgia Tech Research Institute, the Advanced Technology Development Center, the School of Mathematics) are sources of potential employment for ECE majors.
- Non-ECE entities hire independently of ECE and should be contacted directly by those wishing to be considered for employment in those units.
- The hiring unit determines its workload and stipend guidelines (within the parameters set by the Institute).
- Hiring units outside of ECE must advise the ECE Graduate Affairs Office when they hire ECE students. This is done by entering the hiring request into GradWorks for approval. If outside hiring unit does not use GradWorks, please send the hiring notification email to ECE Academic Program Manager Ms. Carol March, at cmarch3@gatech.edu.

Reduced Fees

- Graduate Research and Teaching Assistants who meet the criteria described below by the close of registration each term is eligible for a tuition waiver.

Graduate Teaching Assistants:

- Appointment at a minimum of one-third (33.33%) time and not more than one-half (50%) time.
- Paid through the Georgia Tech payroll system.
- Registered for a full-time course load of a minimum of 13 credit hours in fall and/or spring semesters for **GTA's and a minimum of 12 hours for GTA's in summer term.** At least nine hours must be degree-related letter grade and/or pass fail courses in fall and spring semesters, six hours must be degree related in summer. The remaining hours are the teaching assistantship marker course (**ECE 8997-3 Audit hours**).

Graduate Research Assistants:

- Appointment at a minimum of one-third (33.33%) time and not more than one-half (50%) time.
- Paid through the Georgia Tech payroll system.
- Must register for a full-time course load of a minimum of 21 credit hours in fall and/or spring semesters for **GRA's and a minimum of 16 hours for GRA's in summer term.** At least nine hours must be degree-related letter grade and/or pass fail courses in fall and spring semesters, six hours must be degree related in summer. The remaining hours are research marker course hours (either **ECE 8900** for those who **have not** passed the PhD Course Work Qualifier or **ECE 9000** for those who have passed the Course Work Qualifier). Research hours are specific to the faculty member who is supervising the GRA's research.
- Reduced fees consist of all the GT required student fees.
- Current fee information may be obtained at: bursar.gatech.edu.

Hourly Appointments

- Georgia Institute of Technology applies significant restrictions to the hiring of graduate students on an hourly basis.
- Hourly appointments **must be** approved by the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs **before** the student is hired.
- The Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs must be able to justify the hourly appointment to the College of Engineering and the GT Graduate Studies Office.
- Students who are employed hourly **must be registered** and will pay tuition and fees based on their residency status for the course hours in which they are registered.
- Hourly appointments can only be used as an interim status in a single term. Students who obtain hourly appointments cannot work more than six weeks in a term and cannot work more than half (50%) time.
- In subsequent terms, the hourly employed student must be appointed as a Graduate Research or Teaching Assistant or have graduated and no longer be employed in a student position Tech
- Hourly appointments are **not eligible** for the tuition waiver provided to students with GRA/GTA appointments.
- Students supported as GRA's in the previous semester, cannot be hired on an hourly basis in summer without sufficient documentation to satisfy the College of Engineering that the hourly appointment is justified.
- Faculty planning to hire students on an hourly basis **must** contact the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs for clearance for the hourly hire **before** making a commitment to the student.

Payroll Deduction for Student Tuition and Fees

Graduate Research and Graduate Teaching Assistants (GRA/GTA) who are paid monthly have the option to pay all or part of the tuition and fees on their Bursar's Account through payroll deduction from their GT earnings in these positions. Selection of this payment option is done on-line through OSCAR and is available through the final fee payment deadline in fall, spring, and summer semesters.

- To arrange for payroll deduction students must complete GT hiring paperwork in a timely manner. This paperwork is available on the GT's Office of Human Resources website. In fall semester it is also available during the Graduate Expo which is held every year prior to the start of fall classes – location is provided through email.
- After completing the hiring paperwork, students must follow up with the accounting department of the major school to ensure the GRA or GTA appointment has been entered into the Payroll System. **GRA and GTA appointments must be entered into the payroll system prior to the final fee deadline for the term. If this requirement is not met on time the option to select Payroll Deduction for the term will no longer be available.**
- When the Payroll Deduction payment option is selected through the Student Invoice Statement in OSCAR, verification of employment will be completed to ensure that the student is on the GT payroll system in a qualified job title and that the payroll deduction amount selected does not exceed the expected payroll for the term. Students who are not set up in Payroll or try to deduct more than the stipend for their position will receive an error message.

