

Geology Program Graduate Assistant Policies

Graduate assistants provide several benefits to the geology programs at Southern Illinois University. They instruct students in introductory laboratories, assist with grading, or conduct research. In addition, students holding graduate assistantships contribute to the research mission of the program. Geology offers graduate assistantships to recruit outstanding applicants to its graduate programs. All students applying to the M.S. degree program in Geology, or students applying into the Doctoral Programs in either Geosciences or Environmental Resources and Policy who are also advised by geology faculty are automatically considered for an assistantship. Students entering the M.A. program are considered for an assistantship only on rare occasions.

Initial teaching assistantships are awarded on a competitive basis as part of the graduate admissions process. Applications to the graduate programs in geology are reviewed by the Admissions and Assistantship Committee, a standing committee in the Geology program. The Graduate Program Coordinator chairs this committee which normally includes two other members of the faculty. They evaluate students based on the research interest of the student, grade point average, GRE scores (if submitted), and letters of recommendation. The availability of an advisor to direct the student's research is also considered. The committee ranks the students based on this information and awards teaching assistantships until available funds are exhausted.

Research Assistantships are typically available from grants to individual faculty members. This type of assistantship is supervised by the faculty member in charge of the sponsoring grant. The award is made by the individual faculty member after considering the student's academic background, their suitability for the research, and their ability to contribute to the research program of that faculty member.

Teaching Assistantship assignments are made by the Geology Graduate Programs Coordinator after reviewing recommendations by the faculty teaching a particular course. Responsibilities for Teaching Assistants may include any of a variety of tasks related to the educational mission of the program. Research Assistantship assignments are made by the faculty supervisor.

If funds are available, Geology will support a student in the master's program for up to two academic years (excluding summers) as long as the student makes satisfactory progress toward their degree and in the performance of their assigned duties. If funds are available, Geology will support a student in a doctoral program for up to four academic years (excluding summers) as long as the student makes satisfactory progress on the degree and in the performance of their assigned duties. Geology may, at its discretion, provide support beyond that described above, within limits established by the Graduate School.