



**Towson University**

**Graduate Student Handbook**

Welcome from the Graduate Student Association!

Updated 07/14/2023

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## **Welcome to Towson University!**

Congratulations on your acceptance to Towson University! You have made an excellent choice to continue your graduate education at Towson, and we hope you love it here as much as we do! Choosing TU to further your education is a great step to becoming who you want to be, and we are so glad to be on this journey with you! Towson University offers a distinct learning experience in a location that is filled with great opportunity and employment.

Whether you are here to change career paths or advance in your career, Towson University offers unique programs that can help you meet your personal and professional goals. Our campus prides itself on being a diverse and inclusive environment where all are welcomed. The variety of programs and expertise of the faculty, paired with the close-knit community and personalized learning approach, provides students with the best of both worlds for a graduate student experience.

Towson University is an ideal location for graduate students. Just a few miles north of the city of Baltimore and one hour away from Washington D.C., Towson is ideal for both city and suburb lovers. TU's well-known status and affiliations can help students excel in opportunities such as research, internships, and jobs.

Again, welcome to Towson University! We are here to welcome you with open arms and ears. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns as you embark on this new journey! As exciting as this new chapter is, we understand all the information and changes can be intimidating and overwhelming. So please utilize us as a resource and outlet of support during this time of transition.

## **On-Campus Resources**

### Albert S. Cook Library

Located in the heart of campus, the Albert S. Cook Library has thousands of resources to help graduate students be successful in their courses. From books, journals, and online databases, this space provides graduate students with copious amounts of literature to tackle their assignments! The library also holds workshops year-round on topics ranging from citation management to research tools. As a graduate student, you can gain exclusive access to the graduate student reading room located on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the library. This space is exclusive to graduate students and serves as a space to study, do homework, or take a break between classes and connect with other students. The entrance of the library takes you to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor, also known as the academic commons. Located in the academic commons are various study rooms, print stations, and large-scale scanners to create digital copies of the print media found in the library. The academic commons also have individual noise-canceling Zoom and study pods to provide students with the perfect meeting and/or study space. Additionally, there is a Starbucks to the left of the main entrance of the library. If you are having trouble finding a source or need help citing an article, the librarians at Towson are experienced and readily available. We even have a “Chat with a librarian” service on the library website, for those late-night projects. The website can be located here: <https://libraries.towson.edu/>.

### University Union

The University Union houses many vital offices for programs and services on campus. Some of the services offered here include the following:

1. First Floor
  - a. University store: Rent new and/or used textbooks, and buy Towson apparel
  - b. PNC Bank
2. Second Floor
  - a. Food Options: Chick-fil-A, Dunkin, Kappa Sushi, Torta Fresca, and many more!
  - b. Black Student Union office: Provides institutional services and support for the black community at Towson University

- c. Office of Student Activities: Provides opportunities for students to define their TU experience through exploration, involvement, and intentional programming
  - d. Career Center: One-on-one career counseling and self-assessment tests
  - e. Copy machine
3. Third Floor
- a. Center for Student Diversity: aids the university in its efforts to foster inclusion, collaboration, and relationship building

### West Village Commons

West Village Commons is home to various important offices and services. One essential office here is the Auxiliary Services business office located in room 309 (ASBO). This is where you can get your TU OneCard which will be utilized to enter the graduate student reading room in the library, print on campus, or take the campus shuttle. West Village Commons also has several dining options and an “all you can eat” dining hall. There are also PNC and SECU ATMs located on the first floor.

### Burdick Hall/ Student Gym

Built in 2018, this rec center is a state-of-the-art fitness facility! Burdick Hall has two multipurpose activity courts, studios for group fitness classes, a ninja warrior course, 33-foot climbing wall, and numerous cardio machines and free weights for students to utilize. Burdick Hall is accessible to students with their OneCard and included in student tuition and fees.

