

Outstanding Graduate Assistant Awards For AY 2025-26

Outstanding Teaching Assistant, Outstanding Research Assistant Outstanding Administrative Assistant

The Graduate School (GS) invites colleges and schools to choose graduate students for **Outstanding Graduate Assistant Awards** for exemplary achievement as a graduate assistant (GA). The OGA Awards will be made in three categories: Outstanding Graduate Teaching Assistant, Outstanding Graduate Research Assistant, and Outstanding Graduate Administrative Assistant.

Approximately 4,000 UMD graduate students serve as teaching, research, or administrative assistants. The GS wants to recognize the outstanding contributions that these GAs provide to students, faculty, departments, administrative units, and the University as a whole. The Award conveys the honor of being named among the top 1.5% of campus GAs in a given year.

Each College and School will be responsible for conducting their own selection process during the Spring 2026 semester. **Award winners receive a credit for mandatory fees for the Spring 2026 semester.**

Extended Deadline: Monday, February 9, 2026.

Eligibility

Eligible graduate students must be currently enrolled master's or doctoral students and must hold at least a half-time graduate assistantship (TA, RA, or AA) for the full 2025-26 academic year.

Fellowship holders who do not also hold a UMD graduate assistantship position are not eligible for the OGA Award.

OGA Award Criteria

Qualities of an Outstanding Teaching Assistant

- Knows the subject matter being taught very well
- Teaching style engages students; students feel they are part of the learning process
- Coordinates closely with the professor in planning their instructional activities
- Available to the students with flexible office hours and other means of communication
- When grading assignments, provides clear and helpful feedback to students
- Treats students fairly and equitably

Qualities of an Outstanding Research Assistant

- Has made important contributions to the faculty member's research
- Has mentored other graduate assistants and students
- Evidence of future promise as a researcher
- Evidence of scholarly achievements (e.g., publications, conference presentations)

Qualities of an Outstanding Administrative Assistant

- Takes on responsibilities beyond the job requirements
- Supervises and mentors other assistants or students, formally or informally

Nomination and Selection Process

The Graduate School will award **60 Outstanding Graduate Assistant Awards for AY 25-26**.

To nominate a student for the award, nominators must complete the attached Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award Nomination Cover Sheet and submit it to the college/school in which the student is enrolled. Please contact the college/school to learn more about their internal eligibility requirements and deadlines.

A college or school will choose its Outstanding Graduate Assistant awardees from eligible students *enrolled* in that college or school, whether the student holds an assistantship in that college or school *or* elsewhere on campus. In the latter case, a unit in which a student holds his/her assistantship may nominate the student to the college or school in which the student is *enrolled*.

The total Graduate Assistant Awards allotted to colleges and schools are as follows:

CMNS:	19 GAs	SPHL:	3 GAs
ENGR:	11 GAs	BMGT:	2 GAs
ARHU:	7 GAs	INFO:	2 GAs
BSOS:	6 GAs	ARCH:	1 GA
AGNR:	3 GAs	PLCY:	1 GA
EDUC:	3 GAs	JOUR:	1 GA

Nominators, complete the cover sheet (page 3) and submit to the student's college or school. Please contact the college/school to learn about their internal eligibility requirements and internal deadlines.

Colleges and schools, review the pool of nominees and select the AY25-26 Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award winners and submit your selections to the Graduate School. **The deadline has been extended to Monday, February 9, 2026.**

Notifying the Graduate School

Once the college/school makes the award selections, the college/school will submit nomination cover sheets to the GS Awards Portal at terpengage.umd.edu/gsawards/s/.

Contact Information

Please direct questions to Robyn Kotzker, Program Director for the Office of Funding Opportunities (rkotzker@umd.edu, 301.405.0281)

Outstanding Graduate Assistant Award (AY 2025-26)
Teaching Assistants / Research Assistants /Administrative Assistants
Nomination Cover Sheet

Student's Name: _____

Student's Department / Program: _____

Student's UMD Email Address: _____

Student is currently in their _____ year of their program. (1st, 2nd,3rd, 4th etc...)

Has this student reached candidacy? YES NO N/A

Date (or expected date) of reaching candidacy: _____

Name of Student's Academic Advisor: _____

Name of Department-level Nominator: _____

(Department-level Nominator can be the student's advisor, supervisor, DGS, or CGS)

Name of College-level Contact: _____

(College-level Contact is the college representative who will submit cover sheets to the Graduate School)

RA / TA / AA Information

This student is being nominated for: Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award
 Outstanding Research Assistant Award
 Outstanding Administrative Assistant Award

Please briefly describe why this student is being nominated (or attach a separate letter)

Department Nominators, please submit this nomination to the student's College/School

College/School: After making award selections, each college/school notifies the Graduate School by uploading this form to terpengage.umd.edu/gsaawards/s/ .

College _____ This is # _____ of _____ allotted award(s)