

The National Agricultural Law Center
University of Arkansas



www.NationalAgLawCenter.org

*THE NATION'S LEADING SOURCE FOR AGRICULTURAL AND FOOD LAW
RESEARCH AND INFORMATION*

Graduate Assistant

HANDBOOK

2010-2011

I. Introduction

The National Agricultural Law Center, www.nationalaglawcenter.org, is the nation's leading source of agricultural and food law research and information and is the only institution of its kind in the United States. The Center is a federally funded, independent, nonpartisan research and information entity that serves the nation's vast agricultural community, which includes farmers, attorneys, extension personnel, academics, federal and state policymakers, consumers, and many others. The Center is funded primarily with federal appropriations that flow through the USDA National Agricultural Library, an entity within the USDA Agricultural Research Service.

Each Graduate Assistant is expected to meaningfully assist in the fulfillment of the Center's mission and to provide quality, non-partisan legal research and information that will be disseminated to the nation's vast agricultural community. In addition, it is expected that questions or concerns that may arise at any time regarding any aspect of the Graduate Assistantship be raised immediately with the Center Director, Harrison Pittman, or other appropriate Center staff.

This Graduate Assistant Handbook establishes the duties and responsibilities of all Graduate Assistants employed at the Center. In addition, this Handbook establishes that failure to abide by the provisions of this Handbook may result in the termination of employment as a Graduate Assistant.

Please carefully review this Handbook and maintain a copy in your personal records for future reference. Once you have reviewed the Handbook, please complete and submit the "Graduate Assistantship Agreement" provided at the end of this document at or prior to the Graduate Assistant as soon as possible. Should you have any questions or concerns regarding the Handbook, please e-mail them to hmpittm@uark.edu.

II. Responsibilities of Graduate Assistants

Graduate Assistants undertake projects throughout the year that are assigned or approved by the Center Director. In many instances, and specifically at the direction of the Center Director, a Graduate Assistant may report to one or members of the Center's staff. Each Graduate Assistant is expected to follow instructions provided to them, work diligently and efficiently, give their best efforts on each assignment, conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times, and to immediately raise to appropriate Center staff any questions or concerns that may arise during the academic year.

A. Amount of Work Required of Each Graduate Assistant

As a strict general rule, Graduate Assistants must work a minimum of ten hours per week throughout the 2010-2011 academic year. Graduate Assistants are prohibited from working more than twenty hours per week.

Under unusual circumstances, however, a Graduate Assistant may be able to work more than ten hours in one week in order to compensate for a shortfall in hours from a previous or upcoming week. For example, a Graduate Assistant may be able to work twenty hours one week in order to compensate for not working any hours the previous week to satisfy the ten hours per week requirement. **Please note that this arrangement is heavily discouraged and is intended to be used in unusual circumstances.**

In order to average hours in this manner, a Graduate Assistant must (1) request permission to do so in writing, stating the reason(s) for the request, specifically including an explanation for the deficiency in hours, and (2) receive written permission from the Center Director.

B. Time sheets

Graduate Assistants are required to complete and submit an accurate time sheet on the time sheet form provided by the Center. The timely submission of accurate time sheets is a very significant requirement as it relates directly to the Center's receipt and expenditure of federal funds.

Time sheets are submitted on a **weekly basis**. Time sheets that reflect work done during the previous work week must be submitted **every Monday by 10:00 a.m.** Time sheets should be submitted to Ann Winfred via e-mail at awinfred@uark.edu.

C. Regular Graduate Assistantship Meetings

Graduate Assistants are required to attend regularly scheduled meetings, which will occur on a bi-weekly basis. In the event that a Graduate Assistant will not be able to attend a Center meeting, that Graduate Assistant should communicate via e-mail to hmpittm@uark.edu as soon as possible. If the Graduate Assistant is not able to provide such written notice he or she should make best efforts to contact Harrison Pittman regarding the pending absence.

Time spent in regularly scheduled meetings is counted as time worked on behalf of the Graduate Assistantship supervised by the Center.

D. Work Product Issues

1. The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation

Graduate Assistants will often be assigned projects that involve written product. Citations within any written product intended for Center publication must conform to *The Bluebook: A Uniform System of Citation* (18th ed.), unless otherwise instructed with respect to a particular project. Work product not provided in Bluebook form may be returned for correction without further review.

2. Preferred Format

Microsoft Word is the preferred format for submission of all work product. Should you require any assistance in this regard, please do not hesitate to contact appropriate Center staff.

E. Problems and Concerns Regarding Any Aspect of Graduate Assistantship

Any problems, questions, or concerns regarding any aspect of the Graduate Assistantship that arise during the course of the 2010-2011 academic year must be brought to the attention of the Center Director or appropriate Center staff as soon as possible.

The most effective way to contact the Center Director at any time is via e-mail at hmpittm@uark.edu or by dialing (479) 575-7640.

F. Termination of Graduate Assistantship

Failure to comply with the provisions and content of this Handbook, as well as University of Arkansas policies applicable to Graduate Assistants, can result in the termination of the Graduate Assistantship.

G. Read, Sign, and Return Center Agreement

Each Graduate Assistant must read, sign, and return to Harrison Pittman the “Graduate Assistantship Agreement” attached below. An original must be mailed to:

Harrison Pittman
Director, National Agricultural Law Center
1 University of Arkansas
Fayetteville, AR 72701

Graduate Assistant Agreement (2010-2011)

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I have read the Graduate Assistant Handbook and understand my responsibilities and duties as a Graduate Assistant at the National Agricultural Law Center as outlined in the Handbook. I understand that failure to comply with the Graduate Assistant Handbook, as well as applicable University of Arkansas policies, can result in the termination of my Graduate Assistantship. Further, I understand that my signature is also formal acceptance of a position as Graduate Assistant at the National Agricultural Law Center at the University of Arkansas.

Name

Date