**Bonus:** there is a smoothie and acai window to fuel up after a hard workout!

### The Writing Center

The Writing Center provides individual writing support to all members of the Towson community, including undergraduate and graduate students as well as faculty and staff members. Whether you need help brainstorming an idea or editing your work with a fresh pair of eyes, experts at the Writing Center can assist you! Students can drop in during any stage of the writing process. To make an appointment, go online to the Writing Center webpage: [https://www.towson.edu/cla/centers/writing/?utm\\_source=redirect&utm\\_content=writingcenter](https://www.towson.edu/cla/centers/writing/?utm_source=redirect&utm_content=writingcenter)

### The Career Center

The staff at the Career Center can help you identify your interests and passions and turn them into meaningful work. Through self-assessments and one-on-one career counseling, this center can help you jumpstart the career you always wanted. With resume revision, mock interviews, and LinkedIn assistance, the Career Center can assist with all your job-related questions or concerns.

### The Counseling Center

Usually at no cost, the Counseling Center offers a myriad of services to students encompassing the spectrum of mental health care. These services include individual and group counseling, substance treatment, meditation and mindfulness rooms, referral services, emergency services, and several mental health-related workshops and events.

### Accessibility & Disability Services (ADS)

Under ADA regulations, ADS serves students with disabilities to find reasonable accommodations. The ADS office serves multiple student groups including those who may have a learning disability, physical or mobility disability, vision/hearing impairment, students with chronic health conditions, and those with mental health concerns. This office offers both temporary and long-term accommodations. If you believe you need reasonable accommodations, students are encouraged to make an appointment with the ADS office soon after enrolling to ensure those requests can be met in a timely manner!

### Child Care

Emphasizing the Montessori method of teaching, the Towson University Child Care Center is conveniently located on campus and staffed with lead teachers and caring student aides. This nature-based environment allows children to grow and learn alongside their peers with ample outdoor time. They offer part-time and full-time attendance, and various student employment opportunities.

### Center for Student Diversity

This office fosters inclusion, collaboration, and relationship building across campus. By providing social and transitional support to underserved or marginalized students, this office upholds Towson University's mission of a welcoming environment for all.

### Health Center

Located in the heart of campus, the Health Center offers a wide range of services to students. Some of the available resources are contraceptive/STD services and testing, physical exams, immunizations and tuberculosis testing, lab services, common illnesses, minor injuries, and referrals. While the center encourages appointments, walk-ins are welcome.



## **The New Graduate Student Checklist**

Congratulations on your admission and welcome to Towson University! Please complete all required tasks in Enrolled Graduate Students by the deadline listed. This includes the immunization links. If you have any questions about any of the items on the list, contact the appropriate office prior to the Graduate Student orientation or program orientation.

*Remember to:*

[Activate your student account](#) (You will need your student ID number)

[Get your OneCard](#) at Auxiliary Services in the Union (or pick it up at New Student Orientation!)

The [Health Center's](#) priority is to keep the students and campus community healthy. All students taking classes at TU's main campus, or any affiliated campus location are required to complete the Towson University Immunization and Tuberculosis screening requirements. TU requires all admitted students, including graduate students, to provide proof of immunization for measles, mumps and rubella (MMR), Tetanus Diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap), and COVID-19. You can sign into the Tiger Health Portal to make sure your documentation and records are all up to date.

Complete your [Immunization Requirements](#) with the [Immunization Form](#) or by making an appointment at the Health Center through your [Tiger Health Portal](#). The Health Center is located at Ward & West Hall, 410-704-2466. All Charges will be billed to the student's tuition account or private insurance.

U.S. citizens and permanent resident students must also complete the online tuberculosis questionnaire found on the [TigerHealth](#) site. If required to obtain TB testing, download the TB test form and take it to a health care provider to complete. **Failure to meet the university's mandatory immunization and tuberculosis screening requirements in a timely manner will prevent access to class scheduling.**

## About the Graduate Student Association

### Who We Are

The members of the GSA represent all graduate students at Towson University. Each college has a specific representative that you will hear from during various times of the semester, regarding upcoming events and university policy that may affect graduate students.

