University of Pennsylvania  
College Houses & Academic Services  

2017-2018 Graduate Associate  
Position Description and Contract  

The Graduate Associate (GA) is a para-professional staff member of the Office of College Houses and Academic Services (CHAS) who is expected to assume responsibility for an assigned area of a College House. The GA serves as a mentor, advisor, and friend to residents. Under the direction and supervision of a House Dean, The GA is expected to assist in the development of community, encourage student initiated programming, and report inappropriate behavior. The GA provides support in emergencies and times of personal stress.  

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS  

1) The GA will make this position their highest non-academic priority. The GA will not accept additional employment or make other commitments that may limit their ability to meet the requirements of the position without the advance approval of the House Dean. A House Dean may restrict activities that fall outside of the GA responsibilities if these activities are likely to or have in the past negatively affected the GA's performance. The GA must abide by employment restrictions established by the Immigration and Naturalization service and other U.S. laws.  

2) The GA must attend all sessions of Fall staff training and orientation in August (August 1 through August 28, 2017), Winter Staff Training (January 8, 2018) and all additional in-service training meetings and retreats as designated by the House Dean and CHAS. A GA may move-in to their room no earlier than Friday, August 11, 2017. Exceptions may be made to the August 11, 2017 move-in date; however, an exception will only be granted for graduate orientation within their program or the start of classes. Under no circumstances will the exception be granted for more than 7 days prior to their graduate program orientation or the start of classes and only if the room is available.  

3) The GA is required to reside in the residential space assigned by the House Dean.  

4) The GA is required to contract and maintain cellular telephone service and set-up and regularly monitor a personal e-mail account no later than August 21, 2017. In addition, GAs must provide a cell phone number to the House Dean no later than this date.  

5) The GA is required to remain in residence throughout the period of appointment, including fall term break, Thanksgiving recess, spring recess, the undergraduate exam periods and Senior Week. In planning for Winter Break, the GA should not expect to leave campus before Winter Break officially begins for staff on December 22, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. and must return to campus the day duty resumes for the spring semester January 5, 2018. Some Graduate Associates will be required to remain in residence to assist with those buildings open during the winter recess. The House Dean will establish duty schedules early in the fall semester.  

6) The GA will not be absent from the College House for more than two consecutive days without prior approval from the House Dean, except in extreme emergencies.  

7) The GA is required to read and be familiar with the current Emergency Staff Manual and any other material distributed by College Houses and Academic Services, House Deans, or other department administrators.  

8) The GA is expected to know and observe University regulations and to serve as role models for House residents. The GA should demonstrate behavior befitting a responsible community leader. The GA should
encourage students to respect each other’s rights and fulfill their obligations regarding the House, CHAS, and University rules and regulations.

9) The GA is expected to know and observe the College House Policy on Consensual Sexual or Exploitive Relationships, which follows:

The mission of the College Houses is to provide supportive residential communities for the education of undergraduate students. Within this environment, myriad connections take place among students, faculty, and staff that often have a lifelong impact. On the foundation of these connections, the College Houses become home to powerful communities.

College House communities depend on the integrity of the relationships between faculty, staff, and students within each individual house. For this reason, any sexual or exploitive relationship between a College House’s Dean, Faculty Director, Faculty Fellow, Coordinator or other CHAS residential staff and any undergraduate or graduate student resident, Resident Advisor or Graduate Associate within that house are prohibited, regardless of whether there is any direct supervisory relationship. This prohibition extends to relationships between RA/GA staff and the residents of their specific halls or floors.

This includes but is not limited to romantic or sexual relationships, a relationship that provides undue privileges or a relationship that strips away rights or privileges. Even if both parties have consented to the relationship, such relationships can adversely affect the wider house community, raising serious concerns about the validity of the consent, conflicts of interest, and the unfair treatment of others.

The following offices are responsible for receiving and investigating complaints regarding violations of this Policy:

- The CHAS Executive Director
- The CHAS Faculty Director
- The Vice Provost for Education
- The Office of Affirmative Action and equal opportunity programs

EXCEPTATIONS FOR RESIDENT SUPPORT, COMMUNITY BUILDING AND PROGRAMMING

In order for the College House Program and an individual GA to be effective each GA is expected to know their residents well. This requires a GA to be visible and actively engaged with each resident. Specific GA responsibilities for programming will be assigned by the House Dean and Faculty Director of each College House. Programs will be designed to make all residents informed, active participants in the academic and co-curricular life of the University. Availability both during the evening and weekends is important to community development.

