

KU Undergraduate Advising Center (UAC) Graduate Assistant Program

Description

The Graduate Assistant works with the staff in the UAC to provide comprehensive academic advising services for new, prospective, transfer, deciding, and pre-professional undergraduate students, participates as professional staff in office programs and functions including student orientation, advising presentations, individual advising appointments, and serves on internal committees and work groups when applicable. The UAC coordinates various academic success programs and serves as a general resource for students interested in any undergraduate major or program at KU. We staff three graduate assistants each year.

Office Duties

Our Graduate Assistants perform a wide variety of duties and tasks for the office. Below are expected duties of a Graduate Assistant in the UAC:

1. Advise approximately 150 assigned undergraduate students
2. Assist with orientations for all incoming students through individual advising and enrollment appointments
3. Utilize several types of software and technology systems to perform daily work tasks and to help with strategic office initiatives
4. Learn and utilize the Appreciative Advising and Strengths Based advising philosophies and models
5. Practice personal and academic wellness through calendar management and supervisor support
6. Apply what you are learning in the classroom to day to day work (theory to practice)
7. Complete a six-week training program
8. Participate in continual professional development opportunities on and off campus
9. Participate in a wide variety of office committees
10. Collaborate with several offices on campus and liaise with one or more academic units
11. Participate in social justice discussions, trainings, and development opportunities
12. Understand and implement federal, state, and university laws and policies (i.e. FERPA)
13. Collaborate with a student's support system to help provide a holistic experience (i.e. Family, Student Housing, Instructors, etc.)
14. Other duties as assigned

Competencies

The UAC Graduate Assistant program is centered on KU's adaptation of [ACPA](#) and [NASPA](#) Professional Competency Areas for Higher Education professionals. We use the competency areas as the foundation for the program to help guide our creation of opportunities and experiences that allow the Graduate Assistants to grow and develop as higher education professionals. Below is a description of the 10 competencies and how Graduate Assistants will demonstrate and further develop in these areas during their time in the UAC.

1. **Personal and Ethical Foundation:** Knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop and maintain integrity in one's life and work; this includes thoughtful development, critique, and adherence to a holistic and comprehensive standard of ethics and commitment to one's own wellness and growth. Personal and ethical foundations are aligned because integrity has an internal locus informed by a combination of external ethical guidelines, an internal voice of care, and our own lived experiences. Our personal and ethical foundations grow through a process of curiosity, reflection, and self-authorship.

- a. Work with supervisor to develop personal and professional goals and follow up with supervisor on those goals during regularly scheduled one-on-one meetings
 - b. Practice personal and academic wellness through calendar management and supervisor support
 - c. Participate in continual professional development opportunities on and off campus
 - d. Learn and implement the foundational frameworks and theories of the higher education field
2. Values, Philosophy and History: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions that connect the history, philosophy, and values of the student affairs profession to one's current professional practice. This competency area embodies the foundations of the profession from which current and future research, scholarship, and practice will change and grow. The commitment to demonstrating this competency area ensures that our present and future practices are informed by an understanding of the profession's history, philosophy, and values.
- a. Achieve an understanding of the UAC and KU missions, values, and standards through a six week staff training program
 - b. Participate in on-going staff trainings and engage in discussions of current priorities and future initiatives
 - c. Learn and utilize the Appreciative Advising and Strengths Based advising frameworks
 - d. Apply course material to day to day work (theory to practice)
 - e. Develop a personal advising philosophy
3. Assessment, Evaluation and Research (AER): Focuses on the ability to design, conduct, critique, and use various AER methodologies and the results obtained from them, to utilize AER processes and their results to inform practice, and to shape the political and ethical climate surrounding AER processes and uses in higher education.
- a. Understand how to critically read and digest research articles to stay up to date and utilize best practices in daily work
 - b. Participate in institutional and office research and understand how it can be applied to create change
 - c. Distribute the office experience survey to all students
 - d. Incorporate feedback and data to make personal and office wide improvements
4. Law, Policy and Government: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions relating to policy development processes used in various contexts, the application of legal constructs, compliance/policy issues, and the understanding of governance structures and their impact on one's professional practice.
- a. Understand and implement federal and state laws and policies (i.e. FERPA)
 - b. Serve as a mandated reporter (i.e. Title IX and Clery Act)
 - c. Understand and implement university policies that pertain to work with students such as academic regulations, student conduct and honor code policies, and student housing policies
 - d. Become familiar with resources for legal and policy concerns such as Institutional Opportunity and Access Office, Student Legal Services, and the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards
 - e. Have the opportunity to engage in campus governance through organizations such as the Student Conduct Hearing Board and Graduate Student Advisory Board