### What We Do

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is here to help and serve you...the graduate student! We are a voice for you! We address the needs and concerns that arise from graduate students. We offer workshops, research, travel, and professional development funds, and resources to help support your success.

In addition to these services, the Graduate Student Association also hosts graduate student orientation at the start of each semester. This orientation provides new graduate students with information regarding Towson's campus, resources, and allows you to meet your GSA officers, various program directors, and other incoming graduate students.

### GSA Funding

The GSA provides financial support for graduate students who are conducting scholarly research, traveling to professional conferences, presenting at academic conferences, or engaging in professional development opportunities. Graduate students who are currently enrolled in a degree seeking program, taking courses, and are in good academic standing may apply and be eligible for funding. Each academic year, students may receive funding for 2 of 3 categories: travel funding, professional development funding, and research funding. For more details, please go to our website, [GSA Funding](#) or email us at [gsa@towson.edu](mailto:gsa@towson.edu).

### Workshops

At various times throughout the semester, the Graduate Student Association will host professional workshops that are free and open to all graduate students. Some topics in the past

included: Managing Stress for Graduate Students, Professional Branding, Working with Individuals with Disabilities, Resume, and Salary Negotiations workshops. We have also organized social events including a “Meet the Deans” opportunity. The GSA will send out email invitations to notify graduate students about these workshops throughout the semester.

### Open Meetings

Did you know you are part of the graduate student association too? Each semester the executive members of the GSA hold weekly meetings with the Dean of Graduate Studies to discuss a range of topics and concerns. Reach out to the GSA at [gsa@towson.edu](mailto:gsa@towson.edu) to find out the weekly meeting time for the semester. Please feel free to come to a meeting to discuss a topic, meet us, or ask a question!

### Where We Are

Our office is located on the third floor of the Administration Building in room 301. You will find us there during typical business hours!

### GSA Social Media

Stay up to date with campus events and graduate student information by following our social media pages! We are continuously posting relevant information for graduate students along with quick tips for success, information about workshops, and other upcoming events.

**Twitter:** @TowsonGSA

**Tik Tok:** @TowsonGSA

**Instagram:** @TowsonGSA

**Facebook:** Towson University GSA

### Graduate Student Facebook Group

But wait there’s more! The Graduate Student Association has a Facebook group specific to graduate students, like you! The group is exclusive to TU graduate students and is a place for students to ask questions, seek guidance, or just use as an open forum to discuss graduate student

related topics and concerns. On this page you may find helpful resources from other students, living arrangement ideas, happenings around Towson, and more! This group was created to provide graduate students with a sense of community.

### Graduate Student Newsletter

Be on the lookout for a bi-weekly e-newsletter from the GSA filled with upcoming events both on campus and in the community. The newsletter also includes resources for graduate students, and a featured “Student Spotlight” highlighting the works and accomplishments of some of TU’s graduate students.



## Graduate Assistantships

### About Assistantships

There are various types of assistantships at TU. Students are encouraged to contact their program director to discuss the opportunities that may be relevant or available in their field of study. More information about assistantships can be found [here](#). The various types of assistantships at TU are listed below.

- Graduate assistantships
- Teaching assistantships
- Research assistantships

These assistantships can be full-time (20 hours per week), or half-time (10 hours per week).

Students may be eligible for an assistantship if they are:

- Admitted to a graduate degree seeking program at Towson University
- Minimum GPA of 3.0 or higher in each term and in good academic standing
- Registered for course units each term of assistantship

### Benefits of an Assistantship

While assistantships offer great financial benefits, there are other reasons to pursue an assistantship. Graduate students who work in an assistantship benefit professionally and personally. With this position, students may gain familiarity in their field, communication skills, leadership opportunities, administrative experience, and more.

Along with the professional experience, students who are hired for an assistantship position will be provided with a tuition waiver and bi-weekly stipend based on the assistantship position (full time versus part time). Further details can be found at the [Graduate Assistantships](#) webpage.