- payroll deductions for the term will be made in three equal installments. For example, if a student opts to make a \$1500 payment through payroll deduction in fall, \$500 will be deducted from each of the September, October, and November payrolls. In spring term, equal deductions will be made from the February, March, and April payrolls.
- Payroll deduction will be available for the Fall and Spring and Summer semesters. In the summer payroll deduction will be made in two equal installments in June and July.
- If a balance is owed above the payroll deducted amount, that balance must be paid by the official fee deadlines for each semester. For example, if a balance of \$2000 is owed, and the student arranges for \$1500 to be paid via Payroll Deduction, the \$500 balance on the account must be paid by the published fee deadlines listed on the Bursar website www.bursar.gatech.edu. Failure to pay this balance in full will result in cancellation of the class schedule and/or the GRA/GTA for the term.

For more information regarding this program, students should contact the Bursar's Office at https://bursar.gatech.edu/staff_listing. Questions regarding the GRA/GTA appointment should be directed to your hiring professor or to <https://hr.gatech.edu/contact-us>.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

These are the steps to be taken by students to inform ECE of their decision regarding our assistantship offers:

To Decline an Offer

- Check the "Decline Assistantship Offer Box" on the assistantship form email completed form to Ms. Carol Match at cmarch3@gatech.edu.

To Accept an Offer

- Check the "Accept Assistantship box" and sign the Assistantship form
- Complete the "Memorandum of Understanding of Assistantship Policies and Procedures" form included at the end of this manual.
- Email both completed form to Ms. Carol March at cmarch3@gatech.edu.

Students accepting assistantship offers must complete the following steps:

Obtain a Social Security Card

- All employees must have Social Security cards. Those without cards must apply for them before they can be employed at Georgia Institute of Technology.
- International applicants for Social Security cards must be in the United States for at least 10 working days before they can apply.
- Applicants for Social Security cards must request documentation of their application from the Social Security administrator who processes the application.
- This documentation must be provided to the Georgia Tech Office of Human Resources.
- Additional information about obtaining a Social Security card can be found at: <https://ohr.gatech.edu/other-information>.

Process Hiring Paperwork

- Hiring paperwork must be completed through the GT Office of Human Resources (OHR).
- Students entering Georgia Tech during fall semester are provided with the opportunity to file their hiring paperwork with OHR while participating in the GT orientation program (specifically the Grad Expo portion of the program).
 - More information on this opportunity to complete hiring paperwork can be found on the GT graduate orientation website.
- Students who do not process their new hiring paperwork at the Grad Expo, or obtain fall employment after the close of the Expo, or begin GRA/GTA employment during spring or summer term must complete the online New Hire Packet prior to scheduling the in-person appointment with OHR <https://hr.gatech.edu/student-onboarding> (Human Resources Building, located 500 Tech Parkway) to complete the hiring paperwork.
- Students will need to present at least two forms of official identification to complete OHR's hiring paperwork.
- This documentation includes (but is not limited to) the Social Security card, driver's license, passport etc.
- International students (those on F1 or J1 visas) must also bring their passports and visas with them to the employment center.

Register Properly

- It is the student's responsibility to be sure that they are properly registered before the close of registration each term that they are supported with an assistantship.
- Improper registration can result in loss of the assistantship waiver, assessment of full tuition and fees (based on residency status), and/or cancellation of the student's schedule for the term.
- Please refer to the "Proper Academic Load" section of this document for detailed information regarding registration requirements for students with research or teaching assistantships.

Activate and Monitor the Georgia Tech Email Account

- The official means of communication between Georgia Institute of Technology academic and administrative units (such as ECE, the Bursars, Registrar's, or Student Financial Aid Offices) and students is via the Georgia Tech email account (also known as the gt account).
- Students must have active "gt" email accounts.
- The "gt" email account must be checked daily.
- Although ECE Graduate Affairs and/or other Georgia Tech entities issue improper registration and other appointment/registration-related warnings via email, it is each student's responsibility to be sure that they are properly registered.

