

***Graduate Assistantships  
A Guide for Supervisors***



***Madonna University  
Graduate School***

Livonia, Michigan

# *The Mission of the Graduate School*

The Madonna University Graduate School promotes excellence in graduate education by articulating a vision of inspired leadership, scholarship, and service for students, faculty, and the University. We seek to develop and support dynamic programs that emphasize core values of intellectual inquiry, integrity, professionalism, and promotion of the common good.

## **Madonna University Core Values**

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Respect for the dignity of each person

Peace and justice

Reverence for creation

Education for truth and service

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# Introduction

The Graduate Assistantship Guidebook for supervisors provides an overview of the Graduate Assistantship program at Madonna University. The addition of a Graduate Assistant (GA) to your department is intended to benefit both the department and graduate student. These guidelines are intended to provide useful information for supervisors of Graduate Assistants and meant to compliment the materials and guidance provided in University handbooks and Human Resource documents.

## Benefits of Graduate Assistantships

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Graduate assistantships are provided as financial support for graduate students. They are intended to facilitate progress toward the earning of a graduate degree. All graduate assistantships should be beneficial to both the graduate student and the academic or teaching unit. The unit receives assistance from the supported graduate student and the GA receives experience and mentorship in research or teaching, which is intended to facilitate professional development.

Graduate teaching and administrative assistantships are available for an academic year. Individual academic and non-academic departments are responsible for recommending students for assistantship awards, establishing the job description, work schedule, and evaluation of the assistantship experience each semester. A graduate assistant's work schedule must not exceed 20 hours per week. GA awards are granted for a designated semester in which the student is enrolled.

## Student Benefits of Graduate Assistantships

### Students will be able to:

- Gain expertise in the field of study
- Enhance research skills
- Develop leadership skills
- Acquire teaching skills
- Acquire administrative experience in the academic setting
- Receive tuition and remuneration to assist with educational expenses
- Experience an opportunity to influence undergraduate students
- Enhance their connection with other graduate students/GAs
- Enjoy an opportunity to contribute to the office/department/school/college, and university

# *Graduate Assistantships*

## **Types of Assistantships**

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### **Administrative Assistantship (AA)**

Academic and non-academic units may employ Graduate Administrative Assistants (AAs). The GAA generally serves the department/unit/office in an administrative support role. Duties may vary by department or office but will generally include some or all of the following: responsibility for project support, clerical assistance, research and/or data management; gathering, organizing information; assisting with project/program implementation and or evaluation.

### **Coaching Assistantship (CA)**

The CA assists a Head Coach with the administration of one or more intercollegiate teams. Duties vary by sport and may include some or all of the following: coaching and instruction, recruitment and evaluation, travel management, roster management, and athletic administration.

### **Teaching Assistantship (TA)**

The TA serves the department under the direction and close supervision of a full-time faculty member. Duties may vary by discipline or department but will generally include some or all of the following: teaching responsibility for a laboratory, clinical or discussion session of a course, assisting a faculty member in the grading, advising, and course-related administrative duties.

# Student Eligibility

To be eligible for the Graduate Assistantship, students must meet all eligibility requirements listed below. Students are not eligible to be a GA for a department to which they have been denied admission. The following minimal requirements must be met.

## Requirements - Graduate Assistants must:

- Be eligible for **regular** admission to a Graduate degree program
- Maintain enrollment in at least 6 graduate semester hours of graduate degree coursework consistent with their plan of study. Note: **International students must enroll in 9 semester hours in fall and winter semesters.**
- Maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better
- Demonstrate satisfactory academic progress
- Adhere to the University Code of Conduct
- Perform GA duties satisfactorily, as evaluated by their immediate supervisor/department designee

## Enrollment Verification

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Graduate Assistants must be enrolled in courses at least one week prior to the start of the semester in order for their appointment and compensation to be processed in a timely manner.

Enrollment will be verified at the beginning of each term. If actual course registration and/or room and board designation differs from planned registration, as recorded on the “Graduate Assistantship Appointment” form, compensation will be re-calculated to reflect the changes.

Graduate Assistants must gain/maintain regular admission status in a graduate degree-granting program at Madonna University.

## Graduate Assistants must:

- Register for a minimum of six (6) credits during the fall and winter terms
- International students must register for a minimum of nine (9) credits during the fall and winter terms
- Maintain good academic standing and a minimum GPA of 3.0
- Adhere to the University Code of Conduct

Enrollment status	Semester hours per term
Full-time	9 or more s.h.
3/4 time	6-8 s.h.
Half-time	4-5 s.h.

