TA Appointment Information for Production Students

Some of the below information also applies to screenwriting students who are appointed as TAs. Note that normally production classes employ one TA for 10 hours per week (a 25% time appointment). Therefore, it is common that students are appointed to work for 2 classes for 10 hours per week for each class. A few classes use one 20 hour/week TA.

When making appointment decisions, the faculty take into account the needs of the undergraduate curriculum in general, as well as the academic careers of graduate students and the faculty's personal knowledge of graduate students' abilities, skills and experience.

It is your responsibility to coordinate your own course schedule with the times of classes that you will teach. The department tries to schedule required graduate courses and undergraduate courses you are likely to teach at non-conflicting times. However, if there is a conflict between a course you want to take and one you will teach, please do not expect the time to be changed for either of them. Instead, talk to the faculty involved and see if the conflict can be resolved.

If you need something clarified, please contact the RTF graduate coordinator.

Benefits of employment

Salary:
Teaching Assistant pay rates are set by the Moody College of Communication and are dependent on the number of hours TAs are appointed to work.

Each semester appointment is for a 4.5 month period:
- September 1 – January 15
- January 16 – May 31

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Hrs/Wk</th>
<th>% Time</th>
<th>Monthly Salary</th>
<th>Semester Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$666</td>
<td>$3,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>$1,333</td>
<td>$6,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These are the gross salary, before the deduction of taxes, etc.
Tuition assistance:
TAs who are employed for at least 10 hours per week (25% time) receive a tuition reduction benefit which is credited to their tuition and fee bill. The amount of the tuition reduction benefit is dependent on the number of hours TAs are appointed to work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Hrs/Wk</th>
<th>% Time</th>
<th>Tuition Reduction Benefit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>$1,892</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Assistant</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>$3,784</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The tuition reduction benefit is considered compensation and is taxable by the IRS, so appropriate payroll taxes are withheld.

In-state tuition rates:
TAs who are employed for 50% time are eligible for a Resident Tuition Entitlement which provides a waiver of out-of-state tuition charges and allows student to pay the Texas resident tuition rate. It is the student's responsibility to complete a web-based form to claim the resident tuition entitlement at the beginning of each semester in order to be charged these reduced tuition rates. The form can be found here: https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/fb/waivers/

Medical Insurance:
Teaching assistants appointed at least 20 hours per week for at least four and one-half continuous months (135 calendar days) are eligible to participate in the University's employee group medical insurance coverage. This benefits package also includes modest life insurance coverage. For an additional monthly charge, employees may purchase several other types of insurance (e.g., dental, vision, disability) and may purchase coverage for spouses and dependents. Detailed information about the insurance plans can be found here: https://hr.utexas.edu/student/student-employee-insurance-benefits

International students must complete the international health insurance waiver otherwise they will be charged for insurance by the International Office. After the 12th class day, that charge is non-refundable. The waiver is available at: https://utdirect.utexas.edu/iss/waive_insurance.WBX

The insurance coverage is not available to students who work less than 50% time (20 hours per week).
New 50% time employees will be covered from the first day of their employment and must their insurance selection within the first 31 days of employment. The Office of Human Resources will send further information about insurance coverage and enrollment.

**Employment criteria**

The Department tries to support all MFA production students in the second and third years of study. TA positions are not guaranteed.

The only students who have guaranteed employment in the department are PhD students in the first through fourth years of study. The faculty make every effort to employ 2nd and 3rd year MFA production students, based upon a variety of criteria, including:

a) the best interest of the undergraduate program  
   b) the student's successful progress toward the degree  
   c) the student's suitability for the assistantship  
   d) previous performance as a TA, when applicable  
   e) available funding

Faculty decisions regarding appointments take into account a variety of factors. For example, at times a newer student has clear advantages of experience and training over more advanced students and receives an appointment on that basis.

**Class Assignments:**

Students are appointed as TA for a specific class. Because we are planning months in advance, the department reserves the right to change a specific class assignment to accommodate schedule and/or faculty changes that may occur before the semester begins.

**Incompletes:**

The University's rule is that students who wish to hold graduate student employment may have no more than one temporary incomplete grade (X) and one permanent incomplete grade (I), or two temporary incompletes (X) on their record.

However, the Department of Radio-Television-Film in general holds to a stricter rule: in order to be employed as a TA, the student may have only one incomplete from the previous semester only.

Updated by MHS on 9.12.18
A temporary incomplete (X) must be cleared within one long semester or it becomes a permanent incomplete (I).

**Eligibility requirements for TA positions:**
Students must meet the following eligibility criteria to be considered for a TA appointment.

a) be enrolled as a graduate student for at least 9 hours,
b) abide by the rules concerning incompletes as above, and
c) be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.
d) be making satisfactory progress toward your degree means a 3.0 GPA, no more than one incomplete, and continuous enrollment for at least 9 hours in the long session. The faculty considers successful academic work to be the primary qualification of student employment in the Department. See the end of this section for a detailed list of the eligibility criteria of being employed as a TA.

**Admission to the program with conditions:**
You cannot be appointed during your first year of study if you were admitted with conditions. If you were admitted to an RTF graduate program "with conditions," you must satisfy all of these conditions during your first year of study prior to being appointed as a TA during your second year in the program.

**Non-US Citizens:**
All non-U.S. citizens without experience as a TA at UT must take an English proficiency exam and attend a teaching workshop before they can be appointed. The exam is offered in mid-August and mid-January. Students must sign up for the ITA English Certification test here: [https://world.utexas.edu/esl/students/intl-teaching-assistants](https://world.utexas.edu/esl/students/intl-teaching-assistants)

The mandatory Teaching Assistant Orientation is held approximately one week before classes begin. You should plan to be in Austin for these dates.
University Requirements for Employment:
The following are the university's requirements for employment as a teaching assistant. Please read carefully. It is your responsibility to ensure that you meet all these requirements before accepting an appointment.

The student must:

- Be admitted to Graduate School without conditions.
- Have a GPA of 3.0 or better.
- Be registered for at least 9 semester hours that can be counted toward the graduate degree in the long session of employment and 3 semester hours during any session of the summer of employment.
- Be making satisfactory progress toward an advanced degree -- students registered as "Degree Holder-Non-Degree Seeker" or "In absentia" and non-students are ineligible for appointment to these titles.
- Have no more than one temporary incomplete grade (X) and one permanent incomplete grade (I), or two temporary incompletes (X) on their record. Beginning with Incompletes given in the Fall 1997 semester, graduate students will have only one long session semester to finish an Incomplete. At the end of one long session semester, an incomplete grade will become permanent.
- Not be appointed as a TA, AI, GRA, AA or A(G), alone or in combination, for more than 20 hours during the first two long-session semesters of graduate study at UT.
- Not be appointed for more than 30 hours in a long-session as a TA, AI, GRA, AA or A(G), alone or in combination, if they are in the third semester of graduate study or beyond. (See information below regarding teaching appointments for international students.)