**[Date]**

**[Candidate’s Name]**

**[Address]**

**[Address]**

**[name@uiowa.edu]**

Dear **[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]**:

On behalf of the [**Department/School/College of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**], I am pleased to offer you an appointment as a [**Teaching or Research**]Assistant in the **[four, six, or eight]**-week summer session 2024, beginning [**May 13 (4 week), May 13 (6 week), June 24 (6 week – session II), June 10 (8 week), May 13 (12 week)]**, 2024 and ending **[June 7 (4 week), June 21 (6 week), August 2 (6 week – session II), August 2 (8 week), August 2 (12 week)],** 2024. You will be assigned to teach **[\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_]**. Your section of the course meets **[\_\_\_\_\_]** days per week for **[\_\_\_\_]** minutes each class period. The stipend for this appointment is $**[4-week session (1 course): 2/9 of fifty percent (50%) academic year appointment salary; 6-week and 8-week sessions (1 course): 2/9 of fifty percent (50%) academic year appointment salary; 6-week and 8-week sessions (2 courses): 4/9 of a fifty percent (50%) academic year appointment salary].** You will receive all payments by direct deposit. If not yet enrolled, you will need to sign up for direct deposit at the [University of Iowa Employee Self-Service](https://login.uiowa.edu/uip/login.page?service=https://hris.uiowa.edu/portal/) website.

If you fail to be available to start your appointment on [**May 13, June 24, June 10**], 2024, we will adjust your period of appointment and salary accordingly, using the first day of availability as your start date for appointment purposes. In addition, failure to be available to start your appointment by the last day of the first week of classes will be considered a rejection of this offer and will result in withdrawal on our part of any commitments explicit or implicit in this letter of offer.

As a graduate assistant, you will be required to be **on campus** during the summer session in which you are employed, regardless of your teaching modality, unless specifically approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate Education in the employing college. For more information, please see: [Work Arrangements Guide](https://hr.uiowa.edu/well-being/family-services/workplace-flexibility/work-arrangement-application-user-guide) and [Domestic Out of State Remote Work](https://hr.uiowa.edu/well-being/family-services/workplace-flexibility/work-arrangement-application-user-guide/domestic).

Funding for this appointment is provided through the [**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**] and is contingent upon sufficient enrollment and departmental need. All teaching assignments are made at the discretion of the Department Executive Officer (DEO) and are tentative and subject to change based upon enrollments and departmental need. You will be notified no later than two weeks prior to the start of the course if cancellation is necessary.

You are not required to enroll for summer session to be employed as a graduate assistant, and the tuition scholarships included in the Graduate Student Employment Standards do not apply during the summer. However, you are expected to be classified as a Regular Graduate Student in a degree or certificate program in the [**College of Liberal Arts and Sciences**] while holding the appointment. Moreover, graduate students not registered for 3 or more credit hours during the summer session are subject to payroll withholdings under FICA. Contact the payroll office for further details.

**I-9 Employment Verification**

You are required by federal law to complete an I-9 form to verify your eligibility for employment. The University expects this form to be completed prior to the start of your employment, whenever possible, or on the day you begin work. Please be prepared to present the documents necessary to complete this form and confirm your eligibility (see [I-9 Information for New Employees](http://hr.uiowa.edu/immigration/i-9-information)).

## Benefits

The University contributes toward health and dental benefits for graduate assistants and their dependents. There are deadlines for enrollment in these plans. The University Benefits Office should be contacted for additional information regarding benefits associated with this appointment at the following link: [[UI Student Insurance](https://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits/ui-student-insurance).](http://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits/student) University insurance contributions will start the first of the month after your appointment and submission of an initial insurance application.

**Basic Criteria for Appointment**

This appointment is contingent upon **[below are examples of possible contingencies, but your program may have other examples]**.

* Maintaining a designated GPA (if already departmental practice)
* Meeting English proficiency standards (if relevant)
* Receiving satisfactory student evaluations from your current appointment
* Maintaining a primary degree objective as a graduate or professional student
* Maintaining satisfactory academic progress in the primary graduate or professional degree program

**Graduate Student Employment Standards, University Policy Manual, Graduate College Manual**

Graduate teaching and research assistant appointments or employment terms and conditions are governed by the [Graduate Student Employment Standards](https://grad.uiowa.edu/funding/graduate-student-employment-standards), the [University Policy Manual](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/governance), the [Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations](https://grad.uiowa.edu/academics/manual), applicable departmental policies, and, regarding base wages, the applicable collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Regents, State of Iowa and UE local 896/COGS.

