

# Student Employees

HELPING TO ENSURE SUCCESS

NMSU HR Services

Office of People Relations



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.®  
**New Mexico State University**

# Undergraduate Student Employees

- Employment opportunities to enhance their educational development and experience;
- Income opportunities as a part of their total financial assistance package; and to create co-curricular experiences where they gain valuable work skills.
- Consider student employees as *students first*. Their employment is *secondary* to their academic pursuits.
- Give consideration to the student's academic activities and requirements when scheduling work shifts.



# Undergraduate Student Employees

- All student employees are at-will, temporary employees. Student employment opportunities are determined by workload requirements and availability of funds.
- Non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
  - Hours worked in excess of 40 hours in one week must be paid as overtime.



# Types of Student Hires

- Student Hourly Employment – Tips for Success
  - <https://hr.nmsu.edu/general-resources/employment1/student-hiring.html>
- All student employment categories are restricted to 20 hours average per week (.50 FTE) during the academic year.
- Undergraduate students must be enrolled for at least 6 credits throughout the semester; graduate students\* must be enrolled for at least nine (9) graduate credits throughout the semester.
- Undergraduate students must maintain a 2.0 CUMULATIVE GPA; graduate student employees must maintain a 3.0 CUMULATIVE GPA.



# Graduate Assistants (GA's)

- Graduate assistantships are prestigious and valuable experiences. There are fewer grants and scholarships for graduate students than undergraduates.
- A collective bargaining agreement governs the terms and conditions of employment for GA's:
  - [https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-and-union/grad-assistant-forms/NMSU%20CBA%20Agreement\\_updt.pdf](https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-and-union/grad-assistant-forms/NMSU%20CBA%20Agreement_updt.pdf)
- GA's may be assigned to teaching, research and non-teaching roles within the NMSU system.



# Graduate Assistants (GA's)

- Additional resources when employing GA's:
  - HRS - Employment and Compensation  
<https://hr.nmsu.edu/general-resources/toolkits1/grad-assistant.html>
  - NMSU's Graduate School  
<https://gradschool.nmsu.edu/ga-and-union/Graduate%20Assistant%20Resources.html>



# Role of the Supervisor

- Trains, motivates, guides, and evaluates
- Serves as model for the development of solid work habits such as punctuality, dependability, cooperation, honesty, and efficiency
- For many, bridges the gap between home, the classroom, and the “real world”
- Has good communication and patience



# Supervisor Responsibilities

- Orients the student to their role in the department and the expected standards of behavior (same for all employees)
- Trains in skills and procedures – shares the “why”
- Provides safe workplaces free from hazards
- Keeps lines of communication open, clear, and constructive
- Sets a good example as a professional in the workplace





# Supervisor Responsibilities

- Treats student employees in accordance with their employee rights, as defined by applicable state, federal, and NMSU regulations
- Gives clear directions; assumes nothing; follows up and clarifies
- Is firm, yet flexible.
- Helps student employees feel valued
  - Shows appreciation
- Addresses concerns as they arise
  - Gives timely feedback



# Supervisor Responsibilities

Simple rules that we all know, might not be clear to someone with a first time job.

## Don't assume students know what to do as employees.

- It's not acceptable to use your work computer to look for romantic matches on dating sites.
- You must call in **each day** you are absent.
- Texting and Facebook are not acceptable during work time.



# Tips for Supervisors

- Establish clear goals
- Delegate
- Set a positive example
- Remember student employees are *students first*
- Show appreciation



# Tips for Supervisors

- Allow for input
- Be accessible
- Learn and grow
- Encourage risk taking
- Communicate openly and honestly
- Hold student employees accountable



# Coaching and Mentoring

## Positive Feedback

- Recognize a specific action or behavior
- Give praise right away
- Be sincere
- Direct it toward specific individuals
- Tailor praise to the student's preference
- Make the recognition fit the work being recognized



# Managing Poor Performance

When a student employee's performance is not meeting expectations, the first step is to work with them.

Provide resources, coaching and mentoring to help them be successful.



# Reasons for Poor Performance

- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of skills
- Personal problems
- Interpersonal conflict
- Lack of motivation



# The Coaching Process

Coaching is appropriate when poor attendance, performance or behavior is not yet at such a serious level as might warrant discipline or termination.

Student Employment Handbook:

<https://hr.nmsu.edu/documents/Student-Handbook-Revised-2021-Final1.pdf>





# Prepare for the Discussion

- What am I observing that indicates a problem?
- How is this negatively impacting our team?
- How might the student convince me that the problem is resolved?
- Does the student understand my expectations?
- Does the student know how to perform the job duties?



# Discuss the Concerns

- Objectively describe the concerns
  - Be specific
  - Focus on the behavior and not the person
  - Describe the impact
- Provide an opportunity for the student to respond
- Seek an agreement and ask for commitment
- Explore solutions and allow input
- Summarize the discussion
  - Review next steps
  - Offer encouragement
- Document the discussion
  - Follow-up email



# It's Important to:

- Hold the meeting in private
- Allow as much time as it takes
- Keep your emotions under control
- Provide constructive feedback
- Decide on the minimum action ahead of time



# Follow Up

- Has the student taken the steps agreed upon?
- Revisit the discussion or take disciplinary action
- Verbally recognize improvements
- Document follow-up discussions
- Schedule a time for the next follow-up meeting



# Discussion

Who has supervised or is currently supervising student employees?

What are some issues you have experienced while supervising student employees and how have you handled them?

Let's talk about one of those challenges and brainstorm a better way to handle it.





# Questions?



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.®

# Contact Information

Office of People Relations

575-646-2449

[opr@nmsu.edu](mailto:opr@nmsu.edu)



**BE BOLD.** Shape the Future.®