

**Job Description**  
**Graduate Research Assistant**  
**Economic Research Institute of Erie**  
**Sam and Irene Black School of Business**  
**Penn State Erie**  
**2009**



**Job Title:** Graduate Research Assistant  
**Unit:** Economic Research Institute of Erie  
**Department:** Sam & Irene Black School of Business  
**Reports to:** Dr. James Kurre, Director

**Job Statement**

Assists the Director of the Economic Research Institute of Erie with academic research and community outreach activities. May be assigned to work on special projects. Works independently and in a team environment under supervision of the Director.

This position is a half-time Graduate Research Assistantship. As defined by the University, “half-time” means 20 hours of GRA work per week, for 18 weeks each semester (Fall and Spring). If there is a summer position, it covers 12 weeks. The assistantship is typically awarded for the Fall and Spring semesters, with the possibility of a summer term to be determined at time of appointment.

**Essential Functions**

1. Collects and compiles data from numerous sources, both new and old.
2. Creates and maintains databases for [www.ERIEdata.org](http://www.ERIEdata.org) and other research projects.
3. Performs detailed data analysis under the guidance of the Director.
4. Conducts primary research under the guidance of the Director.
5. Assists ERIE faculty in their research and in preparation for presentations in the local community.
6. Prepares written summaries/conclusions of data analysis for government organizations, businesses, community groups and other clients.
7. Works with IT team to maintain and make changes to the [ERIEdata.org](http://ERIEdata.org) website.
8. Updates the report on Erie’s latest employment statistics and posts it to [ERIEdata.org](http://ERIEdata.org) website on a monthly basis.
9. Obtains [ERIEdata.org](http://ERIEdata.org) usage statistics and maintains them in a database; compiles reports of these data as needed.
10. Initiates and summarizes literature reviews on topics relevant to ERIE’s work.
11. Manages undergraduate research assistants, which includes:
  - delegating tasks
  - acting as a point of contact/reference
  - assisting when problems or questions arise, and
  - proofreading/validating work of undergraduate research assistants.
12. Prepares and gives presentations.
13. Assists with preparation and execution of the ERIE conference.
14. Responds to community requests for data or information.
15. Accurately tracks hours worked, and submits documentation when and as required.
16. May prepare applications for grants for research support.
17. Performs other related tasks as assigned by the Director.

### **Job Specifications/Qualifications**

1. A completed bachelor's degree in a relevant field, preferably Economics, by time of appointment
2. Accepted into the Penn State Behrend MBA program and enrolled or will enroll as a full-time student
3. Proficient in Excel, Word, PowerPoint, & internet navigation
4. Demonstrated ability to work with data and do economic and/or statistical analysis
5. Ability to work independently and in cross-functional teams
6. Must be a self-starter and able to work independently
7. Demonstrated strong performance in undergraduate education
8. Excellent written and verbal communication skills
9. Ability to manage many projects concurrently
10. Knowledge of Microsoft Access, statistical, and web authoring software is a plus.

### **Compensation**

- Tuition: 9-12 credits of graduate courses in a typical (Fall or Spring) semester, and 4-6 credits during the summer, if there is a summer term to the assistantship.
- Monthly stipend, with the rate depending on the guidelines set by the University. The stipend for 2008-09 was \$13,050 for the academic year and \$4,377 for the summer. Direct salary deposits are mandatory and a condition of hire.
- Health insurance at group rate. PSU requires health insurance for GRAs. PSU will pay 80% of the premium, with the other 20% deducted from the paycheck automatically. Students who have an approved health insurance plan available to them outside of PSU can file for an official waiver of the health benefits and premiums.

### **How to Apply**

Send a letter of application with: 1) a resume, 2) transcript, 3) two letters of recommendation, and 4) a writing sample that demonstrates relevant abilities (writing, data handling, statistical skills), in electronic form to:

k12@@psu.edu

Subject: ERIE GRA Position

All materials should be received by April 30. Evaluation of candidates will begin on May 1 and continue until a suitable candidate is identified. This position may start either Summer 2009 or Fall 2009.

For questions, contact:

Dr. James Kurre, Director  
Economic Research Institute of Erie  
Sam and Irene Black School of Business  
Penn State Behrend  
Email: [k12@psu.edu](mailto:k12@psu.edu)  
Phone: (814) 898-6266

**Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity and the diversity of its workforce.**

Rev 4-09