1) The GA is required to maintain a schedule that assures regular interaction and availability to residents on their floor or wing.

2) The GA is required to develop and implement various methodologies that keep residents informed of programmatic activities as well as CHAS or University information. This may be accomplished in many ways that include but are not limited to: regular floor or wing meetings and study breaks, list-serves, bulletin boards, flyers or posters, and many forms of electronic communication such as Facebook or direct email. On-going personal interaction with residents is a key component of GA success, as well as, the creation of respectful and engaged communities of residents on a floor or wing. Successful GAs have learned that individual interaction with residents at least once each week has been a crucial part of developing strong floor communities.

3) The GA is required to assist and encourage residents to become actively involved in the planning and implementation of programs in the House that reflect the needs of diverse residents and help to build both cohesive House and floor or wing communities.

4) The GA is expected to utilize the community building dining allocation to eat regularly in the dining facilities with residents and participate in House dining and dining-related activities in order to build strong relationships with their residents and strong communities with their floors, suites or sections as part of community-building responsibilities.
5) The GA is expected to demonstrate support for staff and residents by attending House events and by assisting with student groups such as residential councils, manager boards, judicial boards, interest groups, and activities committees.

6) The GA is required to attend and participate in all House staff meetings and meet individually with the House Dean as necessary.

7) The GA is required to submit program activity reports, surveys and evaluations as requested by the House Dean and CHAS.

8) The GA is expected to provide initial counseling to students, while making appropriate referrals to other University support services, when necessary. Mediate roommate/floor conflicts whenever possible, referring unresolved roommate problems to the House Dean. In all such matters, the GA is required to consult with the House Dean regarding all student matters.

9) The GA is expected to serve as a communication link between and among residents, the House Dean, the Faculty Director and CHAS.

10) The GA is expected to actively participate in recruitment of candidates, staff selection and staff development. This includes participation in open houses, information sessions, interview training sessions and interviews.

11) The GA is expected to assist with New Student Orientation and other University sponsored activities.

12) The GA is expected to complete any additional responsibilities that may be required by the House Dean. Additional responsibilities may be covered in individual "College House Addenda" which must be signed and returned with this contract.

**EXPECTATIONS FOR OPERATIONAL SERVICES**

1) The GA is required to assist with residential move-in periods that occur in mid-August and January and move-out processes in December and in May as directed by the House Dean and CHAS.

2) The GA is required to participate in the duty system of the house, and submit information reports as necessary. Duty usually requires carrying a cell phone and being within a few minutes (no more than five minutes) travel time of the residence during the entire on-duty period. GAs are expected to refrain from activities (both prior to and during duty) that would impair their ability to respond appropriately to a situation while on duty. This includes the use of alcohol and other controlled substances.

3) The GA is expected to report damage and malfunction of the College House’s facilities through appropriate channels and co-operate with all departments and entities providing residential services.

4) The GA is expected to observe and report problems in the performance of safety/security personnel, equipment and in the operation of security systems.

5) The GA is expected to respond to emergencies appropriately, according to the University and College Houses and Academic Services Emergency Response Procedures.

6) The GA is expected to participate in emergency drills and the dissemination of fire safety, emergency and security information.
ROOM AND COMMUNITY BUILDING DINING ALLOCATION

The Graduate Associate receives a rent-free single occupancy accommodation in their assigned College House. SOME ROOMS WILL ACCOMMODATE A PARTNER OR SPOUSE BUT FACILITIES DO NOT EXIST TO ACCOMMODATE A GA WITH A CHILD.

In order to assist the GA in meeting the position expectations of building strong relationships with their residents and strong communities with their floors, suites or sections each GA is provided a community building dining allocation. The community building allocation is provided so that a GA is able to dine with their residents during the academic year approximately three times per week. This allocation also includes the opportunity to dine with their staff during the pre-service training period in August. The dining allocation is not intended to meet any GA’s daily nutritional needs.

Please note that this dining allocation is provided for the GA’s use only. Meals cannot be exchanged for additional dining dollars nor be reallocated to any other individual or program, such as “Swipe Out Hunger”. The dining allocation does include the ability for the GA to invite up to five (5) guests per semester to dine with them.

AS A COURTESY A PARTNER OR SPOUSE WILL BE PROVIDED A DINING ALLOCATION EQUAL TO THE ONE PROVIDED TO THE STAFF MEMBER.

