



## **Kutztown University Policy ACA-093**

---

### **Graduate Assistantship Termination and Reassignment Policy**

#### **A. Purpose**

Graduate assistantships at Kutztown University provide highly valued educational experiences for graduate students while also promoting access to graduate education. Graduate assistants make meaningful contributions to the University's teaching and research mission. In rare situations where significant performance or conduct issues arise, termination of a graduate assistantship or reassignment of a graduate assistant's supervisor may be warranted. This policy provides guidance for supervisors and graduate assistants in such situations. It is important to note graduate assistants must remain in good academic standing and abide by all University conduct policies.

#### **B. Scope**

This policy applies to all graduate assistants and graduate assistant supervisors.

#### **C. Key words and phrases:**

Dean of Graduate Studies - the senior academic administrator who oversees graduate education at Kutztown University

Graduate Assistant - a graduate student at Kutztown University who works part-time while pursuing an advanced degree, such as a master's or doctoral degree.

Graduate Assistant Supervisor - the faculty or staff member who oversees, manages, and mentors graduate assistants at Kutztown University.

### **Policy & Procedure(s)**

This policy outlines the procedures for graduate assistantship termination initiated by a supervisor, or a supervisor reassignment requested by a graduate assistant. This policy provides guidance for both supervisors and graduate assistants in such situations. When considering termination of a graduate assistantship, the graduate assistant and supervisor must comply with the following procedures:

#### **1. Grounds for Termination**

- a. Reasons a supervisor may initiate termination include:
  - Failure to complete assigned work or fulfill hours
  - Unsatisfactory work quality
  - Unresponsiveness to supervisor communication
  - Other documented, significant performance deficiencies

- b. Reasons a graduate assistant may request a supervisor change include:
  - Lack of regular supervision/communication
  - Work expectations exceed scope of assistantship
  - Work assigned by supervisor is outside the scope of the original assignment

## 2. Termination Procedures

- a. The supervisor must notify the appropriate administrative official of emerging issues (e.g., graduate assistant coordinator, department chair, director). The supervisor must first provide the student with clear written expectations and a documented improvement plan. Before initiating termination, the supervisor must first attempt to remedy deficiencies by providing the graduate assistant with clear written expectations and a documented improvement plan. This should outline:
  - i. Details of performance issues
  - ii. Extra supports to be provided
  - iii. Measurable objectives and timeline for reevaluation (e.g., 2 weeks)

For example, if a graduate assistant is not completing 10 hours of assigned work per week, the improvement plan may establish a new schedule, require detailed work logs, stipulate that at least 90% of assignments must be finished each week, and schedule a meeting in 2 weeks to evaluate if expectations are being met. The graduate assistant and supervisor must both sign the improvement plan and submit it to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval.

- b. After the predetermined time, the supervisor must meet with the graduate assistant to evaluate their progress based on the improvement plan.

The supervisor must submit a written assessment of how the graduate assistant used the provided supports and met the established objectives.

If satisfactory improvement has occurred, the supervisor and graduate assistant may revise the improvement plan to continue monitoring progress. The revised plan must be signed and submitted to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

However, if the objectives were not adequately met, the supervisor will provide a written evaluation to the Dean of Graduate Studies detailing the outcomes assessment and request termination of the assistantship.

- c. Within 5 business days of receiving a signed termination request, the Dean of Graduate Studies will decide whether to terminate the assistantship.

The Dean of Graduate Studies will notify the graduate assistant of the termination request. To inform the decision, the Dean may meet with the

supervisor and/or student and may solicit input from the Graduate Council.

- d. If termination is deemed appropriate, the graduate assistant's stipend and tuition waiver will be prorated/removed.

*Note: Although every effort will be made to replace a Graduate Assistant who has been terminated, The Office of Graduate Studies does not guarantee that a replacement can be secured.*

### 3. Request for Supervisor Reassignment

In certain situations, it may be warranted for a graduate assistant to request reassignment to a different supervisor. The graduate assistant should notify the Dean of Graduate Studies of their concerns with supervision or assistantship expectations. The Dean's office can facilitate a discussion between the graduate assistant and supervisor.

If the Dean's office determines expectations do not comply with policies for graduate assistants, they will assist the student with additional steps, which may include creating an improvement plan for the supervisor or submitting a request to change supervisors.

#### Procedures

- a. The graduate assistant notifies the Dean of Graduate Studies of concerns. If expectations do not comply with policies, an improvement plan is created for the supervisor. The improvement plan must be signed and dated by both the supervisor and the Graduate Assistant, and a copy must be sent to the Dean of Graduate Studies for approval. Should the supervisor not want to sign the improvement plan, supervision of the graduate assistantship will be reassigned so the graduate student can complete the terms of the graduate assistantship under a different supervisor. The graduate assistant may also be assigned to a new role if available.
- b. After the predetermined time, the graduate assistant, supervisor, and Dean's office staff will meet to evaluate if supervision expectations are being met satisfactorily per the improvement plan.

The Dean's office staff will submit a written assessment of the supervisor's compliance. If adequate improvement has occurred, the graduate assistant will continue under the supervision of their current supervisor.

If expectations are still not being met, the graduate assistant may submit a signed request to the Dean for reassignment to a different supervisor.

- c. The Dean of Graduate Studies provides the final determination if a reassignment is appropriate.

### 4. Appeals Process

The Dean of Graduate Studies makes the final determination in all cases related to the termination or reassignment of a graduate student.

5. Policy Oversight and Review

The Dean of Graduate Studies oversees compliance and reviews the policy annually with the Graduate Council.

**E. Effective Date**

Spring 2025

**F. Approved By**

Approved by Graduate Council – February 8, 2024

Approved by Academic Standards and Policies Committee – April 8, 2024

University Senate – November 7, 2024

University President – December 7, 2024

**G. Last Reviewed**

Fall 2024 (policy created)