



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER EL PASO

Operating Policy and Procedure

HSCEP OP: 70.27, **Appointment of Student Employees**

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center El Paso (TTUHSC El Paso) Operating Policy and Procedure (HSCEP OP) is to establish policy and procedures for the employment of student employees.

REVIEW: This HSCEP OP will be reviewed in April of each odd-numbered year by the Vice President for Human Resources, with recommendations for substantial revisions, forwarded to the Office of the President.

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

1. **Definition of Terms.**

Graduate Assistant (Position Class Code U3907): A graduate student employed to perform work which utilizes knowledge beyond undergraduate academic studies. The position of Graduate Assistant is intended for graduate students employed in capacities other than teaching or research.

Research Assistant-Grad Student (Position Class Code U0627): A graduate student employed in support of the research mission of the department to perform laboratory, library, field, computer, or other such activities as may assist the department's research effort. The position of Research Assistant is intended for graduate students employed to perform research activities.

Teaching Assistant (Position Class Code U0325): A graduate student employed in support of the teaching mission who is responsible for, or in charge of, a class or class section, or a quiz, drill, or laboratory section. The position of Teaching Assistant is intended for graduate students employed in teaching activities. The source of funds is ordinarily an academic account.

Student Assistant (Position Class Code U3912): An undergraduate or graduate student employed by any university within the Texas Tech University System (TTU System) to perform work which does not require academic training at the graduate level.

Student Assistant - External (Position Class Code U3914): A student in an institution of higher education other than Texas Tech employed to perform work as assigned by a supervisor.

High School Student Worker (Position Class Code U3915): A high school student employed to perform work which does not require academic training at the college level.

Applicant/Employee with a Disability: Any applicant or employee who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, such as walking, talking, caring for oneself, doing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, or learning. Also includes having a record of any impairment, being regarded as having any impairment, or being associated with a person with a disability.

2. **General Policies-**

A. **Student Employment**

An individual enrolled as a student may be employed to perform part-time work incidental to

their academic training in occupational categories that require student status as reported to the Coordinating Board as a condition of employment. These occupational categories are:

- Graduate Assistant (U3907)
- Research Assistant-Grad Student (U0627)
- Teaching Assistant (U0325)
- Student Assistant (U3912)
- Student Assistant - External (U3914)
- High School Student Worker (U3915)

B. Conditions of Employment

1. A student employee (except for a High School Student Worker and Student Assistant - External) must be currently enrolled as a student at TTUHSC El Paso as a condition of employment, is in good academic standing, and making satisfactory progress toward a degree.
2. An individual previously enrolled as a student in the spring term, expected to enroll in the fall term, may be employed as a student employee between the spring and fall terms.
3. The employing department is responsible for determining initial and ongoing eligibility for student employment. Failure to meet the enrollment requirements will permit the department to withdraw the student's appointment and terminate their employment status.
4. Employment as a Student Assistant, Student Assistant – External, High School Student Worker, or Graduate Assistant must be paid on an hourly basis and may not exceed a maximum of 20 hours per week.
5. Employment as a Teaching Assistant or Research Assistant-Grad Student is considered exempt status. If the FTE is at .50 or more, the position is insurance-eligible with the benefit category of GS.

C. Graduate Student Status

Graduate students employed as Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, or Graduate Assistants are expected to be enrolled in Graduate School [full](#) time. Graduate students in the TTU System or school must receive approval from the TTU System Graduate Dean by completing the Certification of Non-HSC Student or Medical Student (Attachment A) and present it to the employing department. An ePAF employing a TTUHSC El Paso graduate student must be initiated by or routed through the TTUHSC El Paso Graduate School Dean's office for approval after all pre-employment processes have been completed.

D. Verification of Student Status

Upon hiring an individual into a position requiring student status, the department must obtain evidence that the individual is enrolled in TTUHSC El Paso, TTU System, or another institution of higher education. The department will maintain this evidence in a departmental file. These files will be subject to audit.

The department is responsible for ensuring that its students inform the department if they withdraw from school during the semester.

At the beginning of each semester, the department must obtain evidence that the student is continuing enrollment and maintain such evidence. If at any time the individual ceases to be a student, the department is required to initiate an ePAF to change the appointment to a staff position with applicable benefits or separate the person from employment.

E. College Work Study

The Financial Aid Office handles all aspects of student employment involving recipients of College Work Study through Financial Aid programs. The Financial Aid Office will be responsible for the following:

1. Certifying eligibility of College Work Study recipients for on-campus employment;
2. Establishing the earnings limit for student employees who are receiving College Work Study or any other Financial Aid funds;
3. Developing policies for the College Work Study Program;
4. Ensuring compliance with federal and state laws for the College Work Study Program; and
5. Supervising solicitation of College Work Study positions, both on campus and off campus.

F. Student Relationships which are not Employment

A student is not considered an employee when the student's activities meet all criteria listed below. If any one of these criteria is **not** met, the student is considered an employee and entitled to compensation.

1. The activities are a part of the curriculum.
2. The activities are for the benefit of the student.
3. The student does not displace other employees, but works under their close supervision.
4. The department providing the training derives no immediate advantage because of the student's activities; on occasion, the operations may actually be impeded.
5. The student is not entitled to a job at the conclusion of the training.
6. Both parties understand that the student is not entitled to wages for the time spent in training.

G. Non-Discrimination

H. All appointments shall be made based on qualifications and suitability for the role, without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or protected veteran status, in compliance with the laws and regulations of the State of Texas, Regents' Rules, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Texas Tech University System Regulation [07.10](#), and all other applicable federal laws. The account administrator is required to ensure that reasonable accommodations are provided for an otherwise qualified individual with a disability by contacting Human Resources.

