



Museum Studies Graduate Assistants Handbook

For our Graduate Assistants,

We are delighted to have you with us as part of the UNM Museum Studies community. In our Program we strive to support you in your academic studies and research, and we hope you share a commitment to support the Museum Studies Program and to carry out your assistantship assignment in conscientious manner. The following information is supplemental to the Museum Studies Handbook, UNM Graduate Student Pathfinder, and information about university-wide policies and procedures contained on the Office of Graduate Studies Graduate Assistant Website. <https://grad.unm.edu/funding/assistantships.html>

This handbook provides information for students holding an appointment as a Graduate Assistant, Research Assistant, Project Assistant, or receiving a Hibben Fellowship (all hereafter referred to as Graduate Assistants). You are responsible for understanding and following the information outlined below in addition to all university policies and procedures.

Graduate Assistant Hours and Assignments

Students receiving Hibben Fellowships and New Mexico Higher Education Department Scholarships have a service commitment of 20 hours per week, representing a 0.5 or 0.25 FTE Graduate Assistantship (GA/RA). All other Graduate Assistants have a service commitment of 10 hours per week, representing a 0.25 FTE appointment. Schedule of service hours will be arranged with your supervisor to accommodate your class schedule. It is important to contact both your Supervisor and the Museum Studies Program Administrator well before the start of each term to arrange your schedule.

Assistantship Contract Term Start and End dates can be found on the Office of Graduate Studies Graduate Assistant Website. It is important to note that your GA/RA assignment will typically begin one week prior to the start of the academic term. You are expected to be on campus and participating in your service hours at this time. In general, you will be asked to complete all required training during the week prior to fall semester and to assist with our Museum Studies Welcome Back events during the Thursday and/or Friday prior to the start of fall semester.

GA/RA assignments will be made based on your academic schedule, your experience, opportunities for training, and supervisor availability. GA/RA assignments may include supporting an on-campus museum or local institution in research, collection management, educational programming, or project development. Your GA/RA assignment may include 5 hours of service each week in the Museum Studies Program Office. These office service hours will include time to complete research in support of your additional GA/RA responsibilities, time to research community and museum outreach activities to share with colleagues on Social Media, time to complete required trainings, and time networking with and promoting the Museum Studies Program to office visitors. Additional responsibilities included in your assistantship may involve attending museum conferences and professional workshops or attending program promotional events.

Each Friday, Graduate Assistants will submit an activity log (by email to anacke@unm.edu) noting hours, activities and tasks completed. When there is an occasional schedule conflict or illness, you are expected to contact both your program administrator and your site supervisor by email, phone or text to arrange for coverage, request sick-leave or discuss service hours to be made-up.

Training

All Graduate Assistants (including Hibben Fellows, Museum Research Trainees, Graduate Assistants, Research Assistants, and Project Assistants) are required to complete a set of annual training activities as announced and reviewed by the Office of Graduate Studies. These typically include online training modules related to campus safety, protection regarding inappropriate behavior and sexual violence, among other topics. When you receive notice of a required training, please complete the activity and retain evidence of your work.

Performance of Contract Assignment and Meeting Expectations

Graduate Assistants are expected to carry out their contract assignments in a manner that is consistent with a professional work environment. Professional behavior, including respect for others and attention to communication, is an important aspect to each assistantship assignment. We expect every Graduate Assistant to follow university policies, as noted here and in university web resources, and to approach their assignment duties as a part of their professional development and career advancement.

Any concern for meeting contract duties or expectations should be conveyed to the Program Director or Program Administrator. In similar manner, any concerns raised by the supervisor of a Graduate Assistant will be addressed by the Program Director, and any necessary response pursued with Graduate Assistant.

Office Access

Once the "Securing Private Data" training has been completed, Graduate Assistants will be provided access to the Museum Studies Office Suite in the Hibben Center. At times, Graduate Assistants will staff the office suite on their own, and at other times the office will be shared with the director, program administrator, and faculty. A review of building security and emergency preparedness will be given at the start of the semester and your office service hours.

The Hibben Center is open during business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The building is generally closed on the weekends. The Museum Studies Program office, located on the third floor, is open during office hours on weekdays. Graduate Assistants on contract may be assigned a key to the program office, but generally will not have access to the office or building outside of business hours. A Graduate Assistant who requires a key to the Program office will receive information necessary to check out a metal key from the UNM Key Shop and to access the Hibben Center during non-public hours. Building and office keys are not to be shared or traded.

If the office is locked and you do not have a key, you will need to request assistance from a Maxwell Museum staff member to let you into the office.

