TA & AI Appointment Information for Ph.D. & MA Students

PART I: Information about employment as a TA or AI

Salary:

The salary for PhD students who work as TAs for 20 hours/week (50% time) is $1,167 per month or $5,250 for the semester. The salary for PhD students who work as TAs for 10 hours/week (25% time) is $583 per month or $2,625 for the semester.

**For Fall 2014 incoming PhD, the salary for a 20 hour/week TA will be $1,361 per month or $6,125 per semester. As of Fall 2014, the working AI rate will be $1,528 per month and $6,875 per semester. (For those PhD who were bumped to the AI rate of $6,000, you will be paid at that rate if you are assigned as a TA, but the new rate if you are assigned as an AI.)

The salary for MA students who may be employed as TAs for 20 hours/week (50% time) is $1,056 per month or $4,750 for the semester, and $528 per month or $2,375 for the semester for working 10 hours/week (25% time).

These are the gross salary, before the deduction of taxes, etc.

Tuition Reduction Benefit:

AI’s and TA’s 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. For those employed 50% time (20 hours/week) the amount is $3,784, and for those employed 25% time (10 hours/week) the amount is $1,892.

In-state tuition rates:

TA’s and Graduate Research Assistants (GRA’s) who are employed for 50% time are entitled to a waiver of out-of-state tuition charges and are required to pay only the Texas resident tuition rates. It is the student’s responsibility to complete a web-based form at the beginning of each semester in order to be charged these reduced tuition rates. [https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/fb/waivers/index.WBX](https://utdirect.utexas.edu/acct/fb/waivers/index.WBX)

Medical Insurance:

TA’s, and GRA’s who are employed for 50% time are entitled to receive the standard medical insurance provided to all University employees, free of charge. The University provides a choice of several insurance plans. 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 is available at [http://www.utexas.edu/hr/current/insurance/](http://www.utexas.edu/hr/current/insurance/).
If you are an International student, you must also complete an insurance waiver. Otherwise you will be charged for insurance by the International Office. After the 12th class day, that charge is non-refundable. The waiver is available at: http://www.utexas.edu/international/isss/insurance/waiver.shtml

The insurance coverage is not available if you work less than 50% time. New 50% time employees for will be covered from the first day of their employment and may select the insurance carrier of their choice within the first 31 days of employment.

Students who continue 50% time employment from the Spring semester into the Fall semester will have the opportunity to change their insurance company and/or levels of coverage during July. Continuing employees will not be able to make insurance changes in September. The Office of Human Resources will send further information about this before the Spring semester ends.

**Employment criteria**

The Department supports students in the following order, as the budget permits:

1. PhD students in the first through fourth years of study
2. PhD students after the fourth year of study
3. MFA production students in the second and third years of study
4. Some MFA screenwriting students in the second year of study
5. MA students

The only students who have guaranteed employment are Preemptive Scholars and PhD students in the first through fourth years of study. The faculty make every effort to employ students in the other programs in the order listed above, based upon a variety of criteria, including:

- the best interest of the undergraduate program
- the student’s successful progress toward the degree
- the student’s suitability for the assistantship
- previous performance as a TA, when applicable

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. Special note for Master’s students: Because you are last on the priority list for employment, you are least likely to receive a TA appointment. The hiring of MA students is dependent upon available funds, and we often don’t know our financial situation until the very last minute. Faculty may place Master’s students in TAships as a result of their personal knowledge of the student’s performance in class or awareness of the student’s research interests.
Class Assignments

You will be appointed as TA or AI 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. No appointment should be considered guaranteed. The continuation of progress toward the degree and satisfactory job performance are required for the appointment to be confirmed.

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 or AI, the student may have one incomplete from the previous semester only.

Eligibility requirements for TA positions

• be enrolled as a graduate student for 9 hours during the long semester,
• abide by the rules concerning incompletes as above, and
• be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.

Making satisfactory progress toward your degree means a 3.0 GPA, no more than one incomplete, timely completion of examinations such as Ph.D. comprehensives, progress toward dissertation or thesis as determined by your committee, and continuous enrollment for 9 hours in the long session. The faculty considers successful academic work to be the primary qualification of student employment in the Department.

A more detailed list of the eligibility requirements for graduate student employment is at the end of this section. Please review it carefully. The Department will be unable to appoint you if you do not meet these requirements.

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 beginning in mid-August and mid-January and the mandatory
Teaching Workshop is held approximately one week before classes begin. You should plan to be in Austin for these dates. Please contact me if this situation applies to you.

Regarding GRA positions

Some RTF grad students are not appointed to the TA title, but are instead employed as Graduate Research Assistants (GRA’s). There are two types of GRA’s: those who work as technical assistants in support of RTF undergraduate classes, and those who do research in collaboration with a faculty member. Usually, GRA’s who work in support of RTF undergraduate classes are NOT entitled to the tuition fellowship. However, GRA’s working on research projects can negotiate with their supervisor for tuition reimbursement; it is University policy for Principal Investigators to build tuition reimbursement into such grants and contracts unless the grantor specifically prohibits their funds being spent in that fashion.

Students interested in GRA positions on research projects are strongly urged to take courses that will prepare them for research assignments. These courses normally would include some methodological preparation such as RTF 380.

PART II: Special Information about Assistant Instructor positions

Assistant Instructors take full responsibility for teaching a lower-division class. They work closely with a lead faculty member to plan the syllabus and prepare other aspects of the class. Usually, AIs have previously been a TA in the class. Eligibility requirements for AI positions

Students must:
• hold a master’s degree, or have completed 30 graduate hours of course work,
• be enrolled as a graduate student for 9 hours during the long session,
• have completed RTF 398T (see Note below),
• have one semester of service as a Teaching Assistant at UT or have at least one year of teaching experience in an accredited college or school,
• abide by the rules concerning incompletes as in #9 above, and
• be in good academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree.

Note that you must have completed RTF 398T, not be taking it concurrently with your first AI teaching assignment. If you have been an instructor of a college-level course at another university, with full responsibility for teaching the class (i.e., not a Teaching Assistant), you may have the RTF 398T requirement waived, but you must prove your previous employment with a letter from that university.

The AI selection process
AIs are usually advanced PhD students who meet the criteria above and who have previously been a TA for the course they will AI. It therefore takes advance planning to become an AI for a specific course, and students should consult with the lead faculty several semesters prior to the semester in which they hope to work as an AI.

**Salaries for Assistant Instructors**

For the current academic year, the salary for PhD students who work as AIs is $1,333 per month or $6,000 per semester for a 20 hour/week (50% time) appointment. These are the gross salary, before the deduction of taxes, etc. The following are the university's requirements for employment. As a teaching assistant or assistant instructor

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.)
- Have held no more than 14 long-session semesters of employment as a TA, AI, GRA, AA or A(G) alone or in combination.
- Additional requirements for Assistant Instructors
  - Have a Master’s Degree or an equivalent level of achievement in graduate study (30 hours including 18 hours of credit in the subject being taught) and professional accomplishment. Must have 18 hours of graduate credit.
  - Have credit for 398T plus 1 semester of employment as a teaching Assistant.