## How to Find Assistantships

Many assistantships are posted on Towson University's Handshake page. While some are posted here, program directors are not required to post openings on this platform or at all. Therefore, we encourage students to contact their program director upon acceptance into their program and ask about assistantship opportunities. You can access Handshake by clicking [here](#) and will be prompted to sign in with your Towson University student information.

## The Local Community

### What's Nearby?

Towson offers the best of both worlds between the city and suburbs. With Baltimore being just under 10 miles away, it is the quintessential location for a graduate student to explore, find employment, try new restaurants, and more! Towson offers a [Collegetown shuttle](#) that provides free transportation to 5 universities in the Baltimore region. This is a great way to explore your new city at no cost!

Situated by the waterfront, [Fells Point](#) in Baltimore has picturesque cobblestone streets, restaurants with a waterfront view, and unique boutiques. Conveniently just 25 minutes from campus, Fells Point makes for a great lunch or dinner spot. [Harbor East](#), just to the west of Fell's Point, is a popular destination for upscale shopping (featuring Lululemon, Sephora, J Crew, Anthropology, Bonobos, and more), both fine and casual dining, entertainment, events, and more. And if you're into history, be sure to check out Baltimore's [Federal Hill](#) or [Mount Vernon](#) neighborhoods which are rich in culture and lore. Baltimore is also home to the MLB Orioles and NFL Ravens, both neighboring stadiums are easily accessible via the Light Rail.

Home to the Naval Academy and just 45-minutes away from campus is the state capital of Annapolis, Maryland. Annapolis is known for its historic buildings (the Maryland Statehouse briefly functioned as the US Capitol and boasts the exact spot where George Washington stood when he resigned his commission), the US Naval Academy, Chesapeake Bay views, fishing, shopping, and food! Specifically Maryland's famous blue crabs. You can find more points of interest and things to do in Annapolis [here](#).

Washington, D.C. is just 50 miles away and makes for an awesome day trip or nice weekend getaway! Washington, D.C. and its surrounding neighborhoods are filled with history, culture, amazing food, dozens of museums, parks, and more! Other points of interest to consider visiting while in Washington, D.C. may be *Old Town Alexandria, Georgetown, Arlington, Logan Circle, DuPont Circle, and the Navy Yard*.

## Things to Do

Within walking distance or just a short car ride away, Towson has many things to offer. Listed below are common locations you may want to visit in your new town.

Meals and entertainment with friends:

- Barley's Backyard Uptown (0.7 miles)
- C&R Pub (0.9 miles)
- The Rec Room (0.9 miles)
- The Recher (.9 miles)
- The Point In Towson (1.0 miles)
- World of Beer in Towson (1.5 miles)
- Cinemark Movie Theatres (1.5 miles)
- Nacho Mama's (.4 miles)
- Bread and Circuses (.8 miles)
- Banditos of Towson (.8 miles)
- Hightopps Backstage Grille (4.6 miles) Grocery needs
- Giant (1.3 miles away)
- The Fresh Market (1.4 miles away)
- Safeway (1.4 miles away)
- Trader Joes (1.6 miles away)
- Sprouts Famers Market (1.7 miles away)
- Weis Markets (1.8 miles away)
- Aldi (2.2 miles away)
- Whole Foods (.4 miles away)
- Towson Town Center Mall
  - Cheesecake Factory

- P.F. Chang's
- T.G.I Fridays
- The food court (Chickfila, Chinese food, fast food)

#### Caffeine, sweets, and treats

- Dunkin Donuts (0.6 miles away)
- Starbucks (several locations within 1 mile)
- Cunningham's Café (0.8 miles away)
- Atwater's Cafe (1.6 miles away)
- Shake Shack (1.0 miles away)
- Insomnia Cookies (.7 miles away)
- Pure Raw Juice Bar (1.0 miles away)
- Charm City Licks Ice Cream (1.0 miles away)
- Einstein Bros (1.7 miles away)
- Corner Bakery (1.9 miles away)
- Wawa (2.3 miles away)