- ECE and other Georgia Tech entities are not responsible for communication breakdowns resulting from failure to provide a reliable means of contact or failure to respond to warning notice.

Terms of Employment

- GRA and GTA appointments are part-time and temporary.
- The length of an assistantship appointment is stated in the offer letter
- **Employment beyond the period indicated in the assistantship offer letter is not guaranteed**
- Continued employment depends on several factors including but not limited to the following:
 - Availability of funds
 - Academic performance and degree progress
 - Work performance

GTA Responsibilities

- GTAs are assigned mailboxes in Room W203 of the Van Leer Building.
- It is each GTAs responsibility to check the assigned mailbox daily.
- GTAs will receive their assignment from the GTA Coordinator each term.
- Upon receipt of the assignment, GTAs should **immediately** report to the faculty member(s) responsible for the class(es) which they are assigned to support.
- GTAs must meet with the faculty member(s) to establish a work schedule and determine the commitments required of them to appropriately fulfill their assigned duties.
- GTAs must follow the instructions of the supervising faculty member on all matters related to their assignment.
- Specific problems or issues with individual assignments should be referred to the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs.

NOTE: GTAs have access to the ECE departmental copy machines in W203, GTAs who are unable to access the copiers, should contact **Zachariah Worley** – (ECE's Facilities Mgr., who is located in the Van Leer Bldg., Room 319) to arrange copier access.

- **GTAs are evaluated by their supervisors each term.**

GRA Responsibilities

- It is the GRAs responsibility to fully understand and meet the supervising faculty member's expectations for GRA employment.
- The faculty member should evaluate the GRA each term and provide feedback to the student
- A copy of the GRA evaluation is kept in the student's ECE file.
- GRAs are to be aware of A-21 requirements (<http://www.grants.gatech.edu/news>) and to comply with those requirements.
- GRAs are evaluated by their supervisors each term.

Office Assignments

- GRAs and GTAs who are assigned offices should contact **Zachariah Worley**, whose office is in the Van Leer Bldg., Room 319, for keys, etc.

ABSENCE FROM GEORGIA TECH

- To be eligible for the GTA/GRA fee waiver, students must be appointed for and work the **full term**.
- Specific term employment dates for each term are available through the ECE Accounting Office, the Georgia Tech Payroll and Human Resources offices and the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.
- Absences for Graduate Research Assistants must follow the regulations outlined in the Georgia Institute of Technology document, “Personal Services Reporting – Using the Plan Confirmation System,” which is located at:
<https://www.grants.gatech.edu/policies-and-procedures/policies-and-procedures>
- It is understood that students holding assistantships may be away from school for official holidays, term breaks, professional travel, personal and/or family emergencies.
- Students with teaching or research assistantships should make every effort to **avoid scheduling** non-emergency travel during the term(s) in which they are employed. Non-emergency/discretionary travel should be arranged during holiday periods and term breaks.
- Students should obtain approval from their supervisor **prior** to any absence from their assistantship responsibilities.
- Students traveling outside the U.S. or traveling away from Georgia Tech for **seven working days or longer** should inform their research advisor and the ECE Graduate Affairs Office of their travel plans. This includes travel on Institute or School-related business.
- The ECE Notice of Absence form is filed with the ECE Graduate Affairs Office when a seven working days or longer absence is expected. The absence form does not replace the Georgia Tech Authorization to Travel which must also be filed when traveling on Tech or ECE-related business.
- Students who are unable to fulfill the assigned duties of the assistantship due to absence from Tech risk withdrawal of their GRA/GTA waiver, termination of their employment and assessment of full tuition and fees (based on residency status).
- Termination of the GRA or GTA appointment before the official end of the term (whether by student or the supervisor) is also subject to withdrawal of the GRA/GTA waiver and assessment of full tuition and fees (based on residency status).