Note: Domestic graduate students must maintain at least 3/4 time enrollment status.

# Process for Requesting a Graduate Assistantship for your Department

## New Graduate Assistant Request

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New GA position requests require the following supporting documentation:

- New Graduate Assistant Justification Form – Budget Principals should include a written justification. Please see the attached document named “Graduate Assistant Justification Form. docx” (Appendix B).
- Graduate Assistant Position Description – A template has been created. Please see the attached document named “Graduate Assistant Position Description Template.docx” (Appendix D).

For your convenience and guidance on completing the justification form, a rubric has been developed and is included. Please see the attached document named “Rubric for Evaluating Graduate Assistant Justification Requests.pdf” (Appendix C).

Requests for new GA positions are due concurrently with the department’s Annual Preliminary Operating Budget (APOB) process. The position description and the written justification are due to Mark Hutchins no later than designated APOB due date, usually **April 15**. Budget Principals will be notified as to whether or not their request for a new GA position will be honored as soon as possible and no later than **July 1** of the fiscal year. If you have any questions regarding the budget process, please contact Mark Hutchins at mhutchins@madonna.

## Request to Continue a Previously-Approved Graduate Assistant Position

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All GA positions that were approved for the previous fiscal year and have an incumbent student enrolled in a graduate program during the Winter semester will be continued for the next academic year.

GA positions that were approved for the current fiscal year but were not filled need to submit a request according to process in Appendix A. The deadline to request filling a vacant position for the new/next Academic year is April 15.

# Hiring Process

Once the GA position is approved for your department, you can begin working with the Graduate School to post your position and process selected students.

You will need to supply the Graduate School Office with the GA job description and semester start date.

The Graduate School will post the position description on the Graduate School webpage and on Handshake, a job search platform the university uses for posting GA positions, work-study positions and internship opportunities.

See Appendix E – Hiring Process Flowchart

## Application Review

You will receive the application materials of students applying for your GA position through Handshake. Review applications with your departmental committee. Contact students suitable for your department's position.

## Selection and Appointment of GA

When you have made your selection and the GA has accepted the department's offer, contact the Graduate School by email. The Graduate School will contact the student and provide instructions for completing the GA on-boarding materials.

## Renewal of Appointment Process

Renewal of appointments is not automatic. The department must have budget approval. Supervisors must notify the Graduate School that they wish to continue the GA's appointment in their department/current position. Reappointments are based on the availability of funds, department needs and department supervisor's determination of GA's satisfactory performance. Students must complete a new GA appointment/contract form with the Graduate School for reappointment. Graduate Assistants who fail to meet eligibility requirements, may be denied renewal.

## Maximum Time on Support

A graduate student may only hold an assistantship as long as they have not accumulated more credits than required for the degree in which the assistantship was awarded. A master's student may hold a graduate assistantship for up to three years. A doctoral student may hold a graduate assistantship for up to four years.



# *Resignation or Termination of Appointment*

## **Resignation**

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A graduate assistant may resign by submitting a written notification to their departmental supervisor and the Graduate School. Written notification that indicates the last working day through which the graduate assistant is entitled to pay must be submitted to the Graduate School. Note: If the GA resigns during the semester or is terminated after registration is completed, they will be asked to reimburse the University for their prorated tuition. Additionally, they become ineligible for future employment as a graduate assistant and all other compensation will be suspended, as of the date of their resignation/termination.

## **Termination**

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Graduate assistantship appointments are contingent upon and subject to satisfactory performance of assigned duties as determined by the appointing unit. Appointments may be terminated for cause before their expiration under certain conditions. Before termination of appointment for unsatisfactory performance, graduate assistants must receive from their immediate supervisors' written notice of specific deficiencies in performance, as well as detailed suggestions for improvement.

Causes for termination of the GA contract before the end of appointment (not limited to):

- GA fails to perform duties satisfactorily and/or unacceptable conduct
- GA violates provisions of Agreement/Appointment
- GA fails to meet requirements such as maintaining good academic standing (3.00 minimum GPA)
- GA completes required semester hours to graduate from their degree program
- University funds cease to be available for graduate assistantships

## Graduate Assistant Supervision

The GA should have a departmental supervisor who is responsible for orientation, training, assignments and time card management. The department supervisor must:

- Create and maintain a job description for each graduate assistant
- Ensure that the GA complies with mandatory training requirements; completed not later than 30 days from assuming their employment
- Establish a work schedule and ensure that the job duties for each graduate assistant are appropriate for the job and appointment type
- Train the GA on departmental procedures
- Maintain adequate time records and submit timecards to the payroll office

### Required Training

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All graduate assistants will be provided with information to enroll in Vector Training Solutions, the University's training management system. GAs must complete all assigned training courses within the first semester of appointment. The Human Resources department will provide students with access information.

