

Processing Manual

Introduction/purpose

This document provides information about how to process graduate assistantships and graduate tuition waiver scholarships. For information about **policies** that apply to graduate assistants and fellowships, please visit [GA-Handbook.pdf \(nau.edu\)](#) and [NAU Graduate Assistantships & Tuition Waivers | NAU Office of Graduate & Professional Studies](#).

Timeline and Deadlines

[Important dates for graduate assistants & graduate coordinators: Fall 2024 & Spring 2025](#) can be found on the [Office of Graduate & Professional Studies forms index](#) webpage. The .pdf will be updated semesterly and is a consistent resource for GAs and GA coordinators.

Hiring Graduate Assistants

Please keep the following parameters in mind:

- All new hires, including those who have not worked for NAU in the last six months, must complete a new hire packet, including an I-9 verification. The new hire packet is initiated by the HR Service Team upon receiving a New Employee Onboarding ticket from the department.
- The [Appointment Letter Template](#) is the official notice of employment. Note, we will only accept the OnBase offer letter. Email gatw@nau.edu if you need to request an exception.
- Before a graduate assistant can receive a paycheck, the signed Letter of Appointment must be attached to the onboarding application.

within the acceptance form.

Note: You may not require any GA to sign an acceptance letter prior to April 15.

3. Student returns the Letter of Appointment and optional Conditions of Appointment to your department. Please ensure you are in receipt of them as quickly as possible once an offer is made.
4. Once the student has signed the offer letter via OnBase, download a .pdf copy of the email you receive and initiate a New Employee Onboarding ticket. Be sure to include the .pdf showing the student signed the offer letter. We encourage you to have as many letters signed and tickets submitted through your service team as possible prior to the end of the semester. Remember, the signed Letter of Appointment attached to the ePAR must be received before a student can receive a paycheck.
5. The HR Service Team will take care of any necessary pre-boarding work (new hire packet, background check, etc.) and will initiate an ePAR. The ePAR will be routed for a department level approval before being routed to the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies. Note: before the department approver approves the ePAR, any comments requested in the steps below should be included.
6. The GATW Financial Oversight Analyst reviews the ePAR and attached, signed offer letter. Admission, residency, and academic status are verified, and each appointment is reviewed for compliance. Letters which raise policy questions are referred to the Dean of the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies for review. The GATW Financial Oversight Analyst changes residency for GAs to in-state for tuition purposes for the term of the offer if the student is a non-resident. Incomplete or incorrect information will be recycled back to the originator for corrections before it is forwarded again through the ePAR process. If the student is 20-hour benefit eligible, whether they are accepting or decline health insurance, will be recycled, as will 10-hour GAs who accept benefits (10-hour GAs can purchase student health insurance as they are not eligible for the benefit). If the GA will accept two, 10-hour Graduate Assistantships in a semester they are considered benefit eligible; if this is the case, please include this in the ePAR comments.
7. If the assistantship is grant-funded, the ePAR is forwarded to the Office of Sponsored Projects to verify there is funding in the grant available for the stipend. The Office of Sponsored Projects requires a written explanation if the end date of the appointment exceeds the ending date of the grant and if there are not sufficient funds to cover the award. The principal investigator should include an explanation the grant is being extended or additional funds are anticipated if there are insufficient funds to cover the award. Any explanations related to grant funding should be added as a comment in the ePAR.
8. Once the Letter of Appointment has been reviewed, The Office of Graduate & Professional Studies sends the benefit information (tuition waiver/GA tuition remission and insurance) to the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid. The ePAR is routed to Payroll. The average processing time (from receipt of letter in the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies to arrival in Payroll) is 7-10 business days.¹ Additional time may be necessary if graduate assistant position is grant funded. See [Important dates for graduate assistants & graduate coordinators: Fall 2024 & Spring 2025](#) for specific dates. Letters and waiver requests received after this date will result in processing delays for our students.
9. Instructions for Completing the Graduate Assistant [Letter of Appointment](#)
The Letter of Appointment is an official employment document. It is used to activate the following GA benefits:

¹ Please note: the 7–10-day timeline does not mean that an ePAR will be approved and executed within that time frame (or that a paycheck will be issued within that time frame). Please refer to the [payroll processing calendar](#) for details about ePAR approvals and paycheck issuance.

