



**ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY**
Mennonite College of Nursing

Pilot Program for Graduate Assistants in Nursing

Graduate assistantships at Illinois State University are provided as financial support for selected graduate students. They are competitive and are intended to facilitate progress to a graduate degree, provide learning opportunities for students, and meet functional needs and goals of the assigning units. Graduate assistants must typically enroll for 9 or more credit hours by the 15th day of the fall/spring term and for 6 or more credit hours by the 8th day of the summer session.

Mennonite College of Nursing offers highly successful nursing graduate programs. These programs are designed as part-time cohort programs that may appeal to experienced nurses who are employed full-time. The structure of the program and its audience virtually assure that these students never take 9 credit hours in the fall or spring semesters. This has made them ineligible for graduate assistantships. Consequently, these students have been precluded from participating in a significant learning opportunity, the college has been unable to tap into their substantial professional experience, and they have been unavailable to collaborate with our faculty in course instruction and research.

Mennonite College of Nursing will run a pilot program from Fall 2013 to Spring 2015. The pilot will allow part-time students in the nursing MSN, Ph.D., and DNP programs to be granted an exception to the minimum registration requirements for graduate assistants so that they may apply for graduate assistantships. If they are chosen for a graduate assistantship, the students participating in the pilot program will receive a tuition waiver at a rate proportional to the typical minimum registration requirement of 9 credit hours per semester; for example, students carrying 6 credit hours will receive a waiver for six-ninths of their tuition. In addition, if the appointment is for a fall or spring semester, the student will also receive a partial tuition waiver for the summer at a proportional rate. This rate is calculated by adding the total number of credit hours enrolled for the combined fall and spring semesters and dividing by 18 (i.e. number of credit hours enrolled by a full time graduate assistant); for example, students carrying 6 credit hours in the fall and 4 in the spring will receive a waiver for ten-eighteenths of their tuition.

All provisions of the GA Handbook will apply with the exception of those referring to minimum registration requirements, tuition waivers, and health insurance reimbursement. In particular, all students must carry health insurance, and they are guaranteed the same minimum stipends as students with equal FTE appointments.