



Graduate Assistant Eligibility Overview and Checklist

This overview has been developed from the Salaried Graduate Student Employment Procedures UPPS 07.07.06 found at www.txstate.edu/effective/UPPS/UPPS-07-07-06.HTML and the Graduate Catalog. It is important that eligibility requirements are verified by the hiring department **before** the hiring process begins as well as before each semester of continued employment. Also, please note that students must have a separation PCR processed to end employment, including when they graduate.

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Graduate/Doctoral Research Assistants (GRA/DRA)

Job Description:

Per UPPS 07.07.06, Section 02, "Graduate Research Assistants and Doctoral Research Assistants are employed by a department or university office and may receive pay from grant or university funds. 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 exempt from the FLSA under the graduate research exemption, as provided in the June 28, 1994 DOL opinion letter #1263."

Job Codes:

- 9002 – Graduate Research Assistant – GRA
- 9102 – Doctoral Research Assistant – DRA

Common Employment Percentages:

FTE = Full Time Employment

- 12.5% FTE (5 hours per week)
- 25% FTE (10 hours per week)
- 37.5% FTE (15 hours per week)
- 50% FTE (20 hours per week) – *maximum allowed by The Graduate College & Faculty Records*

Eligibility Requirements Checklist:

	Must be in good academic standing (no probation or suspension)
	Must be regularly-admitted to a graduate degree program (no conditional, non-degree, or graduating senior status)
	Must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher
	Must be enrolled in 9-12 graduate hours during Fall/Spring semester and 3-6 graduate hours during the Summer semester
	If a newly-hired international student, must have approval from the International Office to work as a graduate/doctoral assistant

Requires Justification:

- Employment while enrolling in more than 12 graduate hours during the fall or spring semesters or more than 6 graduate hours during the summer semester (not including GA Orientation/Training Courses)
- Employment while enrolling in less than 9 hours during the fall or spring semesters or less than 3 graduate hours during the summer semester*

*Enrolling below the minimum graduate level hours in any semester is a **one-time** exception allowed by The Graduate College and granted only upon request and review. While this exception is typically reserved for the student's final semester of enrollment, it may be used for any semester that both the student and their graduate advisor/department chair deem necessary. Once this exception has been awarded, students seeking any type of graduate assistant employment are required to enroll in a minimum of 9 graduate hours each subsequent fall and spring semester and a minimum of 3 graduate hours each subsequent summer semester to maintain eligibility. Additionally, international students enrolling less than full time must have an approval from the International Office attached to the PCR.

Automatic Exemptions from the Requirements:

- Summer enrollment not required:
 - Enrolled in a minimum of 9 graduate level hours during the previous spring and fall semesters

Graduate/Doctoral Instructional Assistants (GIA/DIA)

Job Description:

Per UPPS 07.07.06, Section 02, "Graduate Instructional Assistants and Doctoral Instructional Assistants are 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 or have access to their grades. In rare circumstances, 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. 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 normally appointed for a semester or the academic year, paid on a monthly basis, and are exempt from the FLSA under the learned professional exemption."

Job Codes:

- 9001 – Graduate Instructional Assistant – GIA
- 9101 – Doctoral Instructional Assistant – DIA

Common Employment Percentages:

FTE = Full Time Employment

- 12.5% FTE (5 hours per week)
- 25% FTE (10 hours per week)
- 37.5% FTE (15 hours per week)
- 50% FTE (20 hours per week) – *maximum allowed by The Graduate College & Faculty Records*

Eligibility Requirements Checklist:

	Must be in good academic standing (no probation or suspension)
	Must be regularly-admitted to a graduate degree program (no conditional, non-degree, or graduating senior status)
	Must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher
	Must be enrolled in 9-12 graduate hours during Fall/Spring semester and 3-6 graduate hours during the Summer semester
	If a newly-hired international student, must have approval from the International Office to work as a graduate/doctoral assistant

Requires Justification:

- Employment while enrolling in more than 12 graduate hours during the fall or spring semesters or more than 6 graduate hours during the summer semester (not including GA Orientation/Training Courses)
- Employment while enrolling in less than 9 hours during the fall or spring semesters or less than 3 graduate hours during the summer semester*