Student health insurance (See Health Insurance section for further details). Students should be advised to enroll or confirm enrollment in health insurance, or they may have their insurance cancelled. Please note the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies does not enroll students in the health insurance, we ensure it is paid for if requested for 20-hour appointments only.

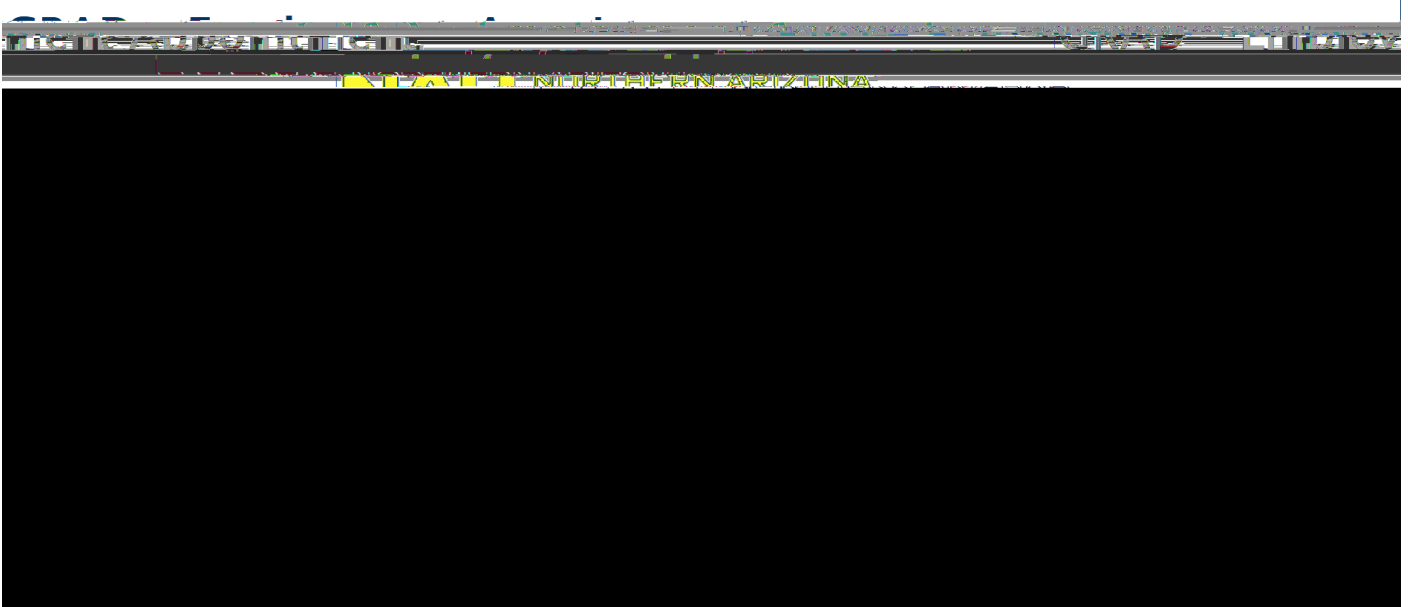
Tuition remission.

Waiver of non-resident tuition for non-resident students.

Click the Letter of Appointment Template directly from the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies webpage.

Because it is an OnBase form and authenticates to the user, we are unable to send the hyperlink to you in a separate email: <https://nau.edu/graduate-professional-studies/forms/>, Appointment Letter Template.

If the Appointment Letter does not have the Letterhead and is all white instead of the NAU colors as shown below, leave and try again or try a different browser. It will not send and complete unless it has the logo and color bars shown below. Other options are to clear cache or contact NAU ITS for assistance. Students must log into their LOUIE account when admitted to the university for a GA processor to pull up the student's contact information and send the letter.



The person filling out the form is pre-filled. Once you input the student UserID, the student section, including GA, is pre-filled, and Page 2 of the form loads.

