Graduate Assistant and student worker manual

Frazar Memorial Library

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Welcome to the staff of Frazar Memorial Library! Graduate Assistants (GAs) and Student Workers (SWs) are critically important to the library and we hope that your experience here will be rewarding to you as your contribution will certainly be to our operations. These programs function to provide the library with part time employees, who form a useful and necessary part of the staff of Frazar Memorial Library.

The following are some general guidelines and rules. We ask that you READ CAREFULLY.

# EMERGENCY PROCEDURES AND SAFETY INFORMATION

Please read and be familiar with the “Safety Manual”, the red binder, at your supervisor’s desk. Be sure to read “Closing Procedures” in the Manual.[[1]](#footnote-1)

# GENERAL POLICIES

## GENERAL DUTIES

Your supervisor will determine your specific duties for each shift and/or for the entire semester, which may include the following: re-shelving, making sure everything is clean and tidy and cleaning up if necessary, maintaining supplies of printer and copier paper and toner, filling printers and copiers with paper as needed during the day and before closing, noting materials used and shelving them before closing the library, opening library and completing necessary tasks at the beginning of each day and making sure everything has been done before you start any other project, closing the library (turning off copiers etc., pushing in chairs at tables and desks, and making sure there are no people on the floor before you turn off the lights), cleaning computers and around them when they are not in use, doing individual projects as assigned by library staff, such as shelf-reading, which is checking to see if the materials are in correct order and putting them in order if needed, and most importantly, helping patrons (assisting students, faculty, and other library users in finding information, locating materials, and using computers, printers, copiers, and equipment). Customer service is high priority, so if you cannot answer a question, you must find a staff member who can. Always be friendly and polite to the patrons. Keep an eye on what they are doing. If you see someone doing something against our rules or damaging our materials, please bring it to your supervisor’s attention immediately.

## Breaks

A 15 minute break may be taken if you are working four or more consecutive hours.[[2]](#footnote-2) Breaks may not be taken at the beginning or end of your shift. A Faculty-Staff Lounge is located on the 2nd floor if you want to use it for breaks and/or lunch. Remember to inform your supervisor or the public service librarian on duty when you leave and return from your break. If your shift is longer than six consecutive hours, you MUST take a break for at least 30 minutes off the clock.[[3]](#footnote-3)

## Cell Phones

Place your cell phone on vibrate and **DO NOT** use it when you are helping a patron. If you get a call on your cell phone, please step away from the desk and ask someone to cover for you. If it is not an emergency, please call the person when you are off duty. Cell phone usage is permitted only for library work-related business, while on duty.

## Computers

You may use the service desk computer for your course work as long as it is not needed for departmental work. Do not save any work to the hard drive. It will automatically be deleted at the end of each day. Save all course work to your flash drive. Use of the computer should not hinder your work performance. Your course work should not interfere with your scheduled job.

Please do not watch movies or play games during your work period. An exception can be made for instructional videos on a training computer away from public service areas.

## Dress[[4]](#footnote-4)

You are representing Frazar Memorial Library and McNeese State University to our students, faculty, prospective students, parents, and community members.

You are expected to wear office-appropriate clothing for an office environment with a style that is reasonable, customary, and within the standards of the community.

## Food/Drinks

Drinks with lids may be kept close to you. Food is not permitted in any area of the library except the lobby and staff lounge area.

## Problem Patrons

Sometimes patrons cause issues for each other or the library staff. Usually, they are violating one or more policies such as no food in the library. In these cases, greet the offending patron with a smile and inform them about the policy. Never be confrontational. If the patron is hostile to you, report them to your supervisor or alert the Public Service Desk and ask for assistance.

## Student Workers

Student Workers are assigned to us from the Student Employment office and the number of hours for each student is assigned by the Financial Aid office.

## Visitors

GAs and Student Workers are not permitted to receive visitors during working hours. Please discourage your friends from phoning or visiting when you are working.

## REFERENCE TRANSACTIONS

Record all transactions on statistics sheet during your work hours (see instructions below).

The guidelines given below were adapted from Katherine Emerson's work entitled "National Reporting on Reference Transactions, 1976-78" which appears in the 1977 spring issue of *Reference Quarterly*.

