

A prospective graduate/doctoral assistant must be enrolled as a regular, degree-seeking student in The Graduate College. Graduate/doctoral assistants may be employed as teaching assistants, instructional assistants, research assistants, or graduate assistants. The information below can also be found in UPPS 07.07.06. Salaried Graduate Student Employment.

Types of Graduate Assistantships

• **Graduate Teaching Assistants and Doctoral Teaching**

Assistants (GTA/DTA) are currently enrolled students employed by an academic department, paid from faculty salaries and reported as the “teacher of record” for an organized undergraduate class. Graduate teaching assistants and doctoral teaching assistants receive a faculty contract for a semester or the academic year, are paid on a monthly basis, and are exempt from The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The student must hold a master’s degree in the teaching discipline or have completed eighteen graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline. (Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) Principles of Accreditation.)

Graduate teaching assistants and doctoral teaching assistants must submit a complete faculty applicant packet that consist of a faculty employment application, official transcripts from all degree-granting institutions, a current vita or resume, a Criminal Background Check Consent Form and an English Proficiency Form. The required scores on the English Proficiency examinations may be higher than those required for admission to a graduate program, and students holding a graduate or doctoral teaching assistantship must pass the Clear English Requirements outlined in AA/PPS No. 04.01.11 (<https://policies.txst.edu/division-policies/academic-affairs/04-01-11.html>).

• **Graduate Instructional Assistants and Doctoral Instructional**

Assistants (GIA/DIA) are currently enrolled students employed by an academic department, paid from faculty salaries, but are not reported as the “teacher of record.” Graduate instructional assistants and doctoral instructional assistants are responsible for a specific group of students (typically undergraduate students) and assign some portion of these same students’ grades. If graduate students are assigned as instructional assistants in graduate courses, they cannot grade other students’ work nor have access to their grades. The dean of The Graduate College will allow an exception for doctoral instructional assistants assigned to master’s level classes, provided there is no conflict of interest. Prior to making the appointment, programs should consult with the graduate dean. The academic department may pay graduate instructional assistants’ salaries for those assisting in the operation of a lab or an activity or recitation group from course fees collected for this purpose. Graduate instructional assistants and doctoral instructional assistants are appointed for a semester or the academic year, paid on a monthly basis, and are exempt from the FLSA.

• **Graduate Research Assistants and Doctoral Research**

Assistants (GRA/DRA) are currently enrolled students employed by a department or university office and may receive pay from grants or sponsored programs, indirect cost recovery, designated lines in faculty start-up accounts approved by the Division of Research, restricted accounts if the funding source allows, or other accounts approved by the Provost. Chapter 10 of the US Department of Labor’s Field Operation Handbook defines research assistants as students “engaged in research in the course of obtaining an advanced degree and the research is performed under the supervision of a member

of the faculty in a research environment provided by the institution under a grant or contract.” If employed on a grant, the work performed must directly relate to the objectives of the grant. Graduate research assistants and doctoral research assistants can be appointed for a semester, the academic year, or the duration of a research project or any portion thereof, and paid on a monthly basis. They are classified as exempt under FLSA.

- **Graduate Assistants and Doctoral Assistants (GA/DA)** are currently enrolled students employed by a department or university office and may receive pay from grant or university funds. Responsibilities may include research (not under the supervision of a faculty member), technical assistance, and institutional support. To avoid conflicts of interests, graduate and doctoral assistants cannot have access to records of graduate students of their degree-granting department. Graduate assistants and doctoral assistants who have access to records must be Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) trained and sign a confidentiality agreement. Graduate and doctoral assistant positions are non-exempt and are subject to the minimum wage and overtime provision of the FLSA. Students employed in these positions must enter all hours worked that deviate from their default schedule in the SAP Employee Self-Serve Portal. Time entry guidelines can be found on the Human Resources website (<http://www.hr.txstate.edu/benefits.html>). Students employed in these positions are not eligible for concurrent employment as a teaching, instructional, or research assistant.

Academic Expectations

All assistants must have unconditional acceptance into a graduate degree program. All assistants must maintain a minimum 3.0 Texas State GPA in course work leading toward completion of a graduate degree.

Course Load

The minimum course load required during a fall/spring term of employment as a graduate assistant is nine graduate semester hours. Students who enrolled in nine graduate semester hours during the prior spring and fall semesters (or with an approved exception on file) are not required to enroll during the summer; otherwise, enrollment in three graduate hours is required for the summer term. Assistants taking more than 12 graduate semester hours during the fall/spring terms must have approval from the dean of The Graduate College. Similarly, assistants taking more than six graduate semester hours per summer session must have approval from the dean of The Graduate College. If an international student starts their degree program in the summer they must be enrolled in 9 semester hours in the summer.