Note: GAs assisting with research activities are required to complete Research Integrity Training, accessible at [Madonna.edu/academics/research](http://Madonna.edu/academics/research).

### Departmental Orientation & Training

Departments will provide GAs with an orientation to their role. Any additional training, such as technology software, learning management system will be provided as needed for the GA duties and responsibilities. All graduate assistants are responsible for becoming familiar with general academic policies and procedures in the University Catalogs, the Student Handbook and Code of Conduct. These materials are available online in the portal.

### Duties and Responsibilities

Graduate assistants, will provide an average of 20 hours of service per week as assigned by the designated supervisor. Graduate assistants may, at the discretion of supervisors, be assigned to work during break weeks.

The work schedule and related job responsibilities will be outlined by the department supervisor or designee.

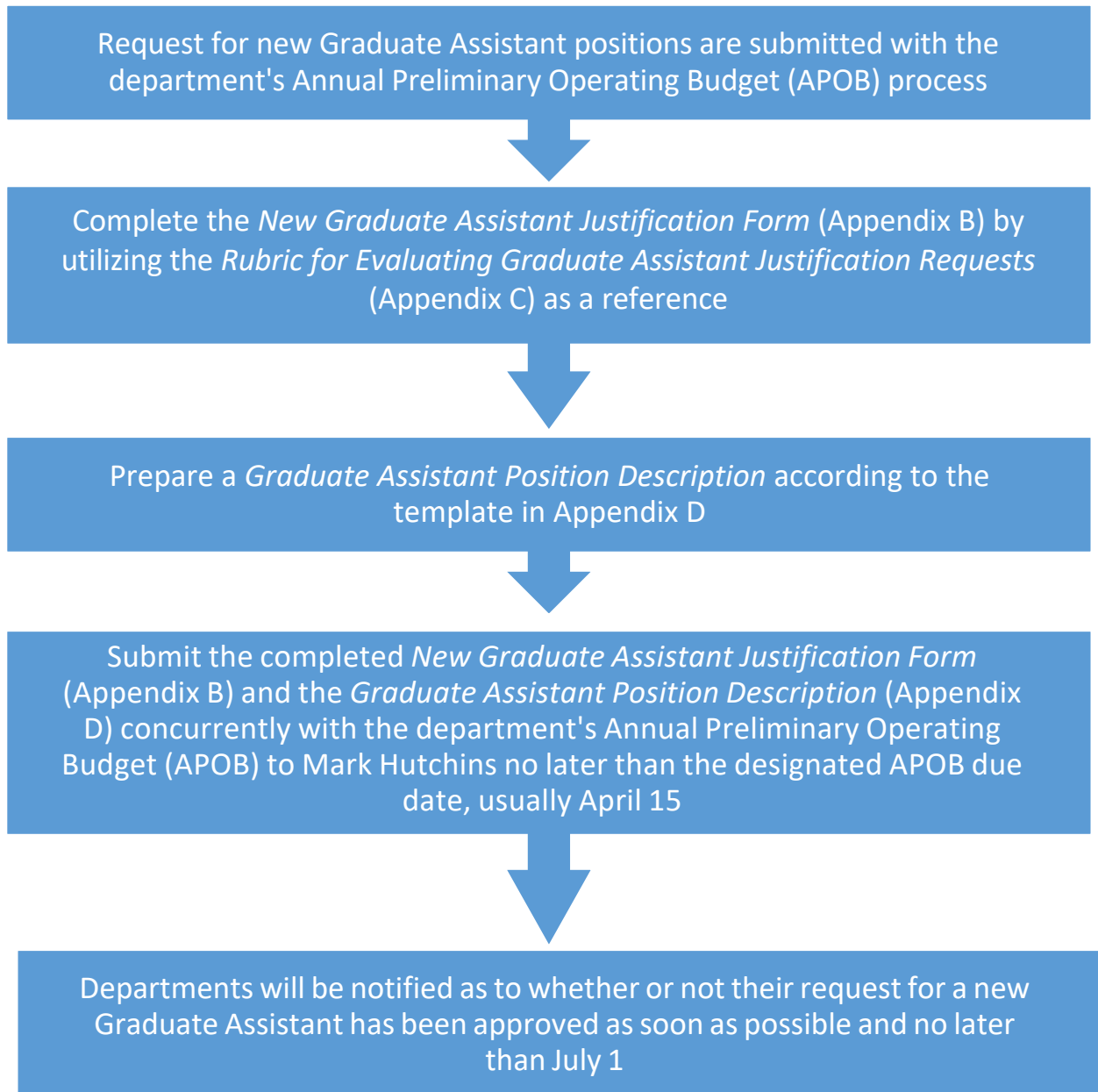
# *Graduate Assistant Supervision*

## Time Cards

The graduate assistant is responsible for submitting a time card through UltiPro to their supervisor bi-weekly according to the pay schedule. The supervisor will approve and submit the time card through UltiPro to the payroll department.

## Appendices – Appendix A

### Graduate Assistant Request/Approval Process Flowchart



# Appendices – Appendix B

## New Graduate Assistant Justification Form

Job Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor \_\_\_\_\_

Account # \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Job Description Dated \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Year \_\_\_\_\_ Start Date and End Date \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

### Justification Questions:

1. What is the financial benefit to Madonna University in subsidizing this GA position? How will this position save financial resources in the upcoming fiscal year or future years?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Which Madonna University graduate program(s) would be a strong complement to this GA position for the student?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How will the student that is selected for this role benefit from this experience?

## Appendices – Appendix C

### Rubric for Evaluating Graduate Assistant Justification Requests

CRITERIA	DOES NOT MEET STANDARD	MEETS STANDARD	EXCEEDS STANDARD	POINTS (100 Possible)
<b>FINANCIAL BENEFIT TO MADONNA UNIVERSITY</b> (WEIGHT = 70%)	The justification does not identify any financial benefit to Madonna University by saving financial resources in 2019-2020 or future years.	The justification identifies some potential financial benefits to Madonna University by saving financial resources in 2019-2020 or future years.	The justification clearly identifies measureable financial benefits to Madonna University by saving financial resources in 2019-2020 or future years.	