#### Shopping

- Towson Town Center – luxury mall with over 180 stores (1.0 mile away)
- Target (1.8 miles away)
- Marshalls (1.8 miles away)
- Walmart (1.9 miles away)
- Home Goods (1.9 miles away)
- TJ Maxx (1.9 miles away)

#### For nature lovers:

- Lake Roland Park (3.7 miles away)

- Cromwell Valley Park (4 miles away)
- Double Rock Park (6.7 miles away)
- Hampton National Historic Site and Gardens (2.3 miles)
- Loch Raven Reservoir (4.7 miles away)
- Federal Hill Park (11.0 miles away)
- Weber's Cider Mill Farm (5.3 miles away)

Community Interests:

- Baltimore County Public Library (1.0 miles away)
- Baltimore Actor's Theatre (1.4 miles)
- [Towson Town Festival](#) (Held each spring)
- [Feet on the Street](#) (Live music each summer Friday night in downtown Towson)
- [Party on Penn "Uptown Roar"](#) (Downtown fall event with community and TU)
- Lights on 34<sup>th</sup> Street (Held throughout wintertime)

Getting around/travel:

- [Towson Loop](#) (free circulator bus around Towson)
- [Charm City Circulator](#) (free circulator bus around Baltimore)
- [Baltimore Light RailLink](#)
- [MARC Train](#) (Baltimore to/from DC)
- [DC Metro](#) (DC area public transit)
- Penn Station - Amtrak - 8.5 miles away
- Baltimore/Washington International Airport (BWI) – 26.5 miles away
- Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport – 58.9 miles away
- Dulles International Airport – 74.6 miles away

- Greyhound bus – 10 bus stops - Baltimore area
- Mega bus- location at White Marsh Mall – 9.3 miles away

#### Other Points of Interest

*USA Today* ranked Baltimore “among the America’s 10 best cities for college students.” Below are some more things to do in the surrounding area.

- List of seasonal [Farmer's Markets](#) in the Baltimore area
- [Sherwood Gardens](#) – known for its 80,000-tulip showcase each spring- 3.5 miles away
- [Maryland Zoo](#) – representing over 200 species of animals - 8.5 miles away
- [National Aquarium](#) –home to more than 20,000 animals - 10.3 miles away
- [Little Italy](#)– restaurants, festivals, and more - 10.2 miles away
- [Inner Harbor](#) –Science Center, Restaurants, and Water Taxi ride- 10.9 miles away
- [Fells Point](#)—historic neighborhood full of shopping and restaurants (10 miles away)
- [Baltimore Orioles](#) at Camden Yards - 10.8 miles away
- [M&T Bank Stadium](#) – watch a Baltimore Raven’s game – 10.8 miles away
- [R. House](#) - “launchpad for outstanding food and community” – 12 miles away
- [The Cylburn Arboretum](#): 200 acres of gardens, wooded trails, and a historic mansion- 5 miles away

Coming soon!

With its rising population and desired location, the Towson area is constantly evolving to meet the needs and wants of the community! According to the Baltimore Business Journal, “In two years, it (Towson) will be busier, have more crowds of people and be more alive... it will be more cosmopolitan”. Here are some things coming to your town in the near future.

Off campus:

- Hotels - Hampton Inn and Home 2 Suites by Hilton
- Doner Bros
- Greene Turtle returns to Towson on campus
- Renovated College of Health Professions coming in 2024

## Local Housing

### Near Campus

If you are looking to stay near campus, there are many options for off-campus apartments! Many of these apartments are conveniently located near Towson shuttle stops too, this will help you cut down on the costs of having a parking permit. Below are some common apartments in the Towson area.

In addition to the resources below, utilize the Towson University off-campus housing portal [here](#).