Position Details

Position Type: *

Position Number: *

Is this position a full-time position? *

Begin Date: *

End Date: *

Hours per week: *

Stipend: *

[Help](#)

Graduate Coordinator Information

Graduate Coordinator Search

Graduate Coordinator Name: *

Graduate Coordinator Email: *

First Name/Initial

Last Name

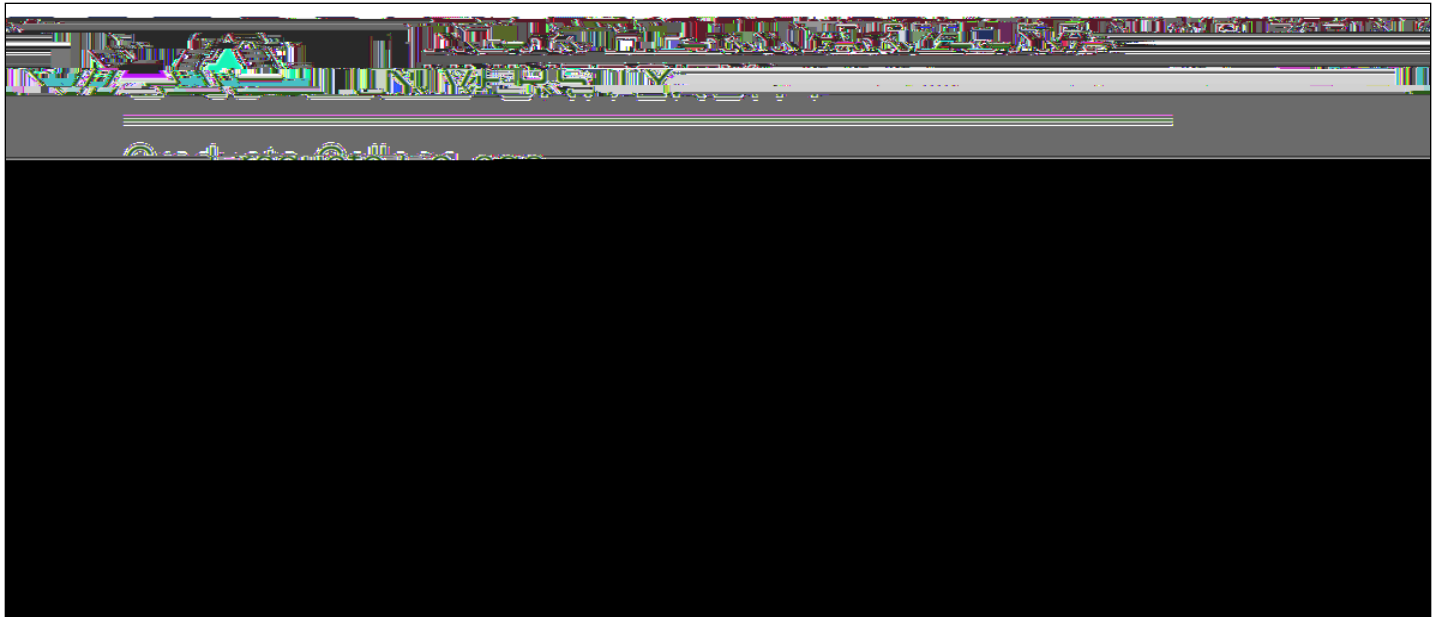
[Search](#)

[Show Help](#)

Acceptance Deadline: *

Department Administrator

Once you submit, the student receives a link to accept their offer. They must accept from a desktop or laptop. This form is not optimized for smartphone and will create an error.



When the student clicks the link on a desktop, the following page is displayed and will prompt the student to fill in their information and accept or decline their assistantship.

After the student accepts or declines, you will receive a confirmation email. Attached to the confirmation email is the .pdf contract the student receives for their records.

Graduate College

Hello,

submit an I-9 form. The attached order sheet will be uploaded to the ePAR.

Graduate Assistantship Details:

Student Name:	[REDACTED]	Student ID (emoid):	1243689
Position Number:	11111111	Position Type:	Graduate Teaching Assistant (00110)
Fund Number:	11	Is this position safety security sensitive:	NO
Fund Percentage:	89	Fund Number:	22
Health Plan:	ENROLLING	Supervisor or Graduate Coordinator:	[REDACTED]
		Form Initiator:	[REDACTED]

