

**Commission on Graduate and Professional Studies and Policies
Resolution to Form a Campus Working Group to Review Policy 6210 – Management of
Graduate Assistantships and Tuition Remission
CGPSP 2025-26C**

Resolution Proposal Form Sent to University Council Cabinet	January 21, 2026
First Reading by Commission on Graduate & Professional Studies & Policies	February 4, 2026
Approval by Commission on Graduate & Professional Studies & Policies	March 18, 2026
First Reading by Faculty Senate	March 6, 2026
Approval by Faculty Senate	March 20, 2026
Staff Senate Comment	February 13, 2026
Administrative and Professional Faculty Senate Comment	March 4, 2026
Graduate and Professional Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	March 25, 2026
Undergraduate Student Senate Waived Right to Comment	March 25, 2026
First Reading, University Council	April 6, 2026
Approved, University Council	Date
Approved, President	Date
Effective Date	Upon Approval

WHEREAS, Virginia Tech’s Principles of Community strive to maintain a climate for work and learning grounded in mutual respect, shared responsibility, and the Principles of Community; and

WHEREAS, although the university’s policy 6210, policy for management of graduate assistantships; and tuition remission, recognizes accommodation for sick and personal leave, it lacks specification of a minimum number of paid leave days for graduate assistants, does not address other leave types such as extended vacation, and provides no consequences of extended absences, leading to inconsistent access to this benefit among graduate assistants and failing to provide guidance to departments, faculty advisors, and graduate assistants in both routine and extraordinary circumstances; and

WHEREAS, the existing policy also lacks a uniform mechanism for defining, communicating and documenting the basic duties, responsibilities, and mutual expectations of graduate assistants and their supervisors, thereby creating opportunities for ambiguity, miscommunication, and operational inefficiency; and

WHEREAS, several universities nationwide, including both peer institutions and aspirational ones as identified by Virginia Tech^[1-18], have adopted clear policies defining graduate student leaves and formalizing basic expectations between graduate assistants and their faculty advisors; and

WHEREAS, the recommendations of the University Mission Initiative Committees also include suggested changes to this policy;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the working group shall be charged to provide a public report with recommendations on the following matters regarding changes in policy 6210:

1. Policy changes establishing a minimum allowance for sick leave and personal leave for graduate assistants, along with a mechanism for implementing the leaves, and consequences of extended absences, following a review of comparable policies at other universities and an evaluation of the potential impacts of such changes; and
2. Policy changes related to additional categories of leaves, including but not limited to bereavement leave and extended leave for vacation, and determine how such leave may be appropriately accommodated within assistantship contracts; and
3. Review and revise the document defining the basic duties, responsibilities, and mutual expectations to be discussed between graduate assistants and their supervisors, which can be adapted to specific departmental or role-based needs, and recommend a standardized process for maintaining and updating the document, along with clear guidance on its lifecycle; and
4. Policy Changes informed by the findings and recommendations of the University Mission Initiative Committees.

REFERENCES:

1. <https://oge.mit.edu/gpp/admissions-and-registration/leaves-accommodations-and-time-off/table-graduate-student-leaves-accommodations-and-time-off/>
2. https://gradschool.cornell.edu/ppr_types/leave-of-absence/
3. <https://grad.berkeley.edu/financial/academic-employment/>
4. <https://grad.ucdavis.edu/family-and-medical-leave-funded-graduate-students>
5. <https://hr.ufl.edu/leave/graduate-assistant-leave-of-absence/>
6. <https://grad.illinois.edu/document/handbook#academic-leave>
7. <https://policy.umn.edu/hr/gradstudentemployment-appf>
8. <https://gradschool.missouri.edu/policy/vacation-policy-for-graduate-assistantships/>
9. <https://gradsch.osu.edu/graduate-school-handbook-gsh/gsh-section-11-benefits-graduate-associates-fellows-and-trainees>
10. <https://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-900/gsad-906-graduate-student-leave-of-absence>
11. <https://www.purdue.edu/vpec/policies/human-resources/s3/#:~:text=Sick%20Leave%3A%20All%20Benefits%2DEligible,for%20illness%20of%20Immediate%20Family.>
12. <https://www.buffalo.edu/administrative-services/for-faculty-staff/time-attendance/state/graduate-student-employees.html>
13. <https://hr.uw.edu/studentemployment/time-off-and-leave-policies/time-off-policies/>
14. <https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-5082/>
15. <https://hr.uw.edu/studentemployment/time-off-and-leave-policies/time-off-policies/>
16. <https://policy.utdallas.edu/utdpp1075>
17. <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships/>
18. https://www.colorado.edu/engineering-facultystaff/sites/default/files/attached-files/advising_agreement_final_final.pdf



AP Faculty Senate Comments

CGPSP 2025-26C - Resolution to form a working group to review
Policy 6210

3/4/2026

The A/P Faculty Senate Policies and Issues Committee has reviewed and approves/endorsees CGPSP 2025-26C - Resolution to form a working group to review Policy 6210.

No additional comments were provided.



Staff Senate Comments

CGPSP 2025-26C

February 13, 2026

Staff Senate has reviewed CGPSP 2025-26C and asks for clarification of the Therefore section that states that two working groups shall be charged. What are the two groups as there seems to only be a request to establish one working group?

Staff Senate has no further questions or comments.

Thank you,

Gabe Petry, Chair, Staff Senate Policies and Issues Committee