

2008 UNH Cooperative Extension Graduate Assistant Information
Proposals due December 17, 2007 ~ Award notification by January 15, 2008

Introduction:

UNH Cooperative Extension's latest Strategic Plan (2007) calls for continued support in the form of Extension Graduate Assistantships as a means to increase faculty and student involvement in engagement and outreach. The assistantships are also intended to promote increased collaboration between university faculty and extension staff.

At least two graduate student assistantships will be available in 2008 for a graduate student stipend, tuition waiver, and graduate student health insurance coverage. We will no longer offer stipend-only graduate assistantships. Proposals made in partnership with an academic department that is able to cover the tuition waiver are encouraged and will be given highest consideration, so that we might offer a greater number of assistantships each year.

Extension Graduate Assistantships are awarded to graduate students affiliated with UNH or UNHM.

Cooperative Extension staff and faculty collaborators should plan to provide supervision and guidance to the graduate assistants within the boundaries of their particular project role with the understanding the project must have a significant outreach/Extension focus.

Proposal Process

At least two graduate assistantships will be competitively awarded annually by UNH Cooperative Extension. Any UNHCE staff member may submit a proposal requesting support for one of the graduate student assistantships. Proposals will have a four-page limit and the following information is required:

1. Name of Extension supervisor/mentor
2. Name of collaborating faculty member and the academic department/institute with which the graduate student will be affiliated.
3. Abstract: one or two paragraphs summarizing the proposal and its intent
4. Rational: should develop the justification/need of the project and present a convincing argument why it is important to carry out the project.
5. Project Goals and Objectives: should be a relatively concise and clear statement of the goals and objectives for the project.
6. Project Plan/Methodology: clearly explain the approach and methods (or activities) that will be used in carrying out the project. This section should also briefly describe the graduate assistant's duties and responsibilities during the period of the assistantship.
7. Expected Outcomes/Benefits: describe the benefits to Cooperative Extension and/or community partners as a result of this project. Indicated briefly how the project will be evaluated and how results will be disseminated to appropriate audiences.

Length/Details of Project/Assistantships

The proposal may request up to two years of support for the graduate student assistantship. If two years are requested and the project is approved, a progress report must be made to UNH Cooperative Extension's Leadership Team by March of the first year of the project and satisfactory progress must be made in the first year. If no report is made and/or unsatisfactory progress is made, second year funding may not be available.

Students will normally be involved with assistantship activities for twenty hours per week during the academic year and you should establish a work schedule that is convenient for the student and supervisor. All graduate assistants funded through Cooperative Extension must attend the UNH-wide graduate assistant orientation (or a similar orientation at other institutions, if offered) offered at the start of each fall semester, typically in late August, the week before classes begin. This is a mandatory meeting so please let prospective students know of this important date.

Graduate Assistant stipends pay for 20 hours per week of work and the stipend rate is set by the university. Currently Level 1 is \$13,500 for all masters' students and PhD students with a bachelor's degree who have less than 2 years experience as a GA or RA at UNH. Level 2 - \$14,400 PhD students with a Master's degree or PhD students with a bachelor's degree who have 2 years experience as a GA or RA @ UNH.

Stipends are available from the beginning of fall semester through the end of spring semester and students will receive a tuition waiver for the summer following their appointment. Summer waivers are prorated for students who had less than a full academic year appointment. It is preferable that the student's departmental office plan to file the paperwork and Extension will provide the appropriate account numbers.

You can find more information regarding UNH Graduate Assistants on the web - http://www.gradschool.unh.edu/home/grad_appt.html

Proposal Selection and Criteria

All proposals will be competitively reviewed and ranked by the Leadership Team according to the selection criteria listed below. Proposals must reflect a partnership between an Extension staff person and a faculty member or research scientist (this is a requirement). If for some reason an approved project does not move forward (i.e. a student has not been identified by May 1, 2008), then the next highest ranking project will be offered the funds.

Proposal selection criteria include:

- Project is compatible with UNHCE's mission, and programmatic focus.
- Addresses a high priority NH need that would not be met otherwise through Cooperative Extension programming.
- Leverages other/additional funding
- Involves more than one Extension program area
- Adds value to existing program priorities
- Has a clear potential to produce significant and visible impact

Reports

Extension staff with an approved two-year project are required to submit a progress report in March of the first year of the project. The progress report should restate the issue/topic addressed, the goals and objectives of the project, and a narrative section indicating progress made towards these goals plus any milestones achieved. Any obstacles or unexpected events encountered that had impact on the project should be identified at this time.

All funded projects require a completion report within three months of the project's ending date. The completion report should contain a summary of the project's goals and objectives plus outcomes, results, and impacts. If the project resulted in a thesis, dissertation, or any other publications, they should be listed as well. Finally, a short section should be included discussing what, if any, next steps are recommended as a result of the graduate student assistant's project.

Timeline:

Proposals are due to UNH Cooperative Extension no later than **December 15, 2007** and should be submitted electronically to lisa.townson@unh.edu. Award notification will be made by January 15, 2008. A graduate student must be identified prior to May 1, 2008 or funding will be offered to the next highest ranking proposal. Funds will be available for the graduate assistant beginning with Fall semester, 2008.

If you have any other questions or concerns regarding UNHCE graduate assistants, please contact Lisa Townson, Extension Specialist, Program Planning & Evaluation at – 862-1031 or via email at lisa.townson@unh.edu.