Thank you,

Graduate College



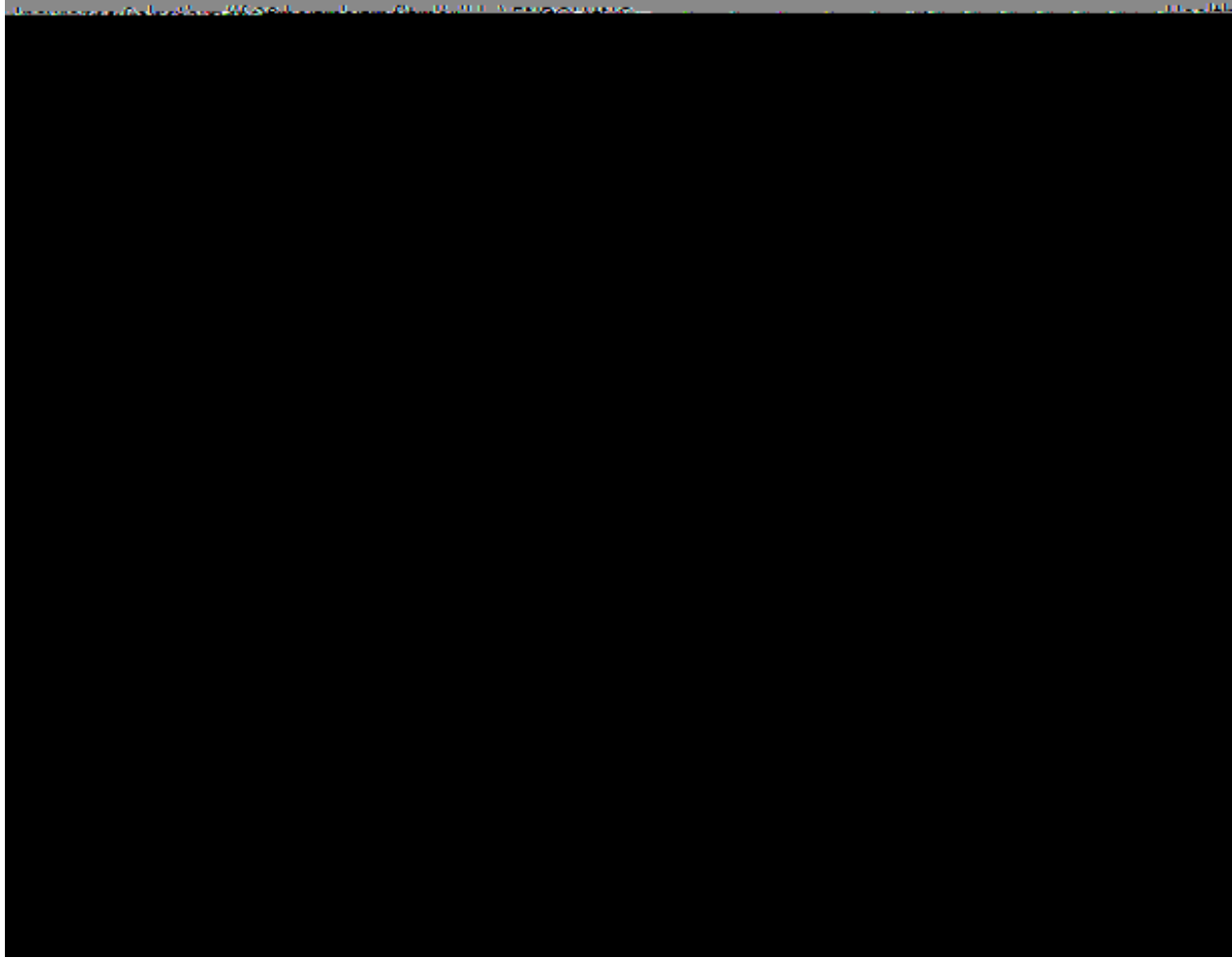
Dear [Student Name],

We have received your acceptance for the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) position beginning 8/28/2022 through 5/12/2023. Your appointment is for 20 hours per week with a financial compensation of \$17,000.00. Your supervisor or graduate coordinator is [Supervisor Name].

ed upon the following table:

You are eligible for benefits bas

Hours Worked Per Week	Benefits	Hours Worked Per Week
	- 50% tuition remission	10 - 19 hours per week
	- No health insurance	
	- 100% tuition remission	20 hours per week
	- Health insurance offered at a cost to you	



Department

Job Title (graduate assistant)

Percent of stipend paid from Agency/Org

Agency/Org and Job Code: Program/Fund and Job Code determine how the GA benefits are paid.

Check Correct Title & Job Code: One per letter.

Graduate Teaching Assistant (Job Code 00110)

Graduate Research Assistant (Job Code 00210)

Graduate Service Assistant (Job Code 00310)

Grant-Funded Assistantships

The Office of Sponsored Projects requires a written explanation if the end date of the appointment exceeds the end date of the grant or if the stipend and benefits exceed the funds available in the grant account. If applicable, this information should be included in the ePAR comments by the department level approver to expedite processing of the ePAR.