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- International students (in other words those who are not US citizens or permanent residents) must have an F1 or J1 visa to be employed in an assistantship position.
- Students who do not have the appropriate visa **must** obtain one **before** they seek out GRA/GTA support.
- The process of switching to an F1 or J1 visa can be time-consuming and usually involves leaving the country. Because this would make the student unavailable to work in the position sought, students must have F1 or J1 status before seeking any employment in ECE.
- **Students on F1 or J1 visas are not permitted to work more than 50% time.**
- International students who are applying to the Immigration and Naturalization Service for permanent resident status must submit an "Application for Employment Authorization" (I-765) along with the "Application to Register Permanent Residence or Adjust Status"(I-485). If this is not done, the student cannot work until the Alien Registration card (green card) is received.
- Even students, who have previously been employed as graduate assistants under the F1 or J1 visas and are applying for permanent residency, cannot work unless the I-765 is filed with the I-485.
- International students (those on F1 or J1 visas) may not be employed at Georgia Institute of Technology unless they are registered as full-time students.

PROPER ACADEMIC LOAD

- To be eligible for the GRA or GTA tuition waiver which results in a significant reduction in the fees paid to Georgia Institute of Technology, GRAs and GTAs are required by the Institute and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia to meet certain criteria.
- The policies below are issued to assure that GRAs and GTAs are following these requirements.
- The importance of following these policies cannot be understated (or exaggerated). Failure to comply with them can result in loss of tuition waiver, cancellation of schedule, and/or termination of the assistantship appointment.
 - The **minimum** number of degree related letter grade and/or pass fail course hours required for proper full-time registration in any term is **nine hours in fall and spring, six hours in summer. NOTE: All GRA/GTA students must register for a total of 12 hours during the summer semester to maintain their tuition waiver.**
 - All letter grade and/or pass fail course hours on a student's schedule (including the research marker courses ECE 7000, 9000, and 8900) are counted to determine the full course load.
 - The **maximum** registration allowed by Georgia Institute of Technology in fall and spring semesters is 21 hours. The maximum allowed hours in the summer term is 16 hours. The maximum number requirements include assistantship marker course hours which are officially designated as "audit" hours.
 - **Students with research assistantships are expected to register for the maximum hours allowed each term.**
 - Students with teaching assistantships who are also conducting research under the supervision of an ECE faculty member are expected to register for the maximum hours allowed each term.
 - Students with teaching assistantships who are not conducting research should register for a minimum of 12 hours.
 - **The only audit hours ECE authorizes for students employed as GTAs or GRAs are the assistantship marker courses ECE 8997 and 8998.**
 - Permission from the ECE Office of Graduate Affairs **must be obtained before scheduling any audit hours other than ECE 8997 and ECE 8998.**
 - Classes listed as ECE 9000 and ECE 7000 function as transcript indicators of Ph.D. dissertation or MS thesis research respectively.

- Only students who have passed the ECE Ph.D. Coursework Qualifier, have selected a research advisor and have filed an advisor selection form signed by both student and advisor with the ECE Graduate Affairs Office may register for the appropriate section of ECE 9000 (Doctoral Research).
- Only students who have selected an MS thesis research advisor and have filed an advisor selection form signed by both student and advisor with the ECE Graduate Affairs Office may register for ECE 7000 (Master's Thesis) as part of their academic load.
- The maximum course load for graduate research or teaching assistants is 21 hours in fall and spring semesters, 16 in summer term.
- All graduate students supported with assistantships on ECE-managed funds **must register for a full-time academic load (minimum of 12 hours) including during the summer semesters.**
- All graduate research and teaching assistants must schedule **a minimum of nine hours of degree-related classes on a letter grade and/or pass fail basis in fall and spring semesters. Students may register for six hours of letter grade and/or pass fail classes in summer of degree-related classes but are encouraged to register for nine in summer as well.**
- The “marker courses” ECE 8997 and ECE 8998 function as transcript indicators of employment as Graduate Teaching or Research Assistants respectively.
- The section of ECE 8997 or ECE 8998 appropriate to the percentage of time for which the GRA or GTA is hired **must be** included in the schedule for each term that the student is employed with an assistantship.
- Students who are researching under the supervision of a faculty member and who are not eligible to register for a research marker course (ECE 7000 – MS Thesis Research or ECE 9000 - Doctoral Research) are to register for hours of ECE 8900 under the advisor's supervision during each term in which they are conducting research.
- PhD and MS thesis option students who have completed all coursework will register for the maximum allowed hours of ECE 9000 or 7000 each term as well as the GRA or GTA marker course appropriate to their appointment.
- Students still completing coursework will adjust the hours doctoral (ECE 9000) or MS thesis (ECE 7000) by the number of coursework hours to be taken.
- The maximum number of 9000 or 7000 hours allowed in fall or spring is 18.
- The maximum number of 9000 or 7000 hours allowed in summer is 13.
- Students employed as GRA/GTAs must register for ECE 8997 or ECE 8998 in addition to ECE 9000 or ECE 7000