<b>STUDENT BENEFIT</b> (WEIGHT = 20%)	The justification does not identify any educational or work experience benefit to the student.	The justification identifies some educational or work experience which could benefit the student.	The justification clearly identifies educational and work experiences which would benefit the student.	
<b>PROGRAM FIT</b> (WEIGHT = 10%)	The justification does not identify which Madonna University graduate program would be a good complement to the position.	The justification identifies one or more Madonna University graduate programs that could be a good complement to the position.	The justification clearly identifies one or more Madonna University graduate programs that would be a good complement to the position.	



## GRADUATE ASSISTANT POSITION DESCRIPTION

**Job Title:** Graduate Assistant  
**Department:** (Enter Department Name)  
**Reports To:** (Fill in Supervisor's Name)  
**Shift/Hours:** 20 hours per week  
**Date Prepared:** (Insert Date)

### SUMMARY

The Graduate Assistant (GA) must be fully admitted to a Graduate degree program at Madonna University. The GA reports to **(Insert Supervisor's name)**. A schedule will be mutually arranged by the GA and the Supervisor to ensure the hour requirement is met. The GA must register for a minimum of 6 semester hours (minimum of 9 semester hours is required for international GAs) during each Fall and Winter semester. The GA may register for additional credits up to a maximum of 24 semester hours per academic year. The GA must maintain good standing academically (3.0 or higher GPA each semester) and adhere to the University Code of Conduct to maintain their position.

### ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Maintain a 3.0 (or higher) GPA each semester for which the student is given the GA award. GA must be in good academic and personal standing.
2. **Add all the job duties and responsibilities you have outlined for this GA position.**

### QUALIFICATIONS

The GA must be fully admitted to a Graduate degree program at Madonna University. The GA must maintain a 3.0 (or higher) GPA each semester for which the student has been given the GA award. Professionalism, work ethic, attention to detail and excellent organizational skills. Excellent interpersonal, oral and written communication skills. Ability to self-initiate, work both independently and collaboratively. Ability to prioritize multiple projects simultaneously and successfully meet deadlines. Ability to work with diverse communities.