Is This Position Safety/Security Sensitive?

ABOR Policy 1.085, implemented on February 1, 2006, requires identification of all positions which are considered safety/security sensitive. The safety/security sensitive status of graduate assistant positions must be identified on the Graduate Assistant Letter of Appointment. The hiring departments must make the identification since they are the most knowledgeable regarding specific job responsibilities. Contact your payroll specialist if you have questions about the policy. The worksheet to determine if this position is safety/security sensitive is available on the [human resources webpage](#) (click on S in the index then click on "Safety Security Sensitive Position Identification Tool").

Conditions of Appointment

Include with the Graduate Assistant Letter of Appointment a copy of the [Conditions of Appointment](#) if your department uses it. The student must read and initial each condition, and sign and date the form, and return it with the signed Letter of Appointment to you. Please retain the original Conditions of Appointment in the student's file. **Do not send a copy of this form to the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies or your HR Service Team.**

Changes to the Terms of the Graduate Assistantship

All changes to a Graduate Assistant's Letter of Appointment will be done via an ePAR for the following circumstances. All ePARs are initiated by HR Service Team members after the department initiates the appropriate HR service ticket.

Upon receipt of the ticket and any necessary additional documentation, the HR Service Team agent will initiate the appropriate ePAR, which will route through the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies for approval.

Termination & how benefits are repaid or charged to departments

The termination of a graduate assistant is processed via ePAR; all ePARs are initiated by HR Service Team agents after receipt of a ticket and any necessary documentation. If the graduate assistantship appointment is terminated early, the benefits will be charged as if the assistant had worked the entire appointment. If the student separates before the middle of the semester the charges will be reversed, and the student will be responsible for repaying any tuition and benefits. Academic year appointments terminating at the end of the fall semester will be paid through December 31st. The student should be advised of the potential requirement to pay back any tuition and health insurance. Please note Graduate Assistants may not be eligible for rehire in another Graduate Assistantship if they do not fulfill the terms of their contract.

Reasons for termination are reviewed on a case-by-case basis and supporting documentation must be attached to the service ticket and subsequent ePAR. Please email gatw@nau.edu to discuss specific circumstances regarding a potential termination.

To terminate a graduate assistant, please initiate an [Offboarding ticket](#) in the [Employee Service Center](#). **Be sure to provide a copy of the resignation letter and a comment stating the reason for termination.**

If you believe your grant award provides an exception to this requirement, contact the Office of Sponsored Projects at 1-928-523-4880 to verify that such a payment is allowed under the terms of the grant.

Similarly, payment of tuition and/or insurance may not be allowable from a state or local account. For example, a service center account may not be used to pay for the balance of tuition owed by a graduate **research** assistant assigned to a sponsored project.

Contact the Office of Sponsored Projects at 1-928-523-4880 for assistance in determining whether the charges are allowable costs to the proposed account.

If the payment is allowable, the balance of tuition (or insurance premium) can be billed directly to the approved account using the [DTPR](#).

3. Please note that the standard university benefits (outlined in #1 above) are always applied through the payroll process. Any departmental billing must be applied toward the balance remaining after the university benefit has been processed. If you submit a departmental billing form for full tuition, or an eligible insurance premium, this may result in an over-award to the student's financial aid package and create problems for the student. It could also result in an overcharge to the grant account.

Exceptions

correction request to the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid, creating unavoidable processing delays.

In the event a graduate assistant wishes to enroll for less than nine hours, the student may forfeit: health insurance, tuition remission and waiver of non-resident tuition. GAs enrolled in less than 6 units are not eligible for Student Health Insurance, however the department may choose to pay for their health insurance with a [DTPR](#) if they have available departmental funds.

- Signatures of the current assistantship supervisor & academic advisor must be on the form prior to sending form to the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies. Omitting the signatures may delay processing the request.
- To accompany a tuition waiver request, email both attachments to gatw@nau.edu
- To accompany a Graduate Assistantship, ensure your service team attaches it to the ePAR along with the offer letter.
- After the request has been received, whether for a Graduate Assistantship or a Tuition Waiver the GATW Financial Oversight Analyst will adjust the tuition and send a correction to the Office of Scholarships & Financial Aid if the form is not received in conjunction with the ePAR, therefore please advise the student to anticipate funding delays.