- Only the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs can authorize changes to the class schedules of graduate assistants (GAs).
- Student employed as GRA/GTA whose registration drops below the required minimum because of withdrawing from classes after the close of registration, will lose their tuition waiver for the term and will be assessed full tuition based on their official residency status.
- GRAs and GTAs who plan to withdraw from classes or from school must follow ECE's Drop/Withdraw Procedure which is both described in the ECE Graduate Handbook and sent out to all enrolled students at least once each term.
- In cases in which the ECE Graduate Affairs Office has determined that extenuating circumstances are involved, and approval is given for a student to drop below the required minimum, the tuition waiver may be held on a **one-time basis**.
- The ECE Graduate Affairs Office will file a request for an exemption to the full-time requirement with the Georgia Tech Student Financial Aid Office.
- If the exemption is approved, the student will be advised to provide a statement to the Student Financial Aid Office acknowledging that they understand the GRA/GTA waiver requirements and they know that no future exemptions will be made. This statement must be provided to the Student Financial Aid Office within five days of when the exemption is approved.

ELIGIBILITY FOR GRADUATE ASSISTANT FEES

- Although graduate assistantship appointments involve the cooperative efforts of the student, supervising faculty member, and the ECE Graduate Affairs and Accounting Offices, it is the student who is ultimately responsible for the payment of fees.
- It is the student's responsibility to complete all steps in the hiring and registration process within the Institute's timetable for each term.
- Students must be sure that the following steps are completed before the close of registration for the term.

Assistantship Appointment

- Georgia Tech policy requires that all GRA/GTAs be appointed **no later than** the final day of registration for the term to be eligible for reduced tuition and fees. For GRA/GTAs in ECE this means that:
- A request to hire a student as GRA for ECE must be filed through the GradWorks hiring website by the hiring faculty member.
- The funds available for support have been certified by the faculty member's ECE Accountant.
- For GTA positions, the ECE Associate Graduate Chair has managed the assistantship openings and made certain that new GTA offers have been initiated when needed. Continuing students who are interesting in a GTA position may submit their application through the secure ECE website.
- An assistantship offer letter has been generated by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office and provided to the student along with the accepting paperwork found in this manual.
- The student has completed the accepting paperwork and returned it to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.
- All required OHR hiring paperwork has been completed.
- Where necessary, a Social Security card has been applied for and documentation of the application has been provided to OHR.

GRA/GTA Waiver Recorded

These waivers are recorded by the ECE Graduate Affairs Office. It is the responsibility of each student to confirm that their waiver has been recorded. Students should verify the status of their waiver by checking OSCAR (the GT on-line registration system).

TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

- The length of employment for a GRA or GTA appointment is stated in the assistantship offer letter that is provided to the student by the ECE Graduate Affairs office. It is also recorded in ECE's assistantship databases.
- Both the student and the hiring faculty member are expected to fulfill the terms of the assistantship as outlined in the offer letter.
- Students employed in GRA or GTA positions are to be evaluated by their supervising faculty member each term.
- Evaluation materials are to be submitted to the ECE Graduate Affairs Office and will be placed in each student's file.
- In addition to filing evaluations each term, the hiring faculty member should document poor performance with the student and the ECE Graduate Affairs Office as it occurs.
- Faculty or students wishing to terminate an employment arrangement prior to the termination date on file in the assistantship databases should consult the Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs before taking any action.
- After a termination date has been determined, it is crucial that the faculty member files a termination request through the secure GradWorks hiring system.

