

## **PROPOSED CAREGIVER SUPPORT RESOURCES PROGRAM FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS ON ASSISTANTSHIPS: Overview, eligibility, application, resources:**

### **1. Overview:**

The Graduate School at Texas Tech University is committed to the success of graduate students who serve as primary caregivers for another individual as defined in the Caregiver Support Resources Program at Texas Tech University.

Graduate Student employee appointments are considered temporary and not eligible for leave accrual programs, retirement programs, holidays or other benefits made available to regular employees. The only exceptions are Teaching Assistants, Graduate Part-Time Instructors (GPTI), Research Assistants, and Graduate Assistants who are employed to work 20 hours per week (.5 FTE) for a period of at least four and one-half months per year and are eligible to participate in the Group Insurance Plans.

### **2. Eligibility**

An individual who is enrolled in TTU's Graduate School full-time and employed in certain occupational categories at 20 hours per week (.5 FTE) may be eligible for the **Caregiver Support Resources Program for Graduate Students on Assistantship**. Graduate student employees must be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward a degree. Teaching Assistants, Graduate Part-Time Instructors, Research Assistants, or Graduate Assistants are expected to comply with OP 64.02, Graduate Enrollment Policy, and OP 64.03, Graduate Students Employed as Teaching Assistants and Graduate Part-Time Instructors.

Occupational categories are defined in OP 70.27, Employment of Student Employees and include the following:

- Graduate Assistant
- Graduate Part-Time Instructor
- Research Assistant
- Teaching Assistant
- Student Assistant

Graduate Student Employees may apply for the following accommodations:

- a. **Caregiver office spaces** are important for graduate students who lack private office spaces.
- b. **Prioritized teaching schedules** matter to all instructors of record who serve as caregivers, regardless of whether they are faculty, instructional staff, or graduate students.
- c. **Modified participation** may be relevant to graduate students if they are expected to participate in certain department, college, and/or university activities and events that are scheduled at irregular times and may conflict with caregiving responsibilities.
- d. **Modified evaluation** may be relevant to graduate students if "components of their performance were negatively affected by caregiving burdens" or if their caregiving responsibilities necessitate extending the length of their graduate programs beyond the normal completion time for other members of their cohorts.

### **3. Application Submission and Review**

To apply for status as a primary caregiver and thus be eligible to request caregiver support resources, graduate student assistants must complete and submit the Primary Caregiver Status and Resources Request Form (see Attachment B for example - actual form will be available online) with routing as follows:

- a. Graduate student assistant applicants should submit the form to their department chair, research supervisor, or program director.
- b. The department chair, research supervisor, or program director will issue a decision and communicate that decision to the graduate student assistant, the Dean of the college where the student is employed. In cases where the graduate student assistant disagrees with the chair's or director's decision and a solution cannot be reached, the case will be reviewed by the academic dean.
- c. The dean will review the decision and, if the decision is approved, will submit the form to the Dean of the Graduate School. If the dean disagrees with the initial decision, the dean will meet with the chair or director to review the decision and resolve the disagreement. If a resolution cannot be reached, the dean will contact the Dean of the Graduate School who will make the final decision on the graduate student assistant request.

To ensure that applications for primary caregiver status and resources are treated as uniformly as possible across the institution, this program will be reviewed annually during standing meetings of: Graduate Council, Deans Council, Faculty Senate, Associate Dean's Council, and Chairs Council.

**Caregiver Study Carrel Use Policy**

**PURPOSE:** This policy is to provide individual study carrels to Texas Tech University Faculty who have Primary Caregiver status and who are in need of temporary, enclosed office space.

