**Deans, Department Heads, Graduate Program Directors, Budget Officers, and Departmental Administrative Assistants:**

There have been several issues with the processing of BearPAFs. The issues have been with all types of graduate assistantship appointments (teaching, research, and administrative). Please be advised that the deadlines, as noted below, for submittal of the BearPAFs will be strictly enforced by the Graduate College, as well as Human Resources and Payroll. Any BearPAFs not submitted by the department on or before the deadlines outlined below will be rejected and the GA will not be allowed to work. **Please note that a BearPAF cannot be finalized/processed by the Graduate College unless and until the graduate assistant signs and returns their *Graduate Assistant Employment Appointment Form* to the Graduate College. This form is emailed to the student’s (graduate assistant) MSU email address.**

Below are the Graduate Assistantship Appointments and BearPAF Procedures, effective immediately:

**GA Appointment/BearPAF Procedures**

**Offering Graduate Assistantships**

* Ensure that student meets eligibility criteria and that your language is clear that you are recommending an offer. The official appointment letter comes from the Graduate College.
  + For new appointments, the Graduate College can send this early as soon as all processing is completed. Please tell us if expedited processing is needed.

**Submission Deadlines for BearPAFs**

**(Dates may vary by a day or two depending on if the date falls on a holiday or weekend. If the date falls on a holiday or weekend, the BearPAF is due the prior workday - - due to time constraints for HR and Payroll in processing. For example: IF May 1 is a Saturday, then your BearPAF is due on Friday, April 30 – the prior workday.**

These deadlines will allow the Graduate College to identify remaining tuition-fee waiver benefits and document academic eligibility in time for Human Resources to ensure timely stipend payment.

* **Reappointments** (students who are currently serving as GAs and will continue for the summer, fall, or next academic year): **May 1**
* **New Appointments**
  + GAs Beginning in the **Summer: May 1**
  + GAs beginning in the **Fall: July 15**
  + GAs beginning in the **Spring: November 1**
    - This deadline also applies for GAs who were initially appointed only for Fall and are now being continued into the Spring
* Departments are encouraged to submit a PAF as soon as the student indicates their intention to accept the offer as opposed to waiting until the deadline to submit a batch of multiple PAFs. This will facilitate efficient processing and timely payment.

**Required Department Verifications (Department MUST complete prior to submittal of the BearPAF to prevent returned BearPAFs, or termination of GA)**

* Admission to a graduate degree or certificate program
* Minimum GPA of 3.0
  + Continuing student’s GPA is based on MSU graduate grades
  + New students are based on undergraduate cumulative or last 60 hours
* Current minimum enrollment requirements
  + 6 graduate hours in fall and spring
  + A student may hold an assistantship in the summer without being enrolled in coursework, if the student/ is enrolled in the subsequent fall semester
  + Special considerations made to allow lower number of hours during final semester of enrollment:
* Student **must** have completed the online *Application to Graduate* for the semester.
* Student **must** send an email to the Graduate College ([GraduateCollege@MissouriState.edu](mailto:GraduateCollege@MissouriState.edu)) to request permission to hold assistantship with less than six (6) graduate credit hours.
* If you are filling out the BearPAF for a teaching assistant position, please note in the “Comments” section if the student has previously completed the required Graduate College Teaching Assistant Orientation. If they have been a TA previously at MSU, then they should have already completed the TA orientation. Note the date they previously completed the TA orientation. *For example: I am hiring Boomer Bear as a TA. Boomer has previously been a TA so I will note in the Comments section: Boomer completed TA training Fall of 2020. This will be confirmed by the Graduate College and then Boomer Bear will not be required by the Graduate College to attend the upcoming TA orientation*. Any new TA that does NOT attend the required Graduate College Teaching Assistant Orientation **will not be cleared to work**.

**Process**

* PAF is submitted by department (initiator)
* Graduate College reviews, and if the student meets the eligibility criteria, the Graduate College will send the appointment letter to the student and copy the BearPAF initiator
* When student accepts the appointment (by signing and returning the appointment letter to the Graduate College), the Graduate College clears the BearPAF
* Initiators can track by checking their **Past Actions tab** to determine current status of each BearPAF. If the BearPAF shows “Graduate College” as the current status, then the GA/TA/RA has **not** been cleared to work. Check with your GA/TA/RA to make sure they have returned their signed appointment form.