

## **Graduate Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities**

This document is a product of the Graduate & Professional Student Government (GPSG, formerly UGGS) developed in conjunction with the Graduate School and the Boulder Faculty Assembly, as well as numerous other governing and advisory bodies on the Boulder campus.

### **Boulder Campus Policy**

The University seeks to provide and sustain an environment conducive to sharing, extending, and critically examining knowledge and values, and to furthering understanding. Effective performance of this mission requires that University graduate students be free within their respective fields of competence to learn, research, and teach in accordance with appropriate standards of scholarly inquiry. Graduate student rights and responsibilities rest on their unique role as students, researchers, and teachers.

Graduate students play an integral part in the ability of the Boulder campus to provide the



b. Graduate employees are expected to fulfill their teaching and research obligations to the best of their knowledge, training, and ability; to carry out their job responsibilities in a conscientious and timely manner; and to perform their duties in accordance with all relevant University, state government, and federal government rules and regulations. They will accurately report their hours worked and level of effort whenever requested or required to do so; work or be available to work on the days and at the times outlined in their appointment letter or contract, or at times explicitly discussed and agreed upon with their faculty advisor or supervisor; and recognize that failure to perform their job responsibilities in a satisfactory manner may constitute cause for disciplinary action or dismissal.

**V. The following definitions will be applied uniformly across the campus.**

*Students:* Include any person currently taking coursework and/or thesis and dissertation credits, as well as any persons officially on leave of absence from a graduate program or otherwise not in residence at the university for official reasons, including but not limited to conducting extended field research or on an exchange program with another university.

*Employees:* Include any person who is a student and is either on an appointment or is otherwise employed by the university, or any related program, project, laboratory, library, gallery, museum, center, or institute, as a teaching assistant, instructor, lecturer, GPTI, adjunct, graduate assistant, research assistant, researcher, or any other form of faculty or staff member, on a regular basis.

*20-Hour Rule:* The percentage of appointment must be equated to the number of hours the graduate student is expected to work. For example, a student who is appointed for 50% can be expected to work no more than 20 hours per week. These 20 hours must include all duties necessary for the completion of the student's teaching assignment (i.e., office hours, in-class time, grading, and preparation time) and/or research assignment (i.e., research meetings, literature searches, preparation time, data collection, data analysis, and report preparation). Research that directly contributes to the timely completion of a graduate student's thesis or dissertation does not fall under this rule. Any appointments that exceed 50% during the academic year must be approved, in advance of the beginning date of the appointment, by the Assistant Dean of the Graduate School or their designee.

*Rights:* These are valid and valued standards and expectations that individual graduate students have of their program, their faculty, staff, and all levels of the university administration.

*Responsibilities:* These are valid and valued standards and expectations that the faculty, staff, administrators, and other graduate students have of individual graduate students.

**VI. Departments will develop and maintain policies consistent with these guidelines and minimum standards and provide grievance**

c. Any amendments to the campus policy statement need to be approved by the Graduate School, the Graduate & Professional Student Government, the Boulder Faculty Assembly, and the Provost

d. Any amendments to the guidelines and minimum standards for the development of department level graduate student policy need to be approved by the Graduate School, the Graduate & Professional Student Government, the Boulder Faculty Assembly, and the Provost.

## **Appendix A: Recommended Policy Development Guidelines and Minimum Standards**

### **I. Overview of Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities**

As students, graduate students have the



membership in decision-making committees, as long as that voice is sought out before the final decision is made.

- a) Evaluations should be factual, specific, and should be shared with the student within a reasonable period.
- b) Explicit written evaluations should include, but are not limited to:

- b) Regarding appointments, a 50% appointment is understood as requiring no more than 320 hours of work per semester and on average 20 hours per week. A 25% appointment reflects no more than 160 hours of work per semester and on average 10 hours per week.
  - c) If a graduate student is requested to work hours in excess of their original appointment, they have a right to petition their department and college or school for an increase in their official appointment.
  - d) If a graduate student on a regular basis is requested to perform additional assignments, in terms of either scale or scope, the Graduate School must be petitioned for any assignment exceeding the standard 20-hour rule for a 50% appointment.
- 2) Graduate student employees have a right to an accurate description of the availability and likelihood of financial and resource support within their program to increase stability and enable graduate



previously and explicitly communicated in offer letters and appointment letters to the student and contracts signed by the student.

4) Graduate student employees have the right to receive appropriate training and support as an educator if they are placed in teaching or teaching assistant positions.

a) Expectations of a teaching assistant will be

3)

**V. Graduate students have the following specific responsibilities as employees:**