Rooms are provided for staff during the term of appointment only. Size, shape, and furnishings of staff rooms vary. All residence staff members are responsible to review and honor the 2017-2018 Terms and Conditions for University Housing as listed at this link: https://cms.business-services.upenn.edu/residential-services/images/stories/RS1718/terms conditions 2017-18.pdf. A GA who is continuing as a staff member from academic year to another may remain in residence continuously until their appointment concludes.

The GA may be relocated at the discretion of College Houses and Academic Services. There are a variety of room types used by the College House system; the GA should not assume that relocation means to a similar room type.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is limited to registered full-time graduate or professional students in degree-granting programs or dissertation status that are in good standing as determined by their respective school(s). CHAS reserves the right to confirm good standing throughout the academic year. The staff member is responsible for immediately notifying the House Dean of any changes in academic standing.

TERM OF APPOINTMENT

The amount of time needed to accomplish the assigned responsibilities varies, but an average of 15-20 hours per week during the school year should be anticipated. This includes time spent at meals with students, in weekly staff meetings and on duty. The Graduate Associate appointment commences on August 12, 2017 and terminates on June 1, 2018 unless the appointment is renewed for 2018-19. College Houses and Academic Services or the House Dean may assign Graduate Associates who receive housing over the summer light duties.

SATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION

Satisfactory performance is evaluated in terms of the successful completion of the assigned responsibilities. GA evaluations will be performed once per semester. Results will be shared with the GA and discussions between the GA and the House Dean and/or Faculty Director will be held with the goal of improving GA performance.

TERMINATION

The appointment may be terminated prior to its normal expiration date if the GA fails to perform the above-specified duties or for conduct at variance with that expected of a GA, or if status as a graduate student in good standing lapses. If termination occurs prior to the end of the appointment period, the GA has five days to comply with move-out procedures.
REAPPOINTMENT

The GA is eligible to apply for re-appointment for additional terms provided past performance warrants re-appointment and they continue to be a student in good standing at the University of Pennsylvania. The GA interested in returning to the position must go through a formal re-appointment process. This process may include a performance review meeting with their supervisor and completion of an online application.

IF YOU ARE ACCEPTING THE POSITION OFFERED IN __________________ COLLEGE HOUSE, AND HAVE READ AND UNDERSTAND THE LETTER OF APPOINTMENT, THIS POSITION DESCRIPTION AND CONTRACT AS WELL AS THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS FOR UNIVERSITY HOUSING, PLEASE SIGN AND RETURN THIS ENTIRE LETTER TO YOUR HOUSE DEAN. THIS APPOINTMENT BECOMES VALID WHEN SIGNED BY ALL THE PARTIES NAMED BELOW AND CHAS HAS CONFIRMED THAT YOU MEET ALL REQUIREMENTS FOR APPOINTMENT. A COPY OF THE COMPLETED LETTER WILL BE RETURNED TO YOU AT THE ADDRESS YOU INDICATE BELOW.

COLLEGE HOUSES AND ACADEMIC SERVICES IS REQUIRED TO REPORT ALL POSITIONS TO STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES. THE VALUE OF THE GA APPOINTMENT MAY BE CONSIDERED AS A RESOURCE IN EVALUATING FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR YOUR GRADUATE PROGRAM. BE ADVISED THAT APPOINTMENTS CAN HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON INDIVIDUAL’S FINANCIAL AID PACKAGE (IE. GRANTS AND WORK STUDY ALLOCATION, IF ELIGIBLE). AS A RESULT APPLICANTS ARE HIGHLY ENCOURAGED TO CONSULT WITH STUDENT FINANCIAL SERVICES, THEIR SCHOOL AND PROGRAM REGARDING ANY POTENTIAL IMPACT BEFORE ACCEPTING THE GA POSITION.

Printed Name of Graduate Associate ___________________________________________ PennCard # ______

Signature of Graduate Associate _______________________________________________ Date ____________

Signature of House Dean ______________________________________________________ Date ____________

Summer Mailing Address of Graduate Associate:

Number and Street _____________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip Code ________________________________________________________

Cell Phone ___________________ Email ____________________

Permanent Mailing Address of Graduate Associate:

Number and Street _____________________________________________________________

City, State and Zip Code ________________________________________________________

Cell Phone ___________________ Email ____________________