

# Student Handbook

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI



PREPARED BY: MU CAREER CENTER – OFFICE OF WORK STUDY EMPLOYMENT

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## INTRODUCTION

This handbook serves as a guide for those who want to know more about the Federal Work Study (FSW) program at the University of Missouri, or *Mizzou*.

Federal Work Study is designed to give part-time employment to undergraduate and graduate students who need the income to help meet the costs of post-secondary education, provide valuable learning and work experiences, and to encourage FWS recipients to participate in community service activities.

In 1994, the University of Missouri's Financial Aid Office and the MU Career Center joined together in the administration of the Federal Work Study Program. While the Financial Aid Office determines eligibility and allocates Work Study funds to students, the MU Career Center develops employment opportunities, refers students to positions, and provides training for students and employers. At this time, the Work Study Employment Office has developed a database of over 2,000 opportunities and referred approximately 1,200 students to positions. Some of these positions involve paid Community Service opportunities.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact our office as we are here to help you. E-mail is the best way to reach us, [workstudy@missouri.edu](mailto:workstudy@missouri.edu). If you prefer to reach us by phone you may do so by contacting the MU Career Center and asking for someone from the Work Study Employment Office by calling (573) 882-6801.

## BENEFITS OF WORK-STUDY

Aside from a wage, students find that work-study provides them with many other benefits including:

- Transferable work skills and experience which will be essential in your post-graduation employment search. While you may not be performing the same tasks in your career, you will however have to understand the expectations of an employer and develop interpersonal skills.
- Better grades and time management skills, several studies have shown that university students that work more than 5 hours but less than 20 earn higher grades than their non-working peers.
- Good working relationships with staff members who can provide excellent letters of recommendation or references for future jobs and education.

## ELIGIBILITY

To be considered for a Work Study award, you must first complete the Free Federal Application for Student Aid (FAFSA) which assesses your financial need. This form must be completed each year by March 1st. Once the application has been received, the cost of education for you will be established. The budget includes an average monetary amount for fees, books, room and board, personal expenses and transportation. An expected family contribution is subtracted from the cost of education. The difference is defined as financial need which could create the need for a work study award. Under federal guidelines, the combination of all need-based aid may not exceed the financial need of the individual. When limited funding is available, regulations assure students with the highest need are considered first priority.

You will need to indicate that you want work study as it is not automatically added to your award package. If eligible, a Work Study award will be listed in the student's Financial Aid letters (typically mailed in June for returning students and in May for freshmen) for the following academic year. Summer students will receive a letter in April indicating eligibility. The monetary amount offered will be the maximum earnings the student may attain during each session. This amount may change if information or financial aid awards change the student's eligibility for financial assistance.

If a student is not eligible for the Work Study program, the Part-Time Job Program in the MU Career Center is another resource designed to help students find employment. Non-eligible students should log on to [HireMizzouTigers.com](http://HireMizzouTigers.com) for part-time jobs on-campus and within Columbia.

Once you know that you are eligible for Work Study and have all paperwork complete with Financial Aid, you may then make some choices of where you would prefer to work. This is where the MU Career Center's Online Work Study Employment System comes in ([workstudy.missouri.edu](http://workstudy.missouri.edu)). You may obtain your Work Study referral through our online database system by typing in your Pawprint and password, and then selecting a job that is of interest to you. Our online database system lists all jobs available, which include on-campus and community service positions. Keep in mind that you can only select one position at a time. After selecting a job, read the listing carefully for further instructions. You will need to contact a designated person from the office within two days and, in many cases, submit an application or schedule an interview.

If your Financial Aid file is incomplete or has holds, you will be notified by Financial Aid through myZou ([myzou.missouri.edu](http://myzou.missouri.edu)). All must be cleared before you can be referred to an employer.

## TYPES OF WORK-STUDY JOBS

At the University of Missouri, departments offer a wide variety of jobs (2,000 positions) to students. These jobs provide vital learning and work experiences outside of the classroom for students in each of the 82+ academic majors. Students are not required to choose a job within their academic major but are strongly encouraged to select jobs which will provide them with relevant work experience in a career field they wish to pursue after graduation. After good grades and a diploma from a university, the second criteria for many jobs after college is work experience. The four most common types of work-study jobs are: student assistant, clerical assistant, research assistant and lab assistant.

### Community Service

Community service work study offers an alternative to traditional on-campus employment by creating jobs in the community where students have the opportunity to earn wages while helping a nonprofit organization. These jobs allow students to come into direct contact with the people they are serving. Seven percent of the Federal Work Study Program monies are allocated to community service positions. Community service involves services, which are identified by an institution of higher education, which are designed to improve the quality of life for community residents, particularly low income individuals, or to solve particular problems related to their needs.

