

Chapter 8: Guide for Graduate Student Researchers

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Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs)

Description

A Graduate Student Researcher is a registered graduate student who performs research under the direction of a faculty member.

Use of Title

GSR with No Remission

Job Code **003266** is always used during the period 7/1 - 9/30 and during the academic year for students not eligible for the GSR tuition-and-fee (GSRTF) remission program.

GSR with Fee Remission

Job codes **003262**, **003263**, **003264**, **003284**, **003285**, **003286**, or **003287** are used during the academic year when a graduate student is eligible for the GSR tuition-and-fee remission (GSRTF) program.

A student eligible for GSRTF must be appointed to the job code (GSRTF Pool) associated with their academic home department/program (where the student is pursuing a degree) as follows:

- 003262 - CSE (Computer Science & Engineering)
- 003263 - MAE (Mechanical & Aerospace Engineering)/CENG/NENG
- 003264 - SE (Structural Engineering)
- 003284 - General (all other departments and programs)*
- 003285 - ECE (Electrical & Computer Engineering)
- 003286 – Physics
- 003287 - SIO (Scripps Institution of Oceanography)

For the Materials Science interdisciplinary graduate program, the job code should be that of the primary department of the student's advisor.

GSR + Other Graduate Academic Employment

Any student who is employed in a graduate academic title*, or combination of graduate academic titles*, totaling 25% or more for a quarter during the academic year, is eligible for a fee remission; and should be appointed to a GSRTF Job Code. (*Grad academic title: GSR, Associate, TA, Reader, Tutor)

Example: 24.99% GSR + 25.00% TA; student is eligible for a fee remission and GSR appointment should be on Job Code 003284 (or other applicable GSRTF Job Code).

A student whose total employment is less than 25% for a quarter is not eligible for a fee remission.

Eligibility

Students appointed to this job code must meet the graduate student academic eligibility criteria listed in Chapter 1.

Appointment Process

Appointment Percentage

GSRs may be appointed up to 49.99% during the academic months and up to 100% during the summer with the home department's approval. GSRs may never be appointed above 49.99% during the academic months; no exceptions can be made to this policy.

Pay Rate

Refer to the [Student Academic Title Rates](#) sheet for current rates.

Each graduate academic department/program has established a support policy for all of their graduate students and a GSR step level(s) to provide support at a certain level. *All GSRs in the same academic department/program are appointed to the GSR step level(s) as established by the student's academic home department or program (not the fund source).*

Use of the GSR title was adopted in 1995 by UCSD (previously we used the Research Assistant title). All requests for use of GSR step level(s) are submitted by the Chair of the academic department/program to the Dean of the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs for review and approval.

For a list of academic department/programs with approved GSR step level(s), please see [Appendix: Graduate Student Researcher Step Levels by Department](#).

Departments may update their Step Level by submitting a formal letter to the Dean of Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs. The letter should be formal, addressed to the Dean of Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs, and signed by the Chair of the department. Please submit using the [Employment Exception Request](#) Google Form.

Pay Schedule

GSRs are paid monthly.

Position Begin and End Dates

GSR appointment dates should align with the quarterly pay periods when possible. Job code 003266, when appointed to less than 25% during the academic year, can have flexible begin and end dates. However, in order to maintain eligibility for GSRTF, the full quarter pay periods must be entered into UCPath.

Period	Dates
Fall Quarter	October through December (10/1 - 12/31)
Winter Quarter	January through March (1/1 - 3/31)
Spring Quarter	April through June (4/1 - 6/30)

Summer Employment Dates

GSRs may be appointed up to 100% during the Summer with the home department's approval. The Summer period is defined as the day after Spring Quarter ends through the day before Fall Quarter begins. Since Summer dates vary from year to year, please refer to the [Academic and Administrative Calendar](#) for the applicable year. Effective, the first day Fall Quarter begins, the student will need to drop back to 49.99%.

Vacation

There is no formal vacation accrual for students appointed as Graduate Student Researchers since their employment may not exceed 49.99% time during the academic year.

GSR Tuition and Fee Remission (GSRTF)

This information is subject to change in AY 2021-2022.

General Information

A GSR who meets the eligibility criteria for GSRTF (see "Eligibility") has their mandatory tuition/fees paid as a prerequisite of employment. Currently these required tuition/fees are: Nonresident Supplemental Tuition (if applicable), Tuition, Student Services Fee, University Center Fee, Recreation Facility Fee, Graduate Student Association Fee, Student Transportation Fee, and Health Insurance.

The fund source that pays the GSR salary is assessed an average monthly charge for the cost of GSRTF. The charging of tuition-and-fee remission to federally sponsored research grants and contracts was approved for the San Diego Campus by the department of Health and Human Services on August 3, 1984.

See also [Formulas for GSRTF Assessment](#).