An information contact is an encounter, in person, by telephone, mail, or other means between a member of the reference/information staff and a user, in which information is sought or provided. These contacts include reference and directional transactions as defined below with instructions for reporting.

A REFERENCE TRANSACTION is an information contact which involves the use, recommendation, interpretation, or instruction in the use of one or more information sources, or knowledge of such sources. Information sources include:

* print and non-print materials
* library bibliographic records
* other libraries and institutions
* persons both inside and outside the library
* library database/internet help

A question answered through utilization of information gained from previous consultations of such sources is considered a reference transaction even if the source is not consulted again.

A DIRECTIONAL TRANSACTION is an information contact which facilitates the use of the library in which the contact occurs and may involve the use of sources describing that library, such as schedules, floor plans, handbooks, and policy statements. Examples of directional transactions are:

* directions for locating facilities such as restrooms, telephones, copying machines, computer lab
* directions for locating library staff and users
* directions for locating materials for which the user has a bibliographic citation
* supplying materials such as pencils, paper, headphones
* assisting users with the operation of machines
* answering questions about change for machines

Report each contact separately, whether or not the user has already consulted either that staff member or another on the same information need.

## TELEPHONE

Please answer the phone as follows:

“Good morning/afternoon/evening, Frazar Memorial Library, [DEPARTMENT NAME], this is [YOUR NAME], may I help you?”

People may call with general questions, such as the hours of the library or how to access our web page. If you can confidently answer the question, go ahead. If you do not know the answer or are not sure, forward the call to the proper department – usually Public Service.

To transfer a call, press the “Transfer” button:

 

Then dial the 4-digit extension you want to transfer to. Then, press the transfer button a second time to complete the transfer. You can then hang up.

## COPYING COSTS

Photocopier copies are 10 ¢ a page. The photocopiers accept coins and dollar bills. If a patron does not have change, we recommend that they get change from the coffee shop, cafeteria, bookstore or a business close to campus. ***We cannot make change****.*

Computer generated copies are ***free for the first 20 copies***. After that, patrons are asked to pay $.10 a page.

## STUDENT EMPLOYEES

### Appointments

* Student Workers (undergraduate)
	+ The Library does not select and hire undergraduate students. The Office of Student Employment assigns undergraduate student workers to the library. The Library Director’s Office receives an email from Student Employment notifying the library of new undergraduate student employees assigned to the library. The Library Director may assign them to specific library departments. Once assigned to a library department, the Library Director’s Office notifies Student Employment the name of the student employee’s departmental supervisor. Each department may have department specific paperwork.
	+ Student workers must retain their course requirements for financial aid in order to continue work in the library during the current semester in which they are enrolled.
	+ Appointments are effective with the first day of classes and extend through final examinations or as declared by the Office of Student Employment. Work schedules may vary depending upon library hours, particularly when holidays (e. g., Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.) are scheduled.
* Graduate Assistants (graduate)
	+ Each library department selects and hires graduate assistants. Graduate students interested in working in the library should make contact with individual departments. There is a library-wide Graduate Assistant Application. These applications and the student’s course schedule are kept on file by the Library Director’s Office. Job offers are contingent upon good standing with the Graduate School. Department supervisors will verify good standing with the Graduate School.
	+ Eligibility for tuition waiver is contingent on registration in at least 6 hours of graduate credit coursework in the Fall and Spring semesters and 3 hours during the summer. Graduate students must have a 3.0 GPA in the previous semester and a 3.0 overall GPA to be eligible for an assistantship. Students enrolled solely in thesis-in-progress may be awarded an assistantship for a maximum of 3 semesters. Also, students in their last semester may be allowed to take only 3 credit hours. Students suspended from Graduate School or on probation are ineligible for assistantships
	+ Appointments are effective with the first day of classes and extend through final examinations or as declared by the Office of Student Employment. Work schedules may vary depending upon library hours, particularly when holidays (e. g., Labor Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas, etc.) are scheduled.

### Absences

No provision is made for sick leave or other absences and you may have to provide documentation. However, if emergency situations should arise, you must notify your supervisor as soon as possible. For any absence, the alternative to salary deduction is to arrange make-up time with your supervisor or arrange to switch hours with another graduate assistant in your area. Lost hours due to library closure or holidays must be made up in order to receive full week’s pay. You will need to work this out with your supervisor.