*Enrolling below the minimum graduate level hours in any semester is a **one-time** exception allowed by The Graduate College and granted only upon request and review. While this exception is typically reserved for the student's final semester of enrollment, it may be used for any semester that both the student and their graduate advisor/department chair deem necessary. Once this exception has been awarded, students seeking any type of graduate assistant employment are required to enroll in a minimum of 9 graduate hours each subsequent fall and spring semester and a minimum of 3 graduate hours each subsequent summer semester to maintain eligibility. Additionally, international students enrolling less than full time must have an approval from the International Office attached to the PCR.

Automatic Exemptions from the Requirements:

- Summer enrollment not required:
 - Enrolled in a minimum of 9 graduate level hours during the previous spring and fall semesters

Graduate/Doctoral Teaching Assistants (GTA/DTA)

Job Description:

Per UPPS 07.07.06, Section 02, "Graduate Teaching Assistants and Doctoral Teaching Assistants are 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, and are paid on a monthly basis, and are exempt from The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) under the learned professional exemption."

Job Codes:

- 9000 – Graduate Teaching Assistant – GTA
- 9100 – Doctoral Teaching Assistant – DTA

Common Employment Percentages:

FTE = Full Time Employment

- 12.5% FTE (5 hours per week)
- 25% FTE (10 hours per week)
- 37.5% FTE (15 hours per week)
- 50% FTE (20 hours per week) – *maximum allowed by The Graduate College & Faculty Records*

Eligibility Requirements Checklist:

	Must be in good academic standing (no probation or suspension)
	Must be regularly-admitted to a graduate degree program (no conditional, non-degree, or graduating senior status)
	Must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher
	Must be enrolled in 9-12 graduate hours during Fall/Spring semester and 3-6 graduate hours during the Summer semester
	Required to hold a master's degree in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline
	If a newly-hired international student, must have approval from the International Office to work as a graduate/doctoral assistant

Requires Justification:

- Employment while enrolling in more than 12 graduate hours during the fall or spring semesters or more than 6 graduate hours during the summer semester (not including GA Orientation/Training Courses)
- Employment while enrolling in less than 9 hours during the fall or spring semesters or less than 3 graduate hours during the summer semester*

*Enrolling below the minimum graduate level hours in any semester is a **one-time** exception allowed by The Graduate College and granted only upon request and review. While this exception is typically reserved for the student's final semester of enrollment, it may be used for any semester that both the student and their graduate advisor/department chair deem necessary. Once this exception has been awarded, students seeking any type of graduate assistant employment are required to enroll in a minimum of 9 graduate hours each subsequent fall and spring semester and a minimum of 3 graduate hours each subsequent summer semester to maintain eligibility. Additionally, international students enrolling less than full time must have an approval from the International Office attached to the PCR.

Automatic Exemptions from the Requirements:

- Summer enrollment not required:
 - Enrolled in a minimum of 9 graduate level hours during the previous spring and fall semesters
- Teaching assistants employed during the spring and fall semesters may spread their required enrollment hours (18 graduate hours) over the entire academic year (9/0/9, 9/3/6, 6/6/6, etc.) if their department allows it.

Graduate/Doctoral Assistants – Exempt & Non-Exempt (GA/DA)

Job Description:

Per UPPS 07.07.06, Section 02, “Graduate Assistants and Doctoral Assistants are 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 FERPA trained and sign a confidentiality agreement.”

- **Exempt Status:** A Graduate/Doctoral assistant is considered exempt, if the job is not subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Human Resource Office is responsible for determining the exemption/non-exemption status of a position. These assistants are required to record working times on an exception basis and are not eligible for paid leave, including holidays.
- **Non-Exempt Status:** A Graduate/Doctoral assistant is non-exempt, if the job is subject to the minimum wage and overtime provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act. The Human Resource Office is responsible for determining whether students need to record working times on an exception basis and are not eligible for paid leave including holidays. Non-exempt students who work over 40 hours in a week will be compensated at time and one-half. Graduate assistants cannot hold an exempt and non-exempt position concurrently.