Required Teaching Assistantship Courses

As a condition of employment, all GTAs, DTA, GIAs, and DIAs must complete a total of three hours of professional development course work. The course titles for the required in-service teaching courses vary by department. Some departments offer one three-hour course, some departments offer a two-hour and one-hour course for a combination of three hours, and other departments offer a one-hour course to be taken three times. Assistants enroll in the course offered by the department in which they are employed during their first term of employment and continue to enroll in subsequent terms until the three-hour requirement is met, as applicable. **Students may not enroll in this course work beyond the required three hours.** Up to a total of three semester hours may be used with other graduate courses to satisfy the minimum nine semester hours of enrollment required as a condition of employment. The University administration will cover the fees and tuition for the required teaching assistantship course (up to a total of three semester credit

hours only). The hiring department must submit the Mandatory Graduate Assistantship Courses form, which requires the student's signature, prior to census day. The form is located under University Approved Forms at www.sbs.txst.edu/students/waivers-exemptions.html (<https://www.sbs.txst.edu/students/waivers-exemptions.html>).

Allowable Work Hours

During the fall and spring terms, assistants may work up to 50% (20 hours per week) full time equivalent (FTE). During the summer term, assistants may be approved by the dean of The Graduate College for additional hours, up to a maximum of 75% FTE (30 hours per week) only if the entire position is externally grant-funded and up to a maximum of 100% FTE if the position is externally funded and the project is directly related to the student's thesis or dissertation thesis/dissertation. An exception request with justification from the graduate advisor or department chair approved by the dean of The Graduate College must be on file with The Graduate College for employment requested over 50% FTE.

Teaching Load for Graduate/Doctoral Teaching Assistants

The usual semester hour teaching load during the fall or spring term is six semester hours or two classes. The usual semester hour teaching load during a six-week or eight-week summer session is one course (up to a maximum of four hours). A twelve-week summer session carries a normal teaching load of six hours. The dean of The Graduate College must approve any exceptions to these teaching loads.

These policies are designed to protect the graduate/doctoral assistant from bearing an unfair employment and course load, which could impede the timely completion of the degree.

Refer to UPPS 07.07.06 (<http://www.txstate.edu/effective/UPPS/upps-07-07-06.html>), Graduate Student Employment, for more detailed information regarding salaried graduate student employment procedures.

Assistantship Orientation

Most departments conduct one or more orientation sessions for new assistants. Newly-hired assistants should inquire about orientation attendance requirements with the department or university office at the time they apply for employment.

Academic Eligibility Requirements

To see a detailed list of academic and enrollment requirements needed to be eligible for a specific assistantship position, please view The Graduate College's guide (https://www.gradcollege.txstate.edu/docs/gapcr_checklist.pdf).

How to Apply for a Graduate Assistantship

Applications for assistantships should be made directly to the department or university office following their application procedure. It is also possible to apply for certain assistantship positions online through Career Services at Handshake (<https://txstate.joinhandshake.com/login/>).

Selection and Appointment

Offers of assistantships are contingent on available funds and admission of the applicant to a degree-seeking graduate program. Graduate assistantship appointments range from a four-and-one-half month period during a summer term to a nine- or twelve-month period during the fall or spring term. The term of an appointment for a Research Assistant may be based on the period of available grant funding. Renewal is

at the discretion of the department or university office for which the student is employed. In all cases, the account manager or the manager's designee will decide who is hired in accordance with the qualifications and standards required for the position.

Supervision and Evaluation

Teaching assistants are the "teacher of record" for the course(s) assigned; however, they are under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline. Instructional assistants are supervised by the Instructor of Record or Laboratory Coordinator of the courses assigned. Research assistants are usually supervised by the faculty member or office supervisor with whom they work. All assistantship positions undergo regular evaluation as required by the department in which they are employed.

Salaries and Benefits

Assistants are paid in accordance with the University Pay Plan salary schedule which can be viewed at <https://www.hr.txst.edu/compensation/universitypayplan.html>.

Eligibility for In-state Tuition

Graduate assistantship types may qualify for tuition waivers through the office of Student Business Services. For more details, please refer to the Tuition Waivers and Exemptions webpage here: <http://www.sbs.txstate.edu/students/waivers-exemptions.html>.

Health Insurance

Graduate Assistants, employed at least half-time (50% FTE) for a minimum period of four and a half consecutive months, are eligible for employer group insurance plans administered by the Human Resources Benefit Office. Assistants may choose between the Student Insurance Plan administered by the Student Health Center and the Employer Group Insurance Program administered by the Human Resources Office. Also, some assistants may already be covered by insurance outside the university and, therefore, may choose not to enroll in a health insurance option offered by Texas State. Assistants should refer to the comparison summary on the Human Resources Office web site in order to make an educated decision. UPPS 07.09.04 International Student Health Insurance, requires all enrolled international students with non-immigrant F-1 and J-1 visa classifications to purchase coverage under the designated international student health insurance policy as a condition of enrollment. The premium will be automatically billed to the international student's account.

Non-Discrimination

Texas State University's graduate student employment policy and procedures must comply with UPPS 04.04.46, Prohibition of Discrimination.

Student Employee Termination, Separation, and Grievance Procedures

The policy and procedures for addressing unsatisfactory job performance and separation are outlined in UPPS 07.07.04. This policy also describes the available employment grievance procedures available to student employees.