SUMMARY

- Students receiving this guide should refer to it during the registration period of each term in which they have an assistantship.
- The staffs of the ECE Graduate Affairs and Accounting Offices are available to answer questions regarding these procedures and should be consulted if any discrepancies in stipend payment or fee assessment occur.
- These professionals are the ones to contact when students have questions rather than relying upon the advice from other students.
- Serious consequences may result when warning messages from GT or ECE administrative offices are ignored.
- All students are required to activate and regularly check their Georgia Tech (gt) email accounts.
- The Bursar's Office and ECE Graduate Affairs Office use email to the “gt” account as a means of alerting students to discrepancies that can result in loss of fee reduction or cancellation of classes.
- Failure to receive important information sent via email is the responsibility of the receiver and not the sender.

DECISION FORMS

- The forms on the following pages are to be used to advise the ECE Graduate Affairs Office of the decision regarding the assistantship offer.
 - To only decline the assistantship, offer please check the “Decline Assistantship box” on the Assistantship form and email the completed form to Ms. Carol March at cmarch3@gatech.edu
 - To accept the assistantship, offer please check the “Accept Assistantship box” on the Assistantship form and complete the “Memorandum of Understand of Assistantship Policies and Procedures” form. Email completed forms to Ms. Carol March at cmarch3@gatech.edu

ACCEPT/DECLINE ASSISTANTSHIP OFFER

Date: _____

Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs
School of Electrical and Computer Engineering
Georgia Institute of Technology

Dear Associate Chair:

I am pleased to **ACCEPT** your offer of an assistantship beginning _____ term, _____(year). I have read all assistantship-related materials made available to. I understand that final arrangements for my assistantship assignment may not be completed until after my arrival at Georgia Tech.

Please note the following information relative to my future employment in the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology:

I am not currently employed at Georgia Institute of Technology.

I am currently employed at GA Tech as _____(position title) in _____(Department or academic unit). That employment will end on _____(MM/DD/YYYY).

In case of emergency please contact: _____

Emergency Telephone Number(s) _____

I have received the assistantship offer from the School of Electrical and Computer Engineering at Georgia Institute of Technology. I have decided to **DECLINE** your offer of support beginning _____ term, _____(year).

*For ECE’s information, please let us know why you are declining our financial support offer (i.e. what other school you will attend or employment opportunity you have accepted). This information will only be used for our future recruiting efforts. *

Sincerely,

Signature

Email Address

Print Name

Contact Number

GTID # (9 digits, starts w/ “9”)

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING OF
ASSISTANTSHIP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES TO
BE COMPLETED AND RETURNED WITH THE
ACCEPTANCE LETTER AND EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION FORMS**

TO: Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs

FROM: _____(Please print your name)

I have read the materials included with my assistantship offer (Graduate Assistantship Handbook – can be found at:

I understand that if policies or procedures are unclear, I am to seek clarification from the ECE Graduate Affairs Office.

I will follow the employment procedures outlined, including applying for a Social Security Card (where applicable) and complete the Office Human Resources (OHR)- related paperwork, in a timely manner.

I will carry a full-time course load. (GTAs conducting research under the supervision of a faculty member and GRAs must register for 21 hours in fall and spring. All other GTAs must register for a minimum of 12 hours. These hours must include at least nine hours of degree-related classes on a letter grade and/or pass fail basis in fall and spring, six hours of degree-related classes in summer) each term that I am supported with an assistantship.

I understand that the only audit hours for which I am permitted to register are the assistantship marker courses (ECE 8997-GTA or ECE 8998-GRA). If I wish to register for audit hours other than ECE 8997 or 8998, I will obtain permission from the ECE Associate Chair for Graduate Affairs before registering for those hours.

I will enroll for ECE 8997 (graduate teaching assistantship) or ECE 8998 (graduate research assistantship) hours to reflect assistantship appointment.

If I have a teaching assistant, I understand that I must check my assigned mailbox in the ECE building daily. The GTA mailboxes are in the Van Leer Building, Mailroom W-203.

I will verify that the tuition waiver is in place each term so that tuition and fees are properly assessed.

Signature

Start Term/Year of ECE Graduate Program

Date