Informatics Research Institute

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Université des Acadiens

Research Assistant Policies & Procedures*

The Informatics Research Institute (IRI) serves as the umbrella entity to coalesce the operations and outcomes of three BOR-approved research centers to include the Center for Business & Information Technologies (CBIT), the National Incident Management Systems and Advanced Technologies (NIMSAT), and the NSF Center for Visual and Decision Informatics (CVDI). The Institute serves as a driver for optimization across the Centers and integration with the broader academic enterprise.

As a research assistant for IRI, you are not considered a staff member; however, a student receiving a stipend for a specific contractual period for a project awarded to one of the IRI research centers.

Screening Process for Prospective Students

Students wishing to be considered for research assistantship positions at IRI will be required to participate in a screening process. Participation in this screening process, while completely voluntary, is necessary but not sufficient for students to be considered for research assistantships.

Those students successfully completing the screening procedure are eligible to be considered for financial assistance. The Institute does not make any warranties, explicit or implied; prior to, during, or after the screening process, that students passing the screening process will be offered an assistantship with the Institute. **Contingent upon the availability of funds**, assistantship decisions will be made, resulting in notification to eligible students.

Work Responsibilities

You will be supervised directly by the staff of the Institute. They recommend your appointment, determine your assignment, and supervise your work. Since assignments vary, your supervisor will monitor your work responsibilities and you will be required to sign a time sheet on a daily basis.

The appointment is half time for one semester. The time allocated to fulfilling work responsibilities is **20 hours a week**. Under special circumstances, an overload during one week may be balanced by a lighter load during the week before or after the overload. Work hours missed because of illness or other obligations should be made up based on a schedule agreed upon with your supervisor.

As research centers, IRI works throughout the year and follows a monthly calendar schedule, not an academic calendar. As such, your contract period **includes the days when school is not in session and you will be required to work during that time**. You are entitled, however, to the same holidays as IRI staff.

Any hours worked on assignments as part of your coursework is in addition to the expected work hours. Under no circumstances, may you use coursework hours to fulfill your required work hours.

If you are unable to report to work anytime during the period of your assistantship, you must **notify and obtain approval in advance from both your supervisor and the Director of Budget & Administration**. Please note that your pay will be adjusted accordingly to reflect the time you are not able to report to work.

Pay and Benefits

Graduate Students

Graduate Students are provided monthly stipends during the contract period. Stipends are subject to federal and state income tax. Payments will be issued on the last working day of each month, except for May and December, which will be issued on the last working day of the semester. **You are responsible for reporting to the IRI Administrative Assistant, within 3 days following each pay date**, to pick up your paycheck stub and sign the payroll voucher. Failure to do so may result in you not getting paid the following month.

Rev 07/2014

In addition to receiving a monthly stipend, you are eligible to have most of your tuition and fees paid by the Institute during the Fall and Spring semesters. However, IRI does not provide payment of registration fees and tuition during Summer semesters.

Undergraduate Students

Undergraduate Students are provided payment on an hourly basis during the contract period. Pay is subject to federal and state income tax. Undergraduates are required to sign payroll vouchers for each pay period and will receive payments based on the University student payroll schedule. **The IRI Administrative Assistant** will notify all undergraduates when vouchers are ready to be signed along with a deadline to sign your voucher. **You are responsible for reporting to her to sign the payroll voucher prior to the deadline.** Failure to do so may result in you not getting paid. At the time she notifies you that vouchers are ready, she will also notify you when paychecks will be ready to be picked up. **You are responsible for reporting to the IRI Administrative Assistant, within 3 day following each pay date**, to pick up and sign for your paycheck.

Renewal for Subsequent Academic Semesters

You will be eligible for reappointment provided you are in good standing at UL Lafayette, have completed at least 9 (graduate)/12 (undergraduate) hours of credit during the semester, and have no incomplete grades. Incomplete grades must be completed before a student can be reappointed. In addition to your application materials and academic records, your performance evaluations will be considered when you seek reappointment.

