University of Michigan
School of Natural Resources and Environment

THE GSI/RA PROCESS

Graduate Student Instructors [see Diana Woodworth, room 1024 Dana Building; phone 734/763-4572]

To be eligible to compete for an instructor position, a graduate student must commit to registering for at least 6 hours of coursework, and be qualified to do the teaching, which is outlined in the position description. Each GSI appointment provides a stipend, tuition waiver and health benefits during the term of the appointment. If a student has a GSI appointment in the Winter term, and again the following Fall, s/he is also eligible for carryover benefits during the Spring/Summer.

Graduate student instructors (GSIs) are hired to help teach discussion sections and laboratories. Most GSI appointments in SNRE are offered to currently enrolled students because they have already taken the courses that they will help teach as GSIs. Prospective students do not apply for GSI positions for their first term; in a few cases a prospective student who appears qualified to help teach a given course is offered a GSI position. Each GSI appointment is for one term only.

Faculty are asked to select GSIs in an equitable manner. Some instructors tend to hire their own advisees, since they have worked closely with these individuals and may have made a commitment to provide financial assistance to them upon admission. Other instructors will consult with their colleagues to provide the best "fit" possible for the course as well as the potential GSIs. Additional information is available in a resource notebook in room 1024 Dana.

Application periods:

> Fall GSIs-- February. Faculty are requested to notify Diana Woodworth of their Fall GSI decisions by late March, though not all decisions will be made by that time.
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> Winter GSIs--September through mid-October. This application period allows students who are new in the Fall term to have an opportunity to apply. Faculty are requested to notify Diana Woodworth of their Winter GSI decisions by mid-November, though not all decisions will be made by that time. **Exception**: The Landscape Architecture faculty make their Winter GSI decisions by the end of March, so submit applications for Winter GSIs for LA courses during the Fall application period.

Application process:

1) Notices are posted on the GSI/RA announcement board outside room 1024, and above the graduate student mail folders. E-mail announcements are also sent to the SNRE.MS and SNRE.PhD mail groups.

2) Application forms and position descriptions are available in room 1024 Dana.
3) Return completed GSI application materials to room 1024.

Diana Woodworth notifies students who have received appointments by placing a letter in their SNRE mail folders. A list is posted outside room 1024 listing the positions and appointees as well. If you are wondering about the status of the decision-making process, you should contact the instructor. There are always details to work out once the decision has been made and students should see Diana ASAP to make sure the hiring process is smooth.

SNRE typically appoints about 45 GSIs in the Fall and 40 GSIs in the Winter. In addition, about 15-20 students per term obtain GSI appointments in other units. Typically these units have included Biology, the Biological Station, Chemistry, Math, Romance Languages, CAUP, CAAS, Engineering, and the English Composition Board.

Research Assistantships [see Diana Woodworth, room 1024 Dana; phone 734/763-4572]

To be eligible, a graduate student must register for at least 6 hours of coursework, and be qualified to do the research work. Each GSRA position provides a stipend, tuition waiver and health benefits during the term of the appointment. Most RA appointments are for one term only.

There are two categories of research assistants (RAs):

1) General Fund RAs--those hired to assist faculty in developing new (not yet funded) research proposals. These may be used by the **REM** concentration to recruit prospective students. Offers are made after faculty members review the academic records, interests, and work experience of those requesting admission to the School; individuals do not apply directly for these positions. These offers are normally made by SNRE from March through April.

    a) **LA** and **RPB** make recruitment stipend offers (ranging from $1,000 to $9,000) instead of offering general fund RA positions. These offers are typically made by SNRE from March through June.

2) Externally-funded RAs--those hired to work on externally-funded research projects. Students must check with individual faculty for these opportunities; they are not posted. Once you have come to an agreement with a professor, you need to get an appointment form from Diana Woodworth. You will fill out part of the form. The professor completes and signs the form, and returns it to Diana for processing. Students should then see Diana ASAP to initiate the hiring process.