Some fields which qualify as community service include health care, child care, literacy training, education (including tutorial services), welfare, social services, transportation, housing and neighborhood improvement, public safety, crime prevention, recreation, rural development, and community improvement.

An agency may qualify as a community service work site, but not all positions there would qualify. Emphasis is placed on direct service; therefore, a filing job at a food bank would not qualify.

Although a priority is placed on assisting low-income individuals, support for students with disabilities or efforts at crime prevention are also encouraged.

For more information on community service or a referral to a community service site, contact the Community Service Work Study Coordinator at [CommunityService@missouri.edu](mailto:CommunityService@missouri.edu) or 573-882-6801.

## **AWARD AMOUNTS & WAGE RATES**

As stated earlier, your award amount is determined by your financial need (through completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid or FAFSA) and availability of funds to the work study program. For the academic year, work-study award amounts will be around \$1,200.

**Note:** Changes in your financial aid award package can change your work-study award amount or change your eligibility. For example if a student is later notified by the Office of Financial aid that they qualify for a grant or scholarship for \$500, their work-study award may decrease by \$500.

The hourly wage rate is determined by the department. Departments may refer to the Student Wage Schedule revised annually by the MU Human Resources Department. The various wage rates should reflect the degree of training, proficiency, and skill required for the position.

All employers must pay their work-study employees at least Missouri's minimum wage of \$7.70 per hour. Some employers pay above this level or provide additional means of compensation as their positions require advanced skill, experience, and/or knowledge.

The following are other salary guidelines outlined by the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook:

1. Students must be paid at least the Missouri minimum wage, which is currently \$7.65 per hour.
2. In determining an appropriate wage rate, departments must consider:
  - A. Skills needed to perform the job;
  - B. How much persons with similar skills are paid in local area for the same type of work;
  - C. Rate MU would normally pay similar non-Work Study employees;
  - D. Any applicable federal, state or local laws that require a specific wage rate.
3. Students doing comparable jobs must be paid comparable wages whether the jobs are performed by students at different class levels or by a student and a regular employee.

### **Considerations: Experience v. Wage Rate**

While wage should be a consideration in the job selection process it should **not** be the primary reason for choosing a particular job. A wide variety of job experience and skills may later give students an edge over those who only perform basic skills once they begin applying for the same jobs after graduation.

Many post-graduation employers value a variety experience as much as they do good grades however; experience is not a substitute for good grades. A job which pays \$8.00 may not allow you to expand your job

skill sets as much as another job which pays \$7.70. *Remember, that your award amount is fixed therefore it cannot be exceeded regardless of wage rate.* The \$7.70 will only require 25 extra minutes of work per week or about 5 minutes a day to earn the same amount of money as the job with a \$8.00/hour wage. With all this in mind you must make a choice based on **your own needs**.

According to the Federal Student Financial Aid Handbook, "a student's need places a limit on the total Work Study earnings permissible, but has no bearing on his or her wage rate. It is not acceptable to base the wage rate on need or on any other factor not related to the student's skills or job description." Student employees returning to a former position should be considered for increases in pay.

## **Initiation Paper Work**

Once you have been selected by an employer for a position you will need to bring the department's payroll person several documents and you will need to complete some paper work. This guide assumes that you have **never** worked for the University, if you have been or are currently employed at the University you should check with you new payroll officer.

**FAILURE TO PRODUCE THE REQUIRED DOCUMENTS WILL RESULT IN A DELAY OF HIRE DATE AND PAY. YOU WILL NOT BE PAID UNTIL ALL PAPERWORK IS COMPLETE!**

The following documents are required and **must** accompany your paper work:

- Your printed work study application form, if you have misplaced your form you can print a copy by logging into the Work Study Employment system.
- Voided check or deposit slips from the back of your checkbook. If you do not have checks you will need to bring us a form from you bank providing the routing number and other information needed for direct deposit. This must come from the bank. (If you need a bank account, the closets banks on or near campus are: Tigers Credit Union in Brady Commons (443-8462), UMB Bank in Brady Commons (449-4306), and Bank of America at 800 Cherry Street (876-6218).)
- Employment Eligibility Verification Identification (Driver's License or MU Student ID)

## **PAYROLL PROCEDURES & WORK SCHEDULE**

Below is general information about completing the necessary paper work to receive your work study award. Please note that your work study award (which you earn from working at an hourly wage) will be directly deposited into your **bank** account bi-weekly and will not be credited to your University account. Families which expect students to use portions of their award to pay University expenses must make the appropriate arrangements.