Summer Graduate Assistants

Unless it is required by a grant for a graduate assistant to work between the end of spring semester and the start of the fall semester, the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies does not permit summer only appointments. Instead, the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies recommends hiring a student as a student wage employee. Learn more about compensation for student employees on the [Student Employment webpage](#).

Graduate assistants hired through the summer do not receive benefits and must be enrolled in at least two hours of credit.

If a graduate assistant is not enrolled while employed for the summer session, both the graduate assistant and the funding source are liable for the 7.65% FICA tax on the student's gross earnings. The tax to employer is equal to the amount of tax paid by the employee. For graduate assistants paid from grants or local accounts, the employee's share of the FICA charges will be charged to the grant or local account.

We do not track the hours worked over the summer session since we do not have summer graduate assistants.

If the summer employment, regardless of position title, is going to cross over into a regular academic semester, **you must complete the [Request for Additional Work form](#) and receive Office of Graduate & Professional Studies Approval prior to the work begin completed.**

Checklist for Resolving Graduate Assistantship Problems

Allow 21 business days from the date the assistantship is received in the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies (depending on the timing of financial aid disbursement,) for tuition remission and health insurance to be applied to accounts. A paycheck will be generated in accordance with the [Payroll processing calendar](#).

Why didn't the graduate student receive a paycheck?

- Did the department initiate a [New Employee Onboarding ticket](#) in the [Employee Service Center](#) within any deadlines set by the HR Service Team or Office of Graduate & Professional Studies?

- Did the student complete their preboarding work, including their New Hire packet, I-9 verification and/or background check? Consult your HR Service Team with questions.

Why doesn't the health insurance benefit appear on the student's account?

- Did the student enroll for health insurance when enrolling for classes? All-year GAs enroll in Fall only and are re-enrolled for Spring. GAs who are on semester contracts enroll each semester they are a GA.
- Is the student enrolled for nine (9) credit hours? If not, a request for an exception to this policy must be made on the [Exception to 9 Units](#) form and submitted to the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies by the processing deadlines. International students must receive a second approval from the International Office.
- Is the graduate assistant working 20 hours per week? Only graduate assistants who work 20 hours per week for the entire semester are eligible for the student health insurance benefit. (See the section on benefits for eligibility information.)
- Did the Letter of Appointment arrive in the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies Office?

scholarships are required to enroll for nine (9) credit hours each semester. Any exceptions to this policy should be requested using the [Exception to 9 Units form](#) and attached with the tuition waiver.

Academic departments receive allocations of tuition waiver scholarships in February. Any scholarships not awarded by June 15 return to the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies. The Office of Graduate & Professional Studies maintains a file for tuition waiver scholarships and makes awards throughout the summer as scholarships become available.

A limited number of tuition waiver scholarships may be available for spring semester only. Departments are encouraged to contact the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies to inquire about spring awards.

[Residency Changes and Tuition Waiver Scholarships](#)

In some instances, students are eligible to petition for Arizona residency. In this case, submit the [tuition waiver recommendation](#) form, and note a petition is in progress in the comments section. Tuition Waiver will fund at the non-resident amount and be adjusted as a correction to the resident amount if approved. Contact Student Accounts for individual questions: SDAS@nau.edu. I: t4 (o)10 (ne Td

Taxable Income

Tuition Waivers, Graduate Assistantship Tuition Remission, and the GA 20-hour health insurance benefit are reported on the 1098T form (under Box 5 for gifted aid and under Box 1 as payment if the award covered tuition charges). If students have any questions regarding their form, they can email TaxCredit1098T@nau.edu.

Graduate Service Assistants are taxed differently due to the categorization of their assistantship. Please refer to the [Tax Information for Graduate Assistants page](#).

Student Group Reports

Once Graduate Assistantship or Tuition Waiver has been received by the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies, students will be placed into a student group as confirmation that the award has been received and is in progress. In Enterprise Reporting, students can be filtered by college, unit, current enrollment for reminders to enroll, and NAU email addresses and other contact information. Please email gatw@nau.edu if you would like the current student group as it will change each semester.