5. Organizational and Human Resources: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions used in the management of institutional human capital, financial, and physical resources. This competency area recognizes that student affairs professionals bring personal strengths and grow as managers through challenging themselves to build new skills in the selection, supervision, motivation, and formal evaluation of staff; resolution of conflict; management of the politics of organizational discourse; and the effective application of strategies and techniques associated with financial resources, facilities management, fundraising, technology, crisis management, risk management and sustainable resources.
 - a. Have the opportunity to serve on the hiring committee for incoming graduate assistants
 - b. Participate in all-staff interviews for incoming advisors
 - c. Utilize StrengthsFinder to better understand self and co-workers in order to work effectively together
 - d. Be intentional, responsible, and sustainable when utilizing office space and resources
 - e. Participate in yearly self and formal evaluation with supervisor
 - f. Gain an understanding of the university advising system by participating in the campus Advising Network (KUAN)
 - g. Problem solve and provide support for students in challenging situations to help them navigate complex university systems

6. Leadership: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions required of a leader, with or without positional authority. Leadership involves both the individual role of a leader and the leadership process of individuals working together to envision, plan, and affect change in organizations and respond to broad-based constituencies and issues. This can include working with students, student affairs colleagues, faculty, and community members. This section is organized by the leadership learning concepts of education, construct knowledge and articulation; training, skill identification and enhancement; development, personal reflection and growth; and engagement, active participation and application.
 - a. Serve as a mentor for a first year Graduate Assistant
 - b. Lead staff meetings and committee meetings as part of office rotation
 - c. Seek out leadership and development opportunities such as being a HESA board member, a student organization advisor, or a member of the Graduate Student Advisory board
 - d. Understand signature Strengths and how they can contribute to the success of the office
 - e. Participate in office retreats which include strategic planning, teamwork, and community building exercises
 - f. Have the opportunity to serve as an assigned mentor to a Peer Advisor

7. Social Justice and Inclusion: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups and seeks to address issues of oppression, privilege, and power. This competency involves student affairs educators who have a sense of their own agency and social responsibility that includes others, their community, and the larger global context. Student affairs educators may incorporate social justice and inclusion competencies into their practice through seeking to meet the needs of all groups, equitably distributing resources, raising social consciousness, and repairing past and current harms on campus communities.

- a. Participate in social justice discussions, trainings, and development opportunities to continually develop cultural competency and appreciation
 - b. Have the opportunity to take part in the UAC Social Justice Committee
 - c. Be familiar with the available campus resources addressing topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion
 - d. Ensure that your office is a safe, inclusive, and welcoming space for all students
 - e. Engage with students from all identities, backgrounds, nationalities, academic majors, achievement levels, etc.
8. Student Learning and Development: Addresses the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs and teaching practice.
- a. Apply what you are learning in the classroom to day to day work (theory to practice)
 - b. Meet with supervisor regularly to discuss best practices from the literature and how it applies to responsibilities in the office
 - c. Have the opportunity to co-teach UNIV 101
 - d. Participate in continual professional development opportunities on and off campus
 - e. Complete a six-week training program
 - f. Gain understanding of the yearly advising cycle
 - g. Apply student development theories in mentoring relationships with first year Graduate Assistants and Peer Advisors
 - h. Evaluate the needs of diverse student populations and implement specific strategies to better support those students
9. Technology: Focuses on the use of digital tools, resources, and technologies for the advancement of student learning, development, and success as well as the improved performance of student affairs professionals. Included within this area are knowledge, skills, and dispositions that lead to the generation of digital literacy and digital citizenship within communities of students, student affairs professionals, faculty members, and colleges and universities.
- a. Utilize many types of software and technology systems to perform daily tasks and to help with strategic office initiatives
 - b. Adapt and develop with the evolving technology needs of the office
 - c. Navigate KU and other websites to locate resources for students
 - d. Have the opportunity to participate in the UAC Strategic Communications Committee
 - e. Understand the reasoning behind methods of outreach and communication as part of a strategic communication plan
10. Advising and Supporting: Knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to providing advising and support to individuals and groups through direction, feedback, critique, referral, and guidance. Through developing advising and supporting strategies that take into account self-knowledge and the needs of others, we play critical roles in advancing the holistic wellness of ourselves, our students, and our colleagues.
- a. Advise approximately 150 assigned undergraduate students
 - b. Assist with orientations for all incoming students through individual advising and enrollment appointments

- c. Reply to emails and phone calls from students as well as following up with students on questions and concerns to provide support and connection to resources
- d. Attend campus events sponsored by students and other campus partners
- e. Have the opportunity to co-teach UNIV 101
- f. Have the opportunity to participate in the UAC Fun Committee
- g. Participate in events sponsored through the campus advising network (KUAN)
- h. Receive support from office and supervisor throughout the search and interview process for a full-time position when the graduate assistantship is complete