- Pay Period-You are paid bi-weekly (every other Wednesday) at an hourly rate established by your employer when you accepted the position. Missouri minimum wage is \$7.65; therefore you cannot be paid below this level.
- Work Schedule-This should be discussed before you are hired and every semester to meet your needs and those of your employers. You can estimate the number of hours you should work per week by dividing your work-study award by your wage and then that quotient by the number of weeks during

the academic year. Example, if you award amount is \$1,200 per academic year, wage is \$7.65/hour, and there are 30 weeks in an academic year:  $\$1,200 \div \$7.65 \div 30 \text{ weeks} \approx 5.23 \text{ hours}$ .

## Transfers

Work Study job transfers, in general, are discouraged and under normal circumstances only one transfer is allowed per academic year. Members of the Work Study Employment staff are available and would be happy to meet with you to discuss your individual situation. Our role would be to listen, give feedback and make suggestions on how best to proceed. If you then decide that you want/need to make a transfer you must follow the procedures listed below.

1. Communicate any problems (schedule, number of hours, responsibilities, etc.) to your supervisor.
  - Supervisors know that your primary responsibility is to be a student, but expect you as an employee to realize that they have an organization, department, office, laboratory, etc. to run and that you have an important role in helping them provide quality services. (see Guidelines and Expectations)
2. If you are unable make adjustments that suit you and the employer.
  - You must give a two week notice to your supervisor or make other mutually acceptable arrangements.
3. After the two week notice or the agreed upon time period has expired.
  - Your supervisor will notify their Work Study Employer Contact person and they will release you from the position.
4. Once you have been released from the position by the Work Study Employer Contact person.
  - You can enter the online Work Study Employment Center and seek a new position.
  - If you need assistance, please come to the MU Career Center in the Student Success Center or call (573) 882-6801 or email [wrkstudy@missouri.edu](mailto:wrkstudy@missouri.edu).
5. After selecting and accepting a new position.
  - Print one copy of your application form.
6. Contact the new employer within two days. Failure to do so may result in the Work Study Employer Contact person removing you from the position and you will have to start over.
  - The employer will provide you with additional information about the position.
  - You should ask questions about expectations, hours, dress, etc.
7. If the employer offers you the position and you accept.
  - Give the employer the application form that you printed.
  - The Work Study Employer Contact person will help you complete the hiring process.
  - Make arrangements to begin working.
8. If you are not offered the position or decide not to take the job.
  - Give the employer the application form that you printed.
  - The Work Study Employer Contact person will release you from the job.
  - Go back to step 4 and begin again.

The Work Study Contact person reserves the right to not release you if there is a sufficient reason to believe you are abusing the Work Study Program.

## GENERAL WORKPLACE GUIDELINES & EXPECTATIONS

As with all the information in this guide as well as information you have received from any training sessions, you must remember that your employer will provide you with additional expectations. You should also remember that although eligibility is part of your Financial Aid package, this is a regular job; as such you are expected to maintain a level of professionalism which reflects well on you, your employer and the institution. As a matter of clarity, the following list includes some of the standards to which you should follow in your work.

- Use common sense at work, if you have question or concern speak with your supervisor.
- You should not be working on course work or using University resources for personal use, this includes your time, computers, phones (your cell phone as well as you employers). You will need to discuss this with your employer to determine how strict they expect you to adhere to this policy.

### **Ethical & Lawful Conduct**

You and your supervisor are expected to adhere to all University rules and regulations as well as state, local and federal laws. All University employees are also expected to act in an ethical manner.

- We urge you to pay special attention to: The M-Book, the University's Collected Rules and Regulations, the University's non-discrimination policy, the Federal Civil Rights Acts (employment discrimination and sexual harassment), FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act), HIPAA Privacy Rule (Standards for Privacy of Individually Identifiable Health Information) and ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act).
- You should immediately report any unlawful or unethical behavior to your supervisor or to Human Resource Services, 1095 Virginia Avenue, Room 101 [umchrs@missouri.edu](mailto:umchrs@missouri.edu), 573-882-7976.
- As a Work Study employee, you are expected to operate in an ethical manner. If you witness anything that you perceive as unethical, you are encouraged to speak with the individual involved and/or your supervisor. We want your work environment to be a safe place for you and everyone else. Maintaining high ethical standards is an important part of a safe environment.
- An area of special concern to us is that of confidentiality of situations, interactions, and insights that must always be respected. If you have any questions about what is considered confidential, please check with your supervisor.
- If you are found to have engaged in unethical or unlawful conduct you may be subject to criminal and civil penalties and expulsion from the University.

### **Work Schedule & Attendance**

As with any job, you are expected to report for your scheduled shifts and any additional time commitments that you have made. If you are unable to report for work, it is your responsibility to call your supervisor as soon as you are aware of the problem so arrangements can be made

- **Lunches and Breaks**-If you work for four or more continuous hours, you are allowed to take a 15 minute break. If you work this length of time over either lunch or dinner, you may take a 15 to 30 minute break to eat. You must get permission from your supervisor before going on break.