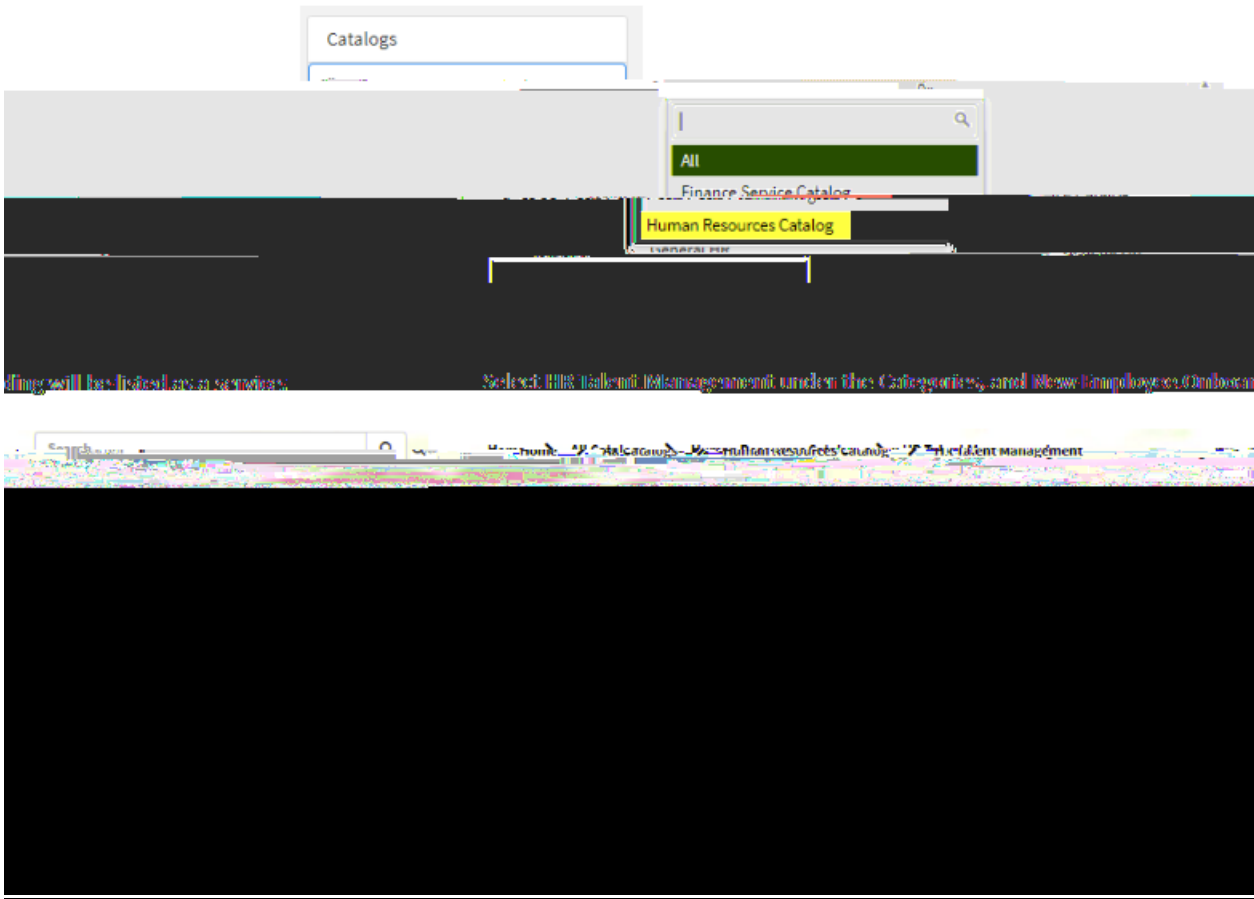
Human Resources Service Teams

Onboarding and Offboarding requests can be found with the following link:

Enter the **Employee Service Center** – nau.service-now.com/hr

From the Homepage, you will find the service through the **Catalog, Request Service tab**, or by **searching a key word**, such as “Hire”.

To find the **New Employee Onboarding** service, click the dropdown under Catalogs and Select **Human Resources Catalog**.



Refer to the HR [Payroll Processing Calendar](#) for timelines regarding stipend processing. The GATW Financial Oversight Analyst does not have a role in stipend questions - those should be directed to your Service Team.

The Graduate Assistantship, Fellowships and Traineeship Manual addresses policies and procedures for fellowship recipients as well.

Processing of fellowships is currently being revised so please check directly with the Office of Graduate & Professional Studies as you offer fellowships to graduate students and process paperwork related to the awarding of fellowships.

For questions from the student perspective consult the Graduate Assistantship Policy Handbook.