Job Codes:

- **TBA** – Graduate Assistant (GA)
- **TBA** – Doctoral Assistant (DA)

Common Employment Percentages:

FTE = Full Time Employment

- 12.5% FTE (5 hours per week)
- 25% FTE (10 hours per week)
- 37.5% FTE (15 hours per week)
- 50% FTE (20 hours per week) – *maximum allowed by The Graduate College & Faculty Records*

Eligibility Requirements Checklist:

Must be in good academic standing (no probation or suspension)
Must be regularly-admitted to a graduate degree program (no conditional, non-degree, or graduating senior status)
Must have a minimum graduate GPA of 3.0 or higher
Must be enrolled in 9-12 graduate hours during Fall/Spring semester and 3-6 graduate hours during the Summer semester
If a newly-hired international student, must have approval from the International Office to work as a graduate/doctoral assistant

Requires Justification:

- Employment while enrolling in more than 12 graduate hours during the fall or spring semesters or more than 6 graduate hours during the summer semester (not including GA Orientation/Training Courses)
- Employment while enrolling in less than 9 hours during the fall or spring semesters or less than 3 graduate hours during the summer semester*

*Enrolling below the minimum graduate level hours in any semester is a **one-time** exception allowed by The Graduate College and granted only upon request and review. While this exception is typically reserved for the student’s final semester of enrollment, it may be used for any semester that both the student and their graduate advisor/department chair deem necessary. Once this exception has been awarded, students seeking any type of graduate assistant employment are required to enroll in a minimum of 9 graduate hours each subsequent fall and spring semester and a minimum of 3 graduate hours each subsequent summer semester to maintain eligibility. Additionally, international students enrolling less than full time must have an approval from the International Office attached to the PCR.

Automatic Exemptions from the Requirements:

- Summer enrollment not required:
 - Enrolled in a minimum of 9 graduate level hours during the previous spring and fall semesters

How to Submit a Justification/Exception Request

Justification requests should be submitted before a student begins working and before a PCR is submitted to the Office of Faculty Records. Hiring departments must attach approvals provided by The Graduate College or the International Office to the PCR.

For **Research, Instructional, or Graduate Assistants (both Exempt and Non-Exempt)** (GRA/DRA, GIA/DIA, GA-Exempt/DA-Exempt, GA-Non-Exempt/DA-Non-Exempt), an email from the student's Graduate Advisor or Program Chair with the following information should be sent to Mark Burrow (mb90@txstate.edu) at The Graduate College:

1. Student's full name and Texas State ID number ("A" number)
2. Expected appointment type (GRA/DRA, GIA/DRA, GA/DA (exempt or non-exempt))
3. Semester of employment
4. Employment percentage (hours per week or FTE %)
5. Justification/Exception Requested:
 - a. Should clearly state which UPPS requirement The Graduate College should consider waiving for the student
 - b. Should confirm that the student meets all other requirements to be eligible for the assistantship
 - c. Should confirm the assistantship will not interfere with the student's academic progress
 - d. Should confirm that the student's academic progress will be monitored closely by their Graduate Advisor or Program Chair
 - e. If requesting a one-time exception from the enrollment requirements, should confirm that the student has not used their one-time exception yet

For **Teaching Assistants** (GTA/DTA), an email from the student's Graduate Advisor or Program Chair with the following information should be sent to Sylvia Mobley (sm39@txstate.edu) at The Graduate College:

1. Student's full name and Texas State ID number ("A" number)
2. Expected appointment type (GTA/DTA)
3. Semester of employment
4. Employment percentage (hours per week or FTE %)
5. Justification/Exception Requested:
 - a. Should clearly state which UPPS requirement The Graduate College should consider waiving for the student
 - b. Should confirm that the student meets all other requirements to be eligible for the assistantship, including 18 hours in the teaching discipline
 - c. If requesting a one-time exception from the enrollment requirement rules, should confirm that the student has not used their one-time exception yet