### Classifications

* Graduate Assistants
	+ Overview: graduate students should have a greater background in academics than undergraduate students. Some departments place an emphasis on greater training graduate assistants over undergraduate student employees. To that effect, graduate assistants are to have greater responsibilities than undergraduate student workers.
	+ Supervision: Each department has assigned a full-time employee to supervise Graduate Assistants. This individual is the primary supervisor. Other full-time staff in that department may assign tasks to graduate assistants with the knowledge and support of the primary supervisor and department head.
	+ Principle Responsibilities: Graduate Assistants are typically tasked with non-routine trouble-shooting skills such as reference assistance, IT assistance, data collection, special projects, events, and programs, and administrative duties such as copying, answering phones, and completing mailings. Some examples include: Offer public services when full-time staff is unavailable; Turn on PC’s and make sure they are working and ready for patrons;
	+ University Policy: [Here](http://www.mcneese.edu/policy/graduate_assistantship)
* Student Workers
	+ Overview: Undergraduate students receive less training than graduate assistants because their duties and responsibilities are more routine with fixed criteria.
	+ Supervision: Each department has assigned a full-time employee to supervise Student Workers. This individual is the primary supervisor. Other full-time staff in that department may assign tasks to student workers with the knowledge and support of the primary supervisor and department head.
	+ Principle Responsibilities: Student Workers are typically assigned repetitive tasks such as shelf reading, cleaning, shifting, etc.

### Continued Employment

We cannot guarantee that you will have a position each semester. The GA hours are determined by the University and can change from semester to semester. Usually, you also must be available to work on the first day of the semester to be considered for employment.

Definitions:

Graduate assistants are primarily students not employees. Nevertheless, graduate assistant appointments are part-time employee-employer contracts between full-time graduate students and the university. As a result, the GA is obligated to fulfill assigned duties for the specified amount of time and is entitled to compensation within the range established by the university.

### Hours

Full-time assistantship = 20 hours/week (15 weeks/ Fall & Spring)

Two-thirds assistantship = 15 hours/week (15 weeks/ Fall & Spring)

Half-time assistantship = 10 hours/week (15 weeks/Fall & Spring)

Summer time varies (it could be 6 or 7 weeks. Hours per week also varies)

Remember – International GAs cannot work more than 20 hours per week.

### Pay Checks

Pay checks are normally issued every two weeks during the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters. Your first paycheck must be picked up in person at the Cashier’s Office. After your first paycheck, your check will be electronically deposited into your bank account.

### Time Sheets

Official time sheets are electronically submitted and approved every two weeks by your supervisor. In your MyMcNeese account you MUST electronically record hours worked each time that you work, and you MUST electronically submit your time sheet at the end of the two week pay period for approval by your supervisor by the due date. Your supervisor will either approve your timesheet or send it back to you for correction. You must also fill out and sign your log sheet for each time period. Failure to record time worked can mean missed wages. Once your time sheet shows up as “approved” in your MyMcNeese account, you will know that your time sheet has been submitted successfully.

### Personal Responsibilities

If you have any questions, please see your immediate supervisor or the department head.

### Resignations

Graduate students should submit a letter of resignation to their supervisor. The recommended notification time is a minimum of two weeks prior to the last working date.  **Resignations may require repayment of tuition waiver and bar a graduate student from future employment as a Graduate Assistant at McNeese unless approval is received from the Dean of the Graduate School.**

### Training

State law requires all employees including student workers, graduate assistants, visiting lecturers, administrative, faculty, staff, as well as other semester-to-semester new hires and game workers, to complete several mandatory training courses. Your supervisor will let you know which trainings are required.

### Termination

Reasons for termination include but are not limited to failure to maintain graduate status, inability to perform assigned tasks, excessive absences or tardiness, misconduct, or violation of McNeese University Drug-Free and/or Sexual Harassment Policies. Termination shall be recommended by the appropriate supervisor to the appropriate department head for approval by the Library Director.

1. Public Services includes this in their training worksheet so that both the student and the trainer sign off on this part. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Approved LAAC March 15, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Approved LAAC March 15, 2016. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Updated by LAAC 8/1/17. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)