Workday for Graduate Assistants (GAs)

Overview

As Iowa State University begins using Workday, the Graduate College is committed to ensuring that all graduate assistants (GAs) understand what this transition means for them. Below, you will find answers to frequently asked questions about Workday. The Graduate College also encourages GAs to attend upcoming information sessions on August 8 and August 27 in the Memorial Union, where these questions and more will be discussed in-depth. Registration is encouraged, but not required.

Questions & Answers

1) What is Workday?

Workday is a leading enterprise software system that provides unified Human Capital Management (HCM), Financial Management, and student information systems to higher education. Iowa State leadership made the decision to switch to Workday because it provides timely, cost-effective and mobile-enabled functionality to all users.

2) How will Workday affect my graduate assistantship?

There still will be three types of assistantships (teaching, research, administrative), but the duration of appointments will be more standardized than in the past. In Workday, appointments during the coming year will be for fixed terms, such as a semester, a summer, and a full year. This may give students greater assurance than in the past concerning the stability of their funding.

It is important to remember that the GA’s supervisor sets the start and end dates. The supervisor also sets expectations. For example, a common expectation is for half-time GAs to contribute 20 hours of effort per week. A supervisor may track hours, and may assign duties for research assistants that may not overlap with the research the student is expected to conduct for a thesis or dissertation.

The monthly stipend deposit a GA receives will be total dollar amount for the term divided by the number of months included in the term, regardless of the number of days included within the first and last months of the term. For example, consider a Fall appointment that begins in August. A GA will receive the full monthly portion of the total stipend at the end of August regardless of which day in August is chosen as the start date. This is different than in the past, when the amount a GA would receive in August was prorated by the number of days in August that were included in the appointment period. The same principle applies at the end of the appointment in December.
Although equal amounts will be deposited during all months within a single term, GAs should be prepared for the possibility of unequal amounts from one term to another, as well as when two consecutive terms include the same month. This latter possibility is most likely to involve the months of August or May, when separate Summer and Fall appointments both include at least one day in August, or when separate Spring and Summer appointments both include at least one day in May. In such situations, the August or May deposit a student receives will be unusually large because it will include full monthly amounts from two appointments. Staff who administer appointments in Workday are being encouraged use one of several strategies that exist to keep the monthly deposits equal or nearly equal.

3) Will I still receive direct deposits?

Yes, as in the past, you will receive a deposit at the end of each month included in your appointment.

4) Will the amount of my stipend change in the new academic year?

This depends on the terms of the appointment specified by the person, department, or graduate program that appoints you. The minimum annual stipend mandated by the Graduate College increased by $500 effective July 2019. In addition, the suspension of prorating stipend deposits according to days of effort is likely to increase the amount many GAs receive. An increase is not guaranteed for all graduate assistants, however, due to the appointment details entered into Workday by departments or graduate programs.

5) How will Workday affect travel reimbursement?

Expenses incurred from approved travel will be reimbursed via Workday. You may be authorized to enter your own reimbursement requests. If so, you can exercise that option, but all GAs may also send scans or photographs of your receipts to a member of your local service team who will enter the request in Workday. Please ask within your department or graduate program for details on how you should proceed.

6) Will there be different processes for applying for PAG or getting PAG reimbursement?

Workday will not affect the way you apply for PAG funding via the Graduate and Professional Student Senate (GPSS). The account 2021893 that was previously used for reimbursements is now known as Worktag PG102496.

7) How will I proceed in purchasing with CyBuy or a P-card?

Please check with your department, graduate major, or the unit that appointed you to an assistantship for what is allowable and the process they prefer for you to use.
8) How can I find answers to additional questions about Workday?

You can check the resources available on workcyte.iastate.edu. You can also seek assistance from someone in your academic department, such as your major professor or Director of Graduate Education. If they are unable to answer your questions, please contact William Graves, Dean of the Graduate College, at graves@iastate.edu.