- [Courthouse Square Apartments](#) – Charming apartments within walking distance of stores and campus
- [Somerset Apartments](#) – Shaded and well-maintained community
- [Rodgers Forge Apartments](#) – Neighborhood-like community close to campus
- [Altus Apartments](#) -Individual leases in one to four-bedroom apartments near campus and Uptown Towson
- [Donnybrook Apartments](#) – Walking distance to campus and access to shuttle stop
- [The York](#) – Fully furnished one to four-bedroom apartments in the heart of Uptown Towson within walking distance to campus

## Downtown Baltimore

Some students choose to live downtown in the Baltimore area. The commute is typically anywhere from 20-30 minutes depending on location and traffic patterns. Living downtown provides students with the opportunity to live in an apartment or rent a house/row home. Some of the most popular areas for graduate students and young professionals to live in are:

- [Fells Point](#)
- [Federal Hill](#)
- [Patterson Park](#)
- [Bolton Hill](#)
- [Hampden](#)
- [Remington](#)
- [Canton](#)
- [Brewers Hill](#)

## Campus Parking and Transportation

### Shuttle Service & The Loop

Towson University has a free shuttle service for students and faculty/staff of Towson University. The shuttle stops at various points around the surrounding Towson area, both on and off campus. There is also an on-campus shuttle that can transport students to several locations around the campus. You can download the TU shuttle app which allows students to track its location throughout the day. Shuttle schedules and information can be found [here](#).

The city of Towson also has a free shuttle service called The Loop. It runs every 15 to 20 minutes, Monday through Friday between the hours of 6am to midnight, and Saturdays 10am to midnight. When on The Loop, one must always wear a facemask. The Loop runs two routes; North to South and East to West. You can also determine where The Loop is and request a ride by texting the number 443-489-4524. More information regarding the loop can be found at: <https://www.baltcoloop.com/>



## Student Parking Passes

If you choose to live at a location that is not along the TU shuttle route or you prefer to drive yourself to and from campus, students have the option of purchasing a Towson Student Parking Pass. A parking permit is required Monday through Thursday, from 6:00 am to 8:00 pm, and Friday from 6:00 am to 3:00 pm. There are multiple options for purchasing the best parking permit for you. Students can buy a parking permit for the whole academic year, fall term only, spring term only, or night-only option. Students are encouraged to look at the campus map for eligible parking garages and locations. More information regarding student parking can be found [here](#).

## Graduate Student Resources

Below are some services and resources that Graduate Students can reach out to for questions.

Additional information can be found on [our website here!](#)

### **Accessibility & Disability Services**

Administration Building, Suite 232-235

Email: [tuads@towson.edu](mailto:tuads@towson.edu)

### **Campus Police**

Public Safety Building

Email: [police@towson.edu](mailto:police@towson.edu)

### **Civic Engagement & Social Responsibility**

Administration Building, Suite 224

Email: [civicengagement@towson.edu](mailto:civicengagement@towson.edu)

### **Cook Library**

E-mail: [library@towson.edu](mailto:library@towson.edu)

### **Counseling Center**

Ward & West, 2nd floor

Email: [counseling@towson.edu](mailto:counseling@towson.edu)

### **Graduate Student Reading Room**

The reading room in Cook Library 202A

### **Inclusion & Institutional Equity**

Administration Building, Suite 214

Email: [oiie@towson.edu](mailto:oiie@towson.edu)

### **International Students & Scholars**

Psychology Building, Suite 408

Email: [isso@towson.edu](mailto:isso@towson.edu)

### **Military & Veterans Center**

Psychology Building, Room 107

Email: [tuvetcenter@towson.edu](mailto:tuvetcenter@towson.edu)

### **Parking & Transportation Services**

Union Garage, Lower-Level Email:  
[uPark@towson.edu](mailto:uPark@towson.edu)

**Office of the Registrar**

Enrollment Services Center, Room 223  
[ContactUs](#)

**Student Computing Services**

Cook Library, Room 35, Towson Run, Room 123  
Email: [scs@towson.edu](mailto:scs@towson.edu)

**Writing Center**

Liberal Arts Building, Room 5330  
Email: [wrobertson@towson.edu](mailto:wrobertson@towson.edu)

[University Map](#)

[Graduate Studies Academic Policy](#)