I. Salary Range

A student is appointed to a position at a salary rate between the minimum and maximum of the salary range for the appropriate category identified in the current Personnel Pay Plan.

J. Benefits

All student employee appointments are considered temporary appointments and are **not** eligible for participation in the regular employee group insurance programs, leave accrual programs, retirement programs, holidays, or other benefits made available to regular employees.

The only exceptions are Teaching Assistants, Research Assistants, and Graduate Assistants who work at least 20 hours per week for at least four and one-half months per year and are eligible to participate in the Texas Employees Group - Benefit Program (GBP).

The premium sharing for employee's group insurance is charged proportionately based upon the funding for the salary payments made during each month.

K. Hiring Process

Each student employee must go through the hiring process ([HSCEP OP 70.11](#)) and must complete all pre-employment paperwork before their first day of employment. Delay in completing the necessary paperwork will delay the student's start date.

Mandatory Training

All newly appointed student employees are required to complete mandatory training, including, but not limited to, online New Employee Orientation (NEO), Equal Employment Opportunity, Sexual Harassment training, and Institutional Compliance training.

2. Processing Appointments and Changes

A student employee appointment, salary change, percentage of time or payroll account, separation, or other personnel action must be made on an ePAF. By appointing a Student Assistant or a High School Student Worker, the account administrator certifies that the nominee is fully qualified to perform the duties to be assigned and that funds for the position have been approved. The account administrator further certifies that, to the best of their knowledge, the appointment, if approved, will be accepted by the nominee at the salary and percent of time indicated on the ePAF. The signature of the Graduate Dean certifies that the nominee is a graduate student in good standing with Texas Tech and that the salary level indicated complies with the salary ranges set for graduate students or that there is adequate justification for approving an exception to the normal salary range for the student employee and approval of the rank and salary to be offered.

3. Assignment of Home Departments (ORGN)

Student employees are assigned to a home department (ORGN). The home department is the department that first submits an ePAF appointing the individual. The home department is responsible for coordinating that student's employment if another department employs the student. The home department may be changed by submitting an ePAF to the Human Resources Department through appropriate administrative channels if employment ends with one home department and begins with a new home department. Other types of home department changes need to be submitted to the Human Resources Department for updates.

4. Student Appointments

Research Assistants and Teaching Assistants are employed on a monthly basis, are paid for the accomplishment of assigned tasks, and are considered to be exempt from accounting for hours worked.

An individual should not be appointed concurrently to a position not requiring student status and to a position requiring student status as a condition of employment.

All hourly appointments are nonexempt, and accurate records of hours worked must be maintained. An employee should **not** be employed in both an exempt and nonexempt (time sheets required) capacity during the same workweek. However, if approved as an exception, an employee employed in any capacity that would normally be partially exempt and partially nonexempt loses the exemption during any workweek, and all hours worked in all capacities must be recorded and combined to determine overtime entitlements.

5. Student Employment FICA Exemption

Effective with work performed after June 30, 2000, eligible TTUHSC El Paso student employees will be exempt from paying FICA taxes.

A. Eligibility Criteria

1. Employed within the TTU System or TTUHSC El Paso in job categories requiring student status as a condition of employment. Concurrent appointments in job categories requiring student status and job categories not requiring student status will cause the individual to lose the exemption from FICA taxes.

- a. Exclusions from Eligibility for Exemption

- Faculty
- Staff
- Postdoctoral student
- Postdoctoral fellow
- Medical resident
- Medical intern

2. Must be enrolled one-half time within the TTU System or TTUHSC El Paso. Enrollment within the TTU System or TTUHSC El Paso will be combined to determine enrollment level. Students must be enrolled under their Texas Tech identification number (R#) in order for the payroll system to determine enrollment levels and eligibility.

- a. Enrollment Requirements

Eligibility for the FICA exemption is determined based on the enrollment requirements for the appropriate semester(s) corresponding to payroll's pay period and the student's enrollment in the appropriate semester(s) at the point in time the payroll is processed. Changes in enrollment during the semester will affect eligibility for payroll processed after the enrollment change and will not retroactively affect eligibility.

Eligibility for pay periods totally between terms of less than five (5) weeks will be determined based upon enrollment during the preceding term. Eligibility for pay periods encompassing time in a preceding term and a between term period will be determined based upon the enrollment during the preceding term. Eligibility for pay periods encompassing time between terms of less than five weeks and the new semester will be determined based upon enrollment in either the preceding or the new semester. Eligibility for pay periods encompassing time in two semesters will be based upon meeting the enrollment criteria in either semester. Eligibility for pay periods totally within a

semester will be determined based upon the enrollment level for that semester.

Enrollment Levels to Meet One-Half Time Criteria

COURSE ENROLLMENT	FALL	SPRING	SSI*	SSII*
TTU Undergraduate	6	6	3	3
TTU Graduate	5	5	2	2
TTU Graduate (99 Hour Exception)	1	1	1	1
TTU School of Law	6	6	1	1
TTU Joint Law and Graduate	5	5	1	1
HSC School of Allied Health Sciences – Undergrad.	6	6	6	N/A
HSC School of Allied Health Sciences – Graduate	5	5	5	N/A
HSC School of Nursing – Undergraduate	6	6	3	3
HSC School of Nursing – Graduate	5	5	2	2
HSC School of Pharmacy	6	6	6	N/A
HSC Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences	5	5	2	2
HSC School of Medicine	Always	Full	Time	

*Summer Semester

Note: The last day to register or withdraw from the University without a penalty is the day before classes start.

6. Right to Change Policy

TTUHSC El Paso reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy in whole or in part at any time without the consent of employees.