**POLICY**

These are the parameters that govern the use of the group study rooms for caregivers:

1. Room usage is intended to be of a temporary nature and not a permanent work relocation.
2. Rooms will only be made available for caregiver use when the library is open.
3. Faculty members will not be allowed to check out a room more than three (3) times a week without written approval from their immediate supervisor and the Head of Access Services in the Library.
4. The Caregiver will be allowed to check out any of the west group study rooms for up to four hours in a workday and be allowed one renewal for that workday.
  - a. West Group Study Rooms:
    - i. Stacks 1: 1W1, 1W2, 1W3, 1W4, 1W5, 1W6
    - ii. Stacks 2: 2W1, 2W2, 2W3, 2W4, 2W5, 2W6
    - iii. Stacks 3: 3W1, 3W2, 3W3, 3W4, 3W5, 3W6
5. If the Caregiver is working in the room with an individual under their care, the Caregiver must be present at all times.
6. The Caregiver is responsible for any and all incidents that happen in the room.
7. The Caregiver and individual needing supervision will follow the guidelines put in place by Access Services for Semester Study Carrels:
  - a. Personal Property:
    - i. The Library does not accept responsibility for belongings and/or equipment left in the study room.
    - ii. Personal computers, calculators, books, or any other items of value should not be left unattended in the study room.
    - iii. Any personal items left in the study room past the time of expiration will be retained in the Access Services Department for two weeks. Any item(s) not claimed within that time will be taken to the TTU Police Department.
    - iv. All Library materials used in the study room **MUST** be checked out at the service desk.
  - b. Keys:
    - i. Assigned study rooms have a key lock. Assigned keys must be returned to the Access Services Department at the end of the loan period.
    - ii. A \$60 fee will be charged to the caregiver for each lost key.
  - c. Safety:
    - i. No electrical appliances of any kind (printers, microwaves, coffee makers, crockpots, heaters, etc.)
    - ii. No tobacco products or e-cigarettes of any kind (TTU OP 60.15)
    - iii. Do not cover the glass in the door at any time
    - iv. Do not place objects (i.e. wood boards, metal planks) above or below the carrel door
    - v. Use headphones when listening to audio devices

**ATTACHMENT B: TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY  
PRIMARY CAREGIVER STATUS REQUEST FORM FOR GRADUATE STUDENT ASSISTANTS: EXAMPLE ONLY**

Graduate Student Employee Name:

R Number:

Email Address:

Office Phone #:

Department/Unit:

Date Submitted:

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\_\_\_\_\_ I certify that I qualify as a primary caregiver as defined by Texas Tech University.

\_\_\_\_\_ I certify that I have reviewed all resources in consultation with my immediate supervisor, they are not applicable to my situation or do not fully satisfy my needs as a primary caregiver.

- OP 64.02, Graduate Enrollment Policy
- OP 64.03, Graduate Students Employed as Teaching Assistants and Graduate Part-Time Instructors
- OP 70.27, Employment of Student Employees
  
- OP 32.35: Modified Instructional Duties
- OP 32.11: Faculty Sick Leave
- OP 70.44: Sick Leave and Sick Leave Pool
- OP 70.32: Family and Medical Leave Act and Parental Leave
- OP 70.06: Employee Working Hours
- OP 40.04: Access for Individuals with Disabilities

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I request the following support resources (check all that apply):

\_\_\_\_\_ **Caregiver office spaces** are important for graduate students who lack private office spaces.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Prioritized teaching schedules** matter to all instructors of record who serve as caregivers, regardless of whether they are faculty, instructional staff, or graduate students.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Modified participation** may be relevant to graduate students if they are expected to participate in certain department, college, and/or university activities and events that are scheduled at irregular times and may conflict with caregiving responsibilities.

\_\_\_\_\_ **Modified evaluation** may be relevant to graduate students if “components of their performance were negatively affected by caregiving burdens” or if their caregiving responsibilities necessitate extending the length of their graduate programs beyond the normal completion time for other members of their cohorts.

I request these resources for the following academic term(s) (e.g., spring 2021):

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Justification:

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\*A primary caregiver at Texas Tech University is anyone who provides unpaid care to a spouse, parent, child, other relative, or partner who has a chronic illness or disability and/or anyone who is solely or jointly responsible for providing care to a child or other relative under the age of 13.

Approvals

Requesting Department Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

Students Home Department: \_\_\_\_\_

Requesting Department Dean: \_\_\_\_\_

Graduate School Dean: \_\_\_\_\_