GRADUATE ASSISTANTS AS EMPLOYEES

Catherine Ciminillo - UFHR Employee Relations
TOPICS

Performance Management
Separation
A WHOLE STUDENT WITH A DASH OF EMPLOYEE

It’s important to understand Graduate Assistants are first and foremost a student.

- Our actions need to focus on the student first.
  - What best for their learning?
  - How will this employment action affect their academic program?
- Along with their area of study, we are teaching them to be professionals.
  - Navigating Common Workplace Situations
PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
BEST PRACTICES

• Set Clear Expectations
  • In the Letter of Appointment
  • In Evaluations
  • In Email

• Be Prepared to Have Difficult Conversations

• Have Frequent Conversations and Follow Up in Email

• Evaluate the GA Frequently

• Listen and Observe
COUNSELING & DISCIPLINE

Graduate Assistants can be subject to counseling or progressive discipline that is related to their employment duties.

- Outlined in Article 21 of the CBA
- Documentation needs approval by Employee Relations before delivery to the GA.
- More severe forms of discipline may require additional levels of approval.
EVALUATIONS

It's important that GA Evaluations are done on a regular basis and provide the GA with a complete and honest assessment of their performance.

Best Practices:
- Semester based evaluations rather than Annual
- Seeking out Assistance with Drafting in cases where there are performance or academic concerns.
**ACTION PLANS**

**Academic**

- One Semester in Length
- Must include examples of Lack of Academic Progress, Metrics or Goals for student to meet, Timeline over the semester for each metric or goal, Support to be provided to the student to help encourage a successful outcome.
- Reviewed by Dean’s Office before delivery.

**Employment**

- One Semester in Length
- Must include examples of Performance Concerns, Metrics or Goals for GA to meet, Timeline over the semester for each metric or goal, Support to be provided to the GA to help encourage a successful outcome.
- Reviewed by Employee Relations before delivery.
SEPARATION
Appointments can end for many reasons, here are the most common:

- Completion of Degree
- End of Initial Appointment Period in Appointment Letter
- Failure to Perform Duties **AFTER** Written Notification from the Department
- Failure to Maintain Satisfactory Student Status **OR** to make Progress Towards the Degree
- **Documented** Incompetence or Misconduct
- Lack of Funding
End of Appointment Period/ Lack of Funds

• Minimum 45 Day Notice, in some cases 90 Day Notice Period.
• Separates from Employment.
• Provide copy of Appointment Letter and Information on Funding if necessary.
• Requires Approval through Employee Relations.

Academic

• Requested prior to End of Semester.
• Separates from Academic Program AND Employment.
• Provide results of Action Plan, Evaluations, and other supporting communications.
• Notify Dean’s Office/UFIC of intent to Dismiss.
• Requires Employee Relations Approval and additional Review.

Employment

• Requested prior to End of Semester.
• Separates from Employment.
• Provide results of Action Plan, Evaluations, and other supporting communications.
• Requires Employee Relations Approval and additional Review.
1. Academic Issues identified and documented in an annual (or semester) review.
2. Department creates an Academic Action Plan in consultation with CALS Dean’s office prior to the start of the semester.
3. Dept. Submits Action Plan to CALS Dean’s Office for Review prior to the end of drop/add week.
4. CALS Dean’s Office Approves Action Plan.
5. Student Fails Plan (assessed at the end of the academic semester).
6. Department Notifies CALS Dean’s Office (and UFIC, if necessary) of intent to Dismiss Academically.
7. Department requests separation IFAS HR/Employee Relations and Notifies Graduate School via drop in SIS.
**Exit Process Flow Pattern - Employment**

1. Employment Issues identified and documented in an annual (or semester) review.
2. Department creates an Employment Action Plan in consultation with HR office prior to the start of the semester.
4. Employee Relations Approves and Submits a copy of Action Plan to CALS Dean’s Office.
5. Student Fails Plan (assessed at the end of the academic semester).
6. Department Notifies IFAS HR/Employee Relations to Dismiss Employment.
7. IFAS HR/Employee Relations Notifies CALS Dean’s Office and GAU.
QUESTIONS?