

**Graduate Student Parental Leave Policy for  
Graduate, Research, and Teaching Assistants  
Lehigh University, 17 November 2009**

**Purpose**

1. An assistantship is financial aid, not employment. This policy states the University's position on helping its graduate students, as they become parents, to strike a balance between personal or family responsibilities and the responsibilities associated with their program of study.
2. This policy is also intended to promote equitable treatment of graduate students.

The overarching goal of this policy is to help funded graduate students maintain full-time status and the continuity of their funding. A secondary goal is to help departments ensure the continuity of effort for graduate students with assistantships, especially with respect to teaching responsibilities.

**Parental leave (up to 5 weeks)**

A student (either the mother or the mother's partner) who expects the birth of a child or plans the adoption of a child should consult with her/his adviser and work supervisor (*e.g.*, department chairperson, department manager, research principal investigator) and make appropriate arrangements for the anticipated absence from the assistantship assignment. The University's policy is to not interrupt an assistantship for a parental leave *up to 5 weeks*, during which time the student is excused from the duties associated with the assistantship.

The student taking the parental leave must be the child's primary caregiver. Accordingly, if both parents are graduate students, each is entitled to the parental leave for a period during which he or she is the primary caregiver, but the leaves cannot be simultaneous. In all cases, the parental leave must be taken within six months of the child's birth date or the adoption date.

The student's department or work supervisor may apply to the Provost's Office for a Parental Leave Grant (PLG). The PLG equals the student's assistantship pay during the parental leave, and is to be used to compensate another student or other students for carrying out the duties of the student who is on leave (typically the case for a teaching assistant). If no other student will be paid and the work stops during the leave, no grant will be made available (this might be the case for some graduate assistantships).

A research assistant funded by a sponsored research grant may be eligible for continuation of support under the terms and conditions of the research grant. If no such support is available, the student's department may apply for a PLG to take the student temporarily off the research assistantship and continue his or her pay during the leave regardless of whether the research grant pays another student to carry out the duties of the student who is on leave.

**Application for a Work–Life Grant to Support a Graduate–Student Parental Leave  
Lehigh University**

**To Be Completed by Student:**

**Personal Information**  
 Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Lehigh ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Student’s Local Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

*I certify that, during the time period indicated above for my parental leave, I will be the child’s primary caregiver.*  
 Student’s signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**To Be Completed by Department Coordinator:**

**Additional Information**  
 Academic Department Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Degree sought: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Department where assistantship duties are performed: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (if different from academic home department)  
 Student’s Title (e.g., Teaching Assistant): \_\_\_\_\_  
 Description of duties: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Approximate beginning date of anticipated leave: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Weeks of work duties expected to be affected by the leave: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (calendar weeks; must be less than or equal to 5)  
 Is the student eligible for alternative funding? (i.e. from an external research grant) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Amount requested: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Acknowledgments:</b>	<b>Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
Academic Adviser:		
Work Supervisor:		
Department Chairperson:		
College Graduate Program Director or Associate Dean:		
College Dean:		

**Provost’s Office Action:**  
 Funds Granted: \_\_\_\_\_ Transferred to Index: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

See Lehigh University’s Policy on Equal Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and Non–Discrimination at  
<http://www.lehigh.edu/~policy/university/eo.htm>