Satisfactory Work Performance and Notice of Deficiency in Performance

Research assistants are expected to meet responsibilities specified by their supervisors and adhere to the agreed-upon work schedule. Should you fail to meet those expectations, your immediate supervisor will give you written notice of deficiency in your performance. These deficiencies, as well as expectations for improvement, will be described in detail in the notice, along with a date for re-evaluation of performance.

Termination

If your work performance is not satisfactory and you fail to make improvements specified in the notice of deficiency by the time your performance is re-evaluated, your supervisor may recommend that your contract be terminated. Your assistantship may also be terminated without notice of deficiency in performance for:

- Failing to maintain academic eligibility because of failure to maintain satisfactory academic progress.
- Obtaining outside employment in excess of 20 hours per week.
- Engaging in unethical conduct (see University Code of Ethics).
- Abandoning job duties (i.e., absence without approved leave).
- Not adhering to University's *Computing and Network Policy* (http://cio.louisiana.edu/itpolicy).

The Director will review all recommendations for termination and make the decision on whether to terminate the appointment. Should the decision be made to terminate your appointment, you will be given 15 calendar day notice of termination.

Course Load

As a research assistant, graduate students must enroll and remain enrolled throughout a regular semester for a minimum of 9 to a maximum of 12 graduate credit hours; undergraduate students for a minimum of 12 credit hours. Courses taken on an audit basis do not count toward satisfying the minimum course load and requirement. Students are strongly discouraged from overloading their schedules that prevents satisfactory conduct of their assistantship duties.

Network and Computer Usage Policy

You must work with the IRI system administrator to keep your computer secure. Not following the security policies below will compromise your computer. Please monitor it regularly and make sure there is no unauthorized use of the computer assigned to you. The system administrator may try to break into your computers; if he is successful you will be issued a warning. IRI believes that if computer graduates cannot take care of their computers they are **<u>NOT</u>** fit to use them.

- Each student and they alone will be responsible for their computer.

- No offensive or pornographic materials should be viewed or printed.
- If you see any unauthorized persons trying to use any of the systems, you should attempt to stop it and report it immediately to the IRI system administrator.
- No student is allowed to keep shared folders, if they have to be shared un-share them immediately.
- No student is allowed to create local user accounts, and all unused accounts should be deleted.
- No use or installation of unapproved software on the computer systems (especially file sharing software like Kazaa, Napster, edonky, uTorrent).
- If new software is to be installed inform the system administrator.
- FTP and IIS servers are not allowed. If they have to be used, notify the IRI system administrator.
- Students should have at least a six character password containing at least one capital letter and one numerical character.
- System configurations are not to be changed without permission.
- Students must log off and shutdown their system before leaving the labs for the day.
- Students must have anti-virus software and firewalls enabled at all times. Instead of disabling the firewall, the students should configure it to meet their requirements.
- All the computers will be monitored for network security.

Anyone caught breaking the policy will be reported to the proper authority, and given a written warning. On the second occurrence, the student will be subject to being banned from the IRI labs and employment terminated.

Dress Code

Casual, comfortable attire is appropriate during working hours, but must be neat and tidy in appearance. Students are expected to be well groomed at all times. Clothing that contains offensive or suggestive language is considered unacceptable attire.

Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is polite and professional. As members of project teams, students are expected to be cooperative, collegial, and flexible to accomplish team goals in a timely and effective manner.

- Workspaces must be kept clean and free of debris, such as food wrappers/drink cans, leftover food, unclean coffee cups, and clutter.
- Profanity and offensive remarks are prohibited.
- Phones and computers are for University business use only.
- Personal phone calls should be limited to break times. No long distance personal calls are allowed on University phones.
- Students may not harass or threaten others, attempt to steal passwords, files, or other system information, attempt to crash, violate the integrity of, or adversely affect the activities of a computer system or network.
- Distasteful or offensive displays, messages and printouts are prohibited.
- Music, playback of sound files, or loud conversations are not suitable in a shared lab environment.
- The University does not authorize the downloading, uploading, reproduction, or distribution of copyrighted materials (i.e. music, movies, books, etc.) utilizing any University resources.

*IRI reserves the right to modify and/or expand these policies and procedures as needed.