- **Tardiness**-Out of common courtesy, you are expected to report for work when you are scheduled. If the schedule indicates that you are to begin work at 10:00 am, then that should be the time that you arrive and are ready to work. If you are scheduled to relieve someone and you are 10 to 15 minutes late, you are either forcing that individual to stay late waiting for you or creating an unacceptable gap in service.
- **Time Off**-At certain times of the year, it may be difficult to schedule everyone's needed time off. This can be made easier by making your employer aware of your absence ahead of time. This can be done by filling out an absence request form, or however your supervisor wants to handle it. Please do not assume that you will be allowed time off automatically. If it is required of you to find a substitute, please make sure that someone is there to fill in your shift.
- **Sickness/Emergencies**-If you are sick or have an emergency notify your supervisor immediately.

### **Computer Use**

- Some employers will allow student workers to use computers for personal use when possible. Please take into account that this is a privilege not to be taken advantage. Please understand that University work takes precedence over anything else. Do not use the computers for your own personal use during your regularly scheduled work time.
- Computer costs for supplies and maintenance are high; therefore computers are for current staff only. Computer labs on campus are set up specifically for students only.

### **Additional Guidelines**

- **Security Concerns**-Staff using departmental computers during off hours must be responsible for locking all doors, windows, etc. Please notify your supervisor if you are interested in working after hours. It is up to your department to determine if this is allowable.
- **Dress**-There are a few considerations that must be given to what you wear. Clothing can be casual and relaxed like what you would wear to classes. Some employers will not have any other guidelines on dress, as long as you look presentable. Other employers may have stricter guidelines. These may prohibit clothing with Greek, religious, or political messages portrayed on them. Professional attire may also be required. Before you begin work, you should go over the dress code with your supervisor.
- **Professionalism**-It is very important that we maintain a professional manner at all times and our success depends largely on what we say or do. Therefore, it is important to be aware of the image we are projecting. Although it is interesting to hear about dates, parties, etc., it may not be appropriate conversation material for a work setting. Please be aware of the things that you are saying and their appropriateness.
- **Front Desk Duties**-When staffing a reception area, it is your responsibilities to greet customers, answer phone calls, and facilitate a smooth flow of services in a timely manner. Studying or doing homework at the front desk is not acceptable. This distracts you from the duties you are expected to perform.
- **Telephone Etiquette**-You may be receiving many calls a day, depending on your location and position. Because of this, covering the telephone may be an important part of your job. Your courtesy and manners are important as well as taking accurate messages from incoming callers.
- **Messages**-Sometimes it will be necessary to take a message. It is important that the message be

legible and placed in the appropriate mailbox or on the person's desk. This message should include the name of the caller, their phone number, and time and date of call.

- Personal Calls-You should discuss the personal telephone policy with your supervisor at the time of employment. As with any professional organization, personal calls are discouraged. Please try to minimize incoming personal calls and make sure you are not tying up any busy lines. Employers realize that emergencies occur and make exceptions in such cases.

## REPERCUSSIONS

These general guidelines are intended to clarify your responsibilities as a student worker. They are important to the success of each office, and therefore, will be enforced. There is a standard four-part process which can be used to handle any problems that arise due to failure to follow these guidelines. Which step you start with will depend on the severity of the offense?

Note: Not all supervisors will go by these exact standards. These are just an example of the possible consequences that may occur if the guidelines are not followed.

Step 1) First, you will receive a verbal warning. This is intended to inform you that you have violated a standard of behavior which is unacceptable. Written documentation of this event will be placed in your file.

Step 2) If another problem should occur, you will be given a written warning. This should signal to you that this problem has been discussed and that you have failed to comply with what is required. It will remind you that if this problem persists, you will be in danger of being suspended or possibly terminated. A copy of this warning will be placed in your file.

Step 3) At this point you will have been warned twice about this problem. This step will place you on probation for a period of two weeks. This probation could include, but is not limited to: being dismissed from work for that period, being required to perform tasks in addition to or different from your normally scheduled assignments, not being able to participate in certain activities, etc. This will be the last time you will be warned. If you fail to correct the problem during or after this you will be asked to leave your job. Once again, this will be documented and placed in your file.

Step 4) By now you have obviously decided that your job is of very little value to you. With the fourth occurrence of the problem your position will be terminated. This will be documented. It is hoped that no one ever leaves under these conditions. You could lose your remaining work study award.

**Please note**-Serious violations in lawful or ethical behavior will be dealt with swiftly and severally and can include criminal and civil charges as well as suspension/expulsion from your academic program and the University.

Question about Work Study Employment.  
Email us! at [workstudy@missouri.edu](mailto:workstudy@missouri.edu) .

Question about my Work Study award.  
Email us! at [MizzouSFA@missouri.edu](mailto:MizzouSFA@missouri.edu).