



## Graduate Assistant – Student Basic Needs

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission (THEC) invites applications for a **project-based, part-time, summer graduate assistant**.

THEC's Data Strategy and Adult Learner Initiatives Divisions are partnering to improve communication to students on basic needs and means-tested benefit programs. This project is in pursuit of THEC's vision to cultivate a cohesive higher education enterprise which fosters innovative solutions to ensure student success, build strong communities, and improve the lives of Tennesseans. The graduate assistant will:

- Collaborate with experts in postsecondary education policy and data;
- Review relevant literature and policy on issues related to postsecondary education;
- Analyze quantitative and qualitative data; and
- Assist with administrative work to support agency operations as necessary;

Additional details on the project are summarized in the **Project Overview** section below.

The graduate assistantship for summer 2026 last **up to 15 weeks (maximum of 29.5 hours per week)**. Tennessee residency is required, but work may be completed on a **remote or hybrid** schedule. The hourly rate for this position is **\$22.00**. Graduate assistants may earn academic credit in accordance with their institution's academic policies. THEC will supply the appropriate equipment to complete the project.

### **Project: *Enhancing Communication of Programs to Support Students' Basic Needs***

**Project Description:** The graduate assistant will coordinate with the Adult Learner Initiatives Division to compile information on eligibility for local, state, and federal means-tested benefit programs—with an emphasis on basic needs services—and, using this information, assist the Data Strategy Division in an evaluation of the [TN Reconnect QuickScreener](#).

**Deliverable(s):** A brief summary (1-2 pages) of all social programs that offer basic needs services to students, their eligibility requirements, and whether they are referenced in the current QuickScreener; a summary (1-page) of the QuickScreener's performance based on a detailed review of the tool and an analysis of its output; and presentation of findings to THEC staff.

## **Qualifications**

Ideal applicants should be a **matriculating, current, or recent graduate of a graduate-level program** in statistics, public policy or administration, education, or a related field. Irrespective of the selected project, qualified candidates should possess:

- A general knowledge of postsecondary education policy issues from a state and/or national level;
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, etc.)
- Experience with quantitative research and analytical software (e.g., R Studio, Stata, etc.)
- Effective skills communicating data and evidence; and
- Excellent written and oral communication skills.
- **Preferred Qualifications:** Experience with survey research data entry; familiarity with scholarly literature on social programs to support students' basic needs.

## **To Apply**

Interested applicants should submit a cover letter, writing sample, and resume **by April 17, 2026**. All materials should be submitted to David Heathcock, Human Resources Director at [thec.hr@tn.gov](mailto:thec.hr@tn.gov).