

Academic Areas of Special Consideration

Graduate Assistantship

Graduate assistantships are offered each academic year beginning in the Fall semester and ending the following Spring semester. Application for an assistantship is made through the Academic Dean's office. Students awarded a graduate assistantship must enroll in a minimum of 6 hours each semester. The number of assistantships is limited. The amount of the stipend is announced annually.

Responsibilities include research and/or other departmental activities, with teaching or laboratory assignments considered viable options. Students work approximately an average of 15 hours per week. All appointments carry the possibility of renewal. Individuals may request consideration for a graduate assistantship when they complete the Application for Graduate Studies. Those students who did not request consideration on the Application for Graduate Studies may submit a letter to the Dean explaining the reason for seeking the position.

To be considered the following criteria must be met:

1. The request for consideration, indicated on the Application for Graduate Studies or letter, must be on file in the office of Graduate Admissions prior to March 1, preceding the year of the Assistantship.
2. The Application for Graduate Studies must be complete; i.e., all supporting documents must be included: transcripts, admission test scores (GRE, GMAT, MAT, as applicable), TOEFL scores and financial statement (for international students), and two academic references.
3. Other materials the applicant deems appropriate.

Short Courses and Workshops

Short courses and workshops which may be offered during a graduate student's tenure must be consistent with the mission of the University and meet the criteria for graduate education. The purpose of these offerings is to provide qualified students with the opportunity to develop skills and competence in chosen disciplines. In short courses, academic work is undertaken on an intensive basis for a short duration. A workshop is even more attenuated. It focuses on a narrow subject matter and covers theoretical and applied aspects. The workshop model is conducive to certain kinds of learning in areas such as education, music, computer technology, and foreign language. The workshop focuses on specific issues for a specific clientele and is especially useful for those seeking teacher certification and updating professional skills. Because of the extremely abbreviated duration of the short courses and workshops, care is taken to ensure that these courses achieve graduate level scope, depth, and intellectual rigor. The number of such offerings is limited and identified on transcripts, catalogs, and other descriptive materials.

Students must meet the same criteria for admission as other graduate students, including prerequisites and capability to participate in the specialized work offered in these types of courses.

Graduate education, regardless of the time frame, requires intensive, purposeful effort, which builds upon a strong foundation of undergraduate work. Each short course and workshop must be a part of an integrated plan of study. The level of complexity is the same and as thorough as comparable courses offered during the regular semester. Courses require independent effort such as a term paper, case studies, or other creative activity. Courses are of sufficient duration to allow for reflection, assimilation, and independent effort. Student performance is evaluated, consistent with the integrity of the grading system.

Graduate credit is awarded only for experiences, which meet the standards of course content, student performance, and evaluation applied to all other graduate courses. Courses approved only for undergraduate credit will not count for graduate credit. Undergraduate courses will not be offered simultaneously with courses approved for graduate credit. One hour of credit may be given for each week of course work, provided there is at least 15 contact hours, with 30 hours allotted for preparation time. One hour of credit may be given for a weekend seminar, provided the seminar is conducted over a minimum of two weekends.

A maximum of three hours of short courses, workshops, or weekend seminars may be taken for credit for a St. Mary's University graduate degree.