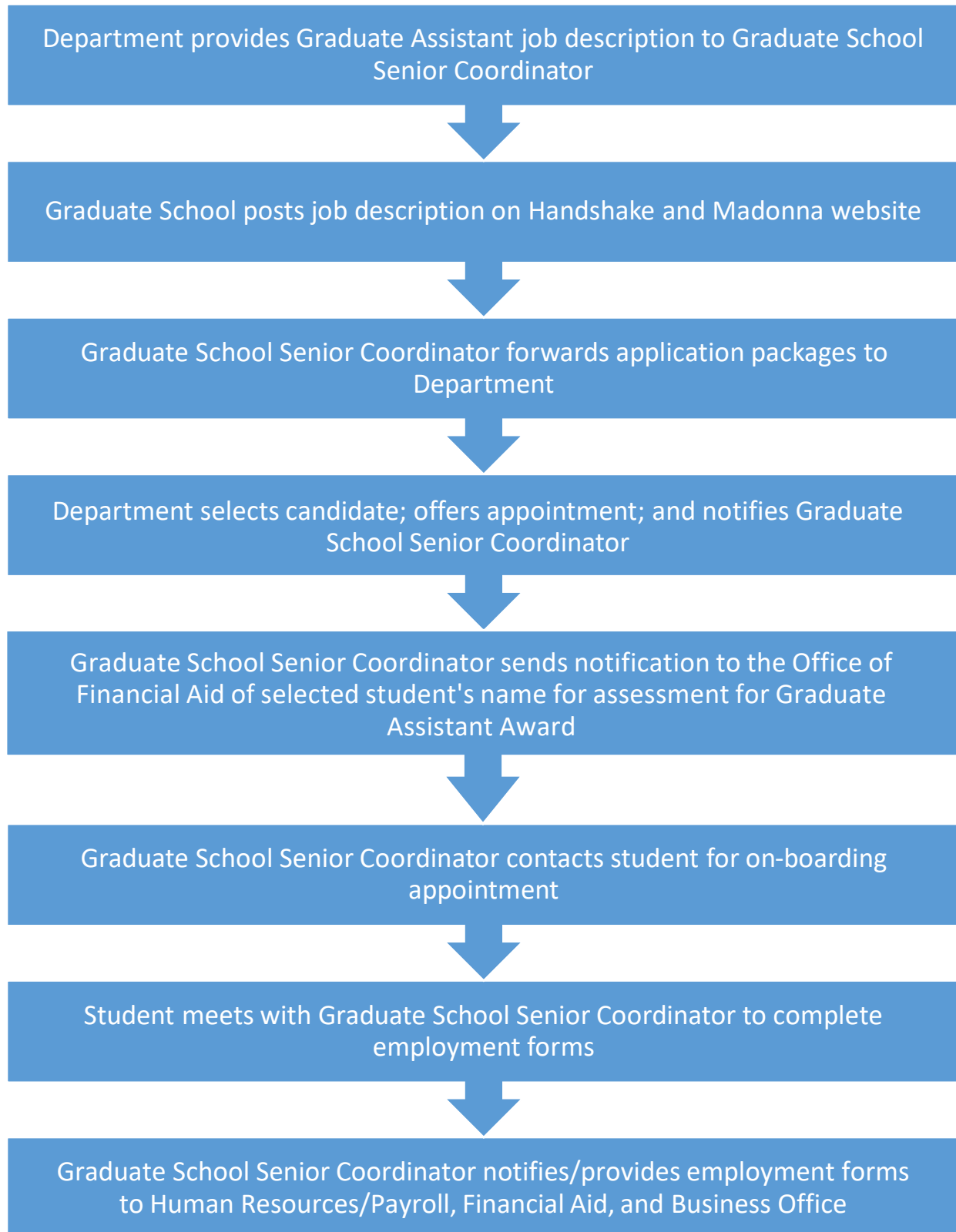
### EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Bachelor degree from a regionally accredited institution. The cumulative GPA must be 3.0 or higher (4.0) scale. Combination of education and practical experience related to the position is preferred.

**MADONNA UNIVERSITY** A Catholic institution founded by the Felician Sisters, and guided by the values of St. Francis. Candidates must be committed to excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, and support the Mission of the University. We are an equal opportunity employer committed to a culturally diverse workforce. Candidates must be legally authorized to work in the United States. Verification of employment eligibility will be required at the time of hire. Thank you for your interest in employment opportunities at Madonna University.

## Appendices – Appendix E

### Flowchart of Graduate Assistant Hiring Process









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