Computing, Copying and Scanning

If you do not have access to your own computer, you will have access to the front desk computer or a department laptop for use during your office service hours. The Program Office has Wi-Fi coverage for access to the university network. Please remember to log off of all department equipment and return laptops to the storage cabinet at the end of your office hours.

All graduate students have access to the Program Office copier/scanner. Graduate students are allotted a limited number of copies per semester for academic use. Multiple printings of a document or documents in

support of faculty or your GA/RA work that are longer than 20 pages should be printed/copied on the Maxwell Museum administrative office printer during business hours. Please request the access code for these tasks.

Telephone

The office telephone should be answered by whomever is staffing the front desk. The incoming call should be answered in cordial manner, noting the office name (the Museum Studies Program) and who is answering (e.g., "... this is _____ speaking"). Basic questions may be answered using the Museum Studies website for guidance. Messages or more complex questions should be noted and forwarded to the Program Administrator by email.

Example: "Museum Studies, this is Anne Marie. How can I help you?"

- Easy question – pull info from <http://museum.unm.edu> or MSST brochure.
- Harder question or interest in gaining more information about the program – "Our program administrator, Anne Marie, can assist you. She is away from the office at this moment, may I take your number and have her call you back?" (Take caller's name & number or email, and send email message to < anacke@unm.edu >)

Confidentiality of Student Records (Buckley Amendment / FERPA)

The following rules were adopted by the U.S. Congress out of a concern for the privacy interests of students. For further details, see the Student Records Policy in the current edition of the Pathfinder. (Also see synopsis of FERPA and complete FERPA rules at the end of this handbook.)

FERPA Rule - No one inside or outside the University shall have access to, nor will the contents of a student's education records be disclosed, without the written consent of the student except as provided by the Act and Regulations.

The Museum Studies Program will not release any portion of a student's file to anyone other than the student, in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (known as "FERPA", or the "Buckley Amendment"). The university generally may not release student records without the student's written permission. This includes both physical release of documents and release of information about the student over the phone or in person. This privacy rule covers almost every conceivable category of student records, such as grades, class schedules, financial information, disciplinary proceedings, medical records, computer files, admissions documents, and academic assessments. Release may not even be made to the police or FBI, the federal government, or to student family members, such as parents or spouses without the student's permission.

Exceptions in the Act and Regulations include, but are not limited to, the following: personnel within the institution determined by the institution to have a legitimate educational interest, officials of other institutions in which students seek to enroll or are enrolled, persons or Organizations providing student financial aid, accrediting agencies carrying out their accreditation function, persons in compliance with judicial orders and persons in an emergency when necessary to protect the health or safety of students or other persons.

All Graduate Assistants should familiarize themselves with the details of FERPA as they apply both to their own records and those of their student peers. Details can be found at: <http://registrar.unm.edu/privacy-rights/ferpa.html>

Conference Room and Storage

The Museum Studies Conference Room is a multi-purpose space available for use by Museum Studies faculty, graduate students, and staff. The Museum Studies Program Administrator keeps the room calendar for reservations. It may be scheduled in advance for seminars, colloquia, committee meetings, and graduate courses. When it is not reserved, it is open for use for coffee breaks, lunch, and informal meetings. Please help keep this space ready for varied activities and welcoming to those who need a respite!

The storage area in the Museum Studies Suite has a microwave and refrigerator for use by faculty, graduate students, and staff. As a matter of courtesy to others, **please clean up after yourself** - wipe the microwave after each use, and do not leave dirty dishes. Also, please label your items, and do not keep perishable food items in the refrigerator for more than a few days. And finally, **please remove food trash** from the Office Suite. You may place food trash in the 3rd floor bathroom receptacles or in trash and recycle bins on the ground floor.

Program Library

The Program Library is available for the exclusive use of Museum Studies faculty and graduate students. Books and journals are to be used in the office and not borrowed or taken out of the office without permission. If you have a suggestion for a book to add to the library, please send a note to the director.

Pay Schedule

All Graduate Assistants on contract with the Museum Studies Program receive their pay (via direct deposit) on the last weekday of the month. For example, if the last weekday of the month falls on a Monday, students will be paid on Monday and not on the previous Friday. Assistantship contracts will be written on a semester to semester basis, and students are encouraged to check their first month's pay stub during a contract to confirm payroll details.

Safety

Please review the General File and Emergency Plan File at the front desk during your first week in the office. The Emergency Plan contains important response information as pertains to fire, extreme weather, and other threats. If you have any questions after reviewing these materials, please ask for guidance or clarification. Your safety is high priority in all emergency situations.

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