Appointment Dates in UCPath

This is a nine-month program from October to June. The academic year is divided into three segments, with a three month period per quarter as follows:

Period	Dates
Fall Quarter	October through December (10/1 - 12/31)
Winter Quarter	January through March (1/1 - 3/31)
Spring Quarter	April through June (4/1 - 6/30)

During each of the quarter periods indicated above, *a student may not be appointed at the same time using the GSR job code 003266 and the GSRTF title code(s) 003262, 003263, 003264, 003284, 003285, 003286, 003287.* A student is either eligible for the GSRTF program for all months during the quarter period or not eligible (title code 3266) for GSRTF during the period. Additionally, if eligible for GSRTF, *a student should only be employed on the GSRTF job code of their academic home department.* A student may not be appointed at the same time using one or more GSRTF job codes.

The GSRTF monthly assessment (average rate) is prorated when an eligible GSRTF is paid from more than one fund source during the same month.

See also [Formulas for GSRTF Assessment](#).

Eligibility

A GSR must satisfy all the following conditions in order to qualify for tuition and fee remission:

1. Be appointed for a minimum 25% time for the full quarter in which tuition and fees are paid, or the dollar equivalent (e.g., 50% for half the quarter). Note: the dollar equivalent is calculated using quarter dates.
2. Be within campus time limits for support.
3. For Non Resident Supplemental Tuition remission, be within the first year of graduate study at UCSD (unless an international student). US citizens and permanent residents should establish California residency by the start of their second year.
4. Not have a fellowship or traineeship which provides tuition and fees.

GSR Appointments Not Eligible for GSRTF

There are some situations when a GSR, even though appointed at 25% or more during a quarter, is not eligible for GSRTF.

1. A student has an extramural fellowship or traineeship that pays full tuition/fees (and a monthly stipend) and the extramural fellowship or traineeship is the primary award. If a student receives an extramural fellowship with a monthly stipend and full tuition/fee payment, and the total stipend amount for the quarter exceeds the monthly GSR salary for the quarter, the GSR would not be eligible for GSRTF. The GSR would be appointed on job code 003266 (salary only).
In the "comments" section of the payroll action, the department must provide an explanation why the student is not eligible for GSRTF (ex. "Student not eligible for GSRTF – Fellowship pays full tuition/fees and is the primary award").
2. A student's tuition/fees are already paid via a third-party contract. For example, an international student has his tuition/fees paid by his home government. The GSR appointment would be on job code 003266 (salary only). A copy of the third-party contract must be on file in the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs.
3. A student in one of the Joint Doctoral Programs between UCSD/SDSU pays registration tuition/fees at San Diego State University.
 - a. The following Joint Doctoral Programs employ GSRs meeting the criteria listed in #3: Clinical Psychology, Mathematics and Science Education, and Public Health.

Example

A student is in the Clinical Psychology Joint Doctoral program and is paying tuition/fees at SDSU. A GSR appointment will be on job code 003266 (salary only).

Joint Doctoral Students

If a student in a joint doctoral program is paying tuition/fees at UCSD, and meets the GSRTF eligibility criteria, then the student must be employed as a GSR on the tuition-and-fee remission program (GSRTF).

GSRTF Payments

Eligible GSRs' tuition and fees are paid quarterly on an actual rate basis by the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs. The student's home academic department is responsible for submitting GSRTF payment requests online using the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs Financial Support Request Tool at <https://gradforms.ucsd.edu/financial/>.

GSRTF Pools and Average rates

There are seven separate GSRTF pools (CSE, ECE, MAE, SE, PHYS, SIO, General) that have a corresponding GSRTF title code and average rate (see calculation below). Based on the title code entered in UCPath, the corresponding rate is charged to the salary fund source on a monthly basis to collect monies for the GSRTF payments issued on the student's behalf.

The average monthly rate for each GSRTF Pool is published by the Office of Contract and Grant Administration (OCGA) and updated on their website in August/September each year.

The average monthly rates (and GSR salary/step levels) also appear on the Student Academic Title Rates chart on the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs website: <https://grad.ucsd.edu/financial/employment/student-pay-rates.html>

Each GSRTF Pool's annual charge is calculated by summing the projected tuition and fees to be paid by all GSRs in the specific GSRTF Pool in the upcoming year, adding any deficit or subtracting any surplus from the Pool's previous year's account, and dividing this number by the projected number of eligible GSRs in the specific Pool. Surpluses and deficits are not shared with other GSRTF Pool accounts.

All proposals which request GSR salaries should include requests for GSR Tuition-and-Fee Remission at the average rate for the projected GSR's graduate department/program. GSRTF continues to be excluded from indirect costs.

For those individual extramural funds that do not accept the GSRTF assessment (ex. American Cancer, American Heart, March of Dimes) the appropriate monthly charge (average rate) will be debited against the special GSRTF Clearing Account which the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs administers. The department must complete the GSRTF Clearing Account or Recharge Action Form (available here: http://grad.ucsd.edu/_files/financial/GSRTF%20Recharge%20Form.pdf) and submit it to the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs. For more details on this process, please see our [FAQ: GSRTF Clearing Account or Recharge Action](#).

The Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs has overall fiscal responsibility for managing the seven GSRTF accounts. Each year in July/August the Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs works with the GSRTF Pool departments to determine and recommend monthly average rates to go into affect the following October 1.

In 1985, all Department Chairs agreed that those departments in the General Pool and using title code 3284 will have their fellowship block grant adjusted by the amount of the department's over or underpayment to the General Pool. The Division of Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs manages this process.

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