CELR Graduate Assistantship Position Description

LOBO GARDENS GRADUATE ASSISTANT
Community Engaged Learning & Research Program
University College

OVERVIEW

Full-time graduate students in applicable degree programs are eligible to apply. The position begins August 1, 2021 and ends May 31, 2022. The Graduate Assistant (GA) earns a stipend of $14,340.42 for a 10-month appointment, is eligible for a 12 credit hours per semester tuition waiver, and optional health insurance. The appointment is .50 FTE, which requires the GA work 20 hours per week per semester. The appointment is for the Fall 2021 semester with option for reappointment. Reappointment is based on satisfactory work performance and available funding.

CONTEXT OF THE WORK

The mission of the Lobo Gardens Initiative (LGI) is to provide the University of New Mexico (UNM) and the wider community with opportunities to learn about the practices and personal, social, environmental benefits of sustainable agriculture and small-scale farming and food distribution. We work to develop ecologically and community enhancing systems that can thrive in our unique Southwestern environment. Lobo Gardens sites (there are currently three on the UNM Campus) serve as sites of multidisciplinary education, with undergraduate and graduate courses using the gardens directly in their curriculum as living-learning laboratories. At the same time, Lobo Gardens offers workshops to the campus and wider community that are broadly related to growing food. Lobo Gardens builds community capacity not only on campus but also through outreach and in partnership with community nonprofits, farms, gardens, schools, organizations, and businesses. Lobo Gardens currently comprises three sustained gardens in different settings and institutional contexts on campus, has started up other on- and off-campus gardens, and will continue to help launch community food gardens on and off-campus.

POSITION OVERVIEW

The Lobo Gardens Graduate Assistant is a multi-faceted position responsible for the management, facilitation, and growth of University of New Mexico’s on-campus organic community food gardens. Applicants require strong interpersonal, outreach, organizational, and management skills and experience; strong understanding of sustainable small-farm/gardening practices; strong coordinating
and community-building skills and experience; an interest and understanding in higher education and community-based experiential learning; a self-starting and directed work ethic; and dependable knowledge of and commitment to pesticide-free community food growing and gardening.

This position is a step toward creating permanent infrastructure to ensure the longevity of Lobo Gardens as essential learning and community-building environments on campus. The coordinator will serve under the direction of UNM’s Community-Engaged Learning and Research program and the Lobo Gardens executive board. The **20 hour/week position** involves multiple areas of work, has flexible work times (and requires some weekend and evening availability), and requires significant physical ability (e.g., ability to lift 50 pounds, to kneel/sit/bend on the ground, and work outdoors in hot or cold weather).

**RESPONSIBILITIES**

Assist in the day-to-day operations of the Lobo Gardens Program and related on-campus gardens, located at the Lobo Gardens RED site, the Lobo Gardens Hokona site, and the Lobo Gardens at Parson’s Grove, and provide general support for students, instructors and community partners that collaborate with the Lobo Gardens Program.

- Coordinate daily operations and maintenance of the garden. Maintain and enhance garden site ecologies through weeding, compost management, water system maintenance, efficient oversight and management of equipment and resources (tools, seeds, and other supplies), natural soil building, planting pollinator species, and companion plant guilds.
- Coordinate the development and management of the gardens with UNM classes, staff, faculty, students, and UNM departments to grow and run LG (three on-campus sites).
- Ensure safety and access to multiple individuals and groups (ADA accessibility).
- Promote and develop campus partnerships and educational curriculum, including provision of educational programming and public events.
- Promote, organize, and at times lead gardening workshops for campus and community.
- Recruit and facilitate campus and community volunteers to participate in workdays, educational workshops, and ongoing garden maintenance.
- Support fundraising/grant writing efforts as needed.
- Provide weekly updates/activity logs to CELR, LG executive committee, and participating instructors.

**BENEFITS**

- Stipend: $14,340.42 for a 10-month appointment.
- Tuition Waiver: Maximum twelve (12) credit hours paid for spring semester.
- Time Commitment: 20 hours maximum per week.

**REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS**

We seek an individual dedicated to sustainable agriculture and small-scale farming, food justice, and promoting ecologically and community enhancing food systems. The ideal candidate will be committed to equitable and reciprocal public engagement with communities and passionately invested in social justice, equity, and inclusiveness. Strong management and administrative skills, combined with a vision
for the future of Lobo Gardens and a sense of mission for the program, are also needs, as is a sincere commitment to promoting diversity, as evidenced by prior successful and innovative measures. The ideal candidate will be self-motivated, with the ability to recognize and respond to needs and complete projects with minimal guidance as a member of the CELR team.

- Knowledge of organic gardening, nutrition, permaculture, and community food systems
- Record of sustainability minded ventures, with knowledge of and commitment to pesticide-free community food growing and gardening
- A passion to educate others and support others in learning about the importance of community gardens, local food systems, health, and sustainability.
- Ability to support expansion of LG and build lasting networks
- Proven strong interpersonal, outreach, organizational, and management skills
- Interest and understanding in higher education and community-based experiential learning
- Proven record of self-starting work ethic, vision, responsibility, knowledge, dependability, and follow through
- Experience in coordinating diverse groups and in community building
- Excellent verbal and written communication skills. Accessible and available to multiple stakeholders. Ability to communicate with diverse audiences and individuals to share ideas, talents, and resources. Highly responsive to campus and community needs
- Proven ability to see projects through—from developing to implementing to evaluating
- Ability to juggle multiple projects simultaneously
- Proficient knowledge of computers, technology, and social media marketing. Daily access to email, the Internet, and telephone
- Willingness to adapt to changing organizational conditions and extremely limited resources
- Flexibility to work non-traditional hours, including some evening and weekends as needed
- Ability to work both as part of a team and individually
- Creativity, flexibility, resourcefulness, and positive thinking.

ELIGIBILITY

The Office of Graduate Studies requires GAs to meet the following criteria:

- Have been formally admitted to a graduate program at UNM.
- Be currently enrolled at UNM for a minimum of 6 hours of course work, thesis or dissertation hours which count towards the graduate degree. Courses taken for AUDIT are not accepted as part of the minimum hours.
- Entering graduate students, admitted in summer, must be enrolled for a minimum of 3 credit hours in coursework that will apply to the degree. Continuing graduate students, including international students, are eligible to work up to full-time (1.0 FTE) during the summer session and are not required to be enrolled.
- Maintain a 3.0 grade point average in graduate course work each semester.
- Students on Type 1 or Type 2 probation are ineligible to hold an assistantship. Students on Type 3 probation may provisionally hold an assistantship for one semester (see Academic Probation and Consequences).
- Be within the time limit for completion of the degree sought.
• Master’s Students: All work used to meet degree requirements for a master’s degree, including transfer credit, must be completed within a seven-year period immediately preceding the granting of the degree.
• Doctoral Students: Doctoral candidates have five (5) calendar years from the semester in which they pass their doctoral comprehensive examination to complete the degree requirements.

TO APPLY

Submit a resume/CV, letter of interest, and contact information (name, phone, email) for two references (professional or academic) to Dr. Monica Kowal, Associate Dean, at kowal1@unm.edu.

DEADLINE FOR APPLYING

The position is open until filled. Applicants should submit their materials to the Associate Dean no later than April 15th, 2021. Applications will be reviewed and selected based on the materials provided and applicants must be available for an interview in mid-to-late May 2021.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Monica Kowal, Associate Dean for Community Engaged Learning & Research
University College, UAEC Suite 180, kowal1@unm.edu