April 6, 2017

MEMORANDUM

TO: Department Heads, College of Engineering

THROUGH: Dr. M. Katherine Banks
Vice Chancellor and Dean of Engineering

FROM: Dr. Prasad Enjeti
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

SUBJECT: Summer Employment of Graduate Assistants – Leave without Pay and Title Change Policies

In the coming months, we anticipate receiving many requests pertaining to the employment of graduate students during the months of May, June, July, and August. Graduate students may request permission to intern or work in industry, others may encounter circumstances requiring a temporary period away from assigned duties, and some may decide to stay in town to continue their studies. Depending on the student’s situation, different HR processes will need to be followed. Attached you will find a summary chart to help you determine the processes, paperwork, and approval authority needed for changes in summer employment.

Leave Without Pay (LWOP) – Graduate Assistant Research (GAR) and Graduate Assistant Non-Teaching (GANT) are typically budgeted for 12 month periods. GARS and GANTS do not have access to paid leave, but in some cases there is a need to maintain their employment relationship until they return. Typically this has been accomplished by placing these individuals in a LWOP status. In order to accommodate these requests in an efficient manner, I am authorizing each department to place GARS and GANTS on leave without pay for the summer months given that the individual is in good academic standing and will be enrolled and return to his/her assistantship position in the fall. To account for these individuals, each department must prepare a Graduate Assistant Request for Leave without Pay form identifying the individuals authorized to be placed on LWOP. The form can be accessed at http://engineering.tamu.edu/hr/forms/

Graduate Student Worker – In order to account for individuals that may benefit from a change in title over the summer months due to a reduction in job duties as a result of being in his/her final semester and therefore not able to meet the GAT/GANT/GAR eligibility criteria, it has been determined that the title Graduate Student Worker will be utilized to offer the appropriate distinction and flexibility necessary for individuals in our Graduate Programs. The Graduate Student Worker title offers the opportunity for qualified individuals to maintain benefit eligibility as well as maintaining the rate of pay commensurate with the graduate assistant’s existing rate of pay. It is important to note that the title changes to Graduate Student Worker should not be used to avoid paying benefits and/or tuition during the summer nor shall reasons related to funding and/or performance issues serve as acceptable justification.

Alternate (Off-Site) Work Location – Requests for graduate assistants to maintain employment in a work setting other than the designated headquarters (College Station) must be proposed via an Alternate or Offsite Work Location form. The form must clearly distinguish the offsite business location and business necessity for the requested change. Requests for individuals returning home and/or performing duties absent a business necessity will not serve as acceptable justification. The form must be submitted and approved prior to the change in work site. The form can be found at http://engineering.tamu.edu/hr/forms

Attachments

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