If you were awarded financial aid, please contact the Office of Student Financial Aid to discuss the impact this tuition/fee assistance and assessment at the resident rate will have on your aid award. You may contact the office at financial-aid@uiowa.edu or 319-335-1450 or 2400 University Capitol Centre.

**Effort**

As noted in the Graduate Student Employment Standards, graduate assistant employees are engaged in professional activities of such a nature that the output produced, or the result accomplished, cannot be precisely standardized or measured in relation to a given period of time and that the time necessary to accomplish an assignment will vary. Thus, graduate assistants and instructors should not account for effort allocation on an hour-by-hour basis.

**[Required for Teaching Assistants] Teaching Policies**

As a teaching assistant, you will be expected to follow your college’s teaching policies, which are described at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/undergraduate-teaching-policies-resources/course-policies>.

**[Required for Teaching Assistants] Teaching Substitutes**

In the event of an absence, teaching assistants are expected to make a good-faith effort to find a replacement and communicate with their supervisor as soon as they are aware of the need.

**[Required for Teaching Assistants] Iowa Board of Regents’ English Language Proficiency Requirement**

The Iowa Board of Regents has adopted a policy on oral communication competence, designed to ensure that all instructors have “the ability to communicate appropriately in the language of instruction to students attending Regent’s institutions.” New teaching assistants will be evaluated by the middle of the first semester of teaching, and by the end of every subsequent semester. A question on oral communication competence will be included in the form the department uses for student evaluations of teaching.

**[For those first-time teaching assistants who indicated on their admissions application that English is not their *first* language, including U.S. citizens]**: Based on our records, you indicated on your admissions application that English is not your first language. Consistent with the Iowa Board of Regents policy on oral communication competence noted above, as a first-time teaching assistant who self-identified as a speaker of English as a second language, you are required to demonstrate your effectiveness in English speaking and comprehension skills for teaching undergraduates in a University of Iowa classroom before you are assigned teaching assistantship responsibilities. The English as a Second Language (ESL) Programs Office will evaluate your language skills for this purpose by administering two tests. We will pre-register you for the first test; however, you must verify your registration for this test with the ESL Office, 1112 UCC, by **[date]**.

# The first test, the [English Speaking Proficiency Assessment](https://esl.uiowa.edu/programs/teaching-assistant-preparation-english/english-speaking-proficiency-assessment) (ESPA), will evaluate your general spoken English proficiency. If you pass the ESPA test, you will take the [English Language Performance Test](https://esl.uiowa.edu/programs/teaching-assistant-preparation-english/english-language-performance-test) (ELPT) to assess your language proficiency in a classroom context. For the ELPT, which is video recorded, you will make a brief presentation on a topic in your discipline in order to test your ability to present material in a classroom setting. You will not be tested on your knowledge of your discipline, but only on your ability to present material and answer questions in English during your presentation. The results of these evaluations will determine the teaching responsibilities for which you are qualified (fully certified or conditionally certified). Those who receive conditional certification must enroll in appropriate English language courses in the Teaching Assistant Preparation in English (TAPE) Program and then be reevaluated.

Students who submit a Test of English as a Foreign Language: Internet-based Test (TOEFL iBT) speaking subscore of 26 and listening subscore of 25 are exempt from taking the ESPA but will be required to take the ELPT. Students who receive a score of 60 on the ESPA are exempt from taking the ELPT and will be fully certified.

The ESL Office is continuing to work towards streamlining the testing process. Please consult the following link for the latest information on testing standards/process: https://esl.uiowa.edu/programs/teaching-assistant-preparation-english.

## [Required for Teaching Assistants] [Choose one] [For those first-time teaching assistants whose *first* language is not English]:

1. By the end of your first year as a teaching assistant, you are expected to have attained a B certification (able to handle a discussion section). Your college will **not** approve any appointment forms for second-year teaching assistants who have not met this criterion.
2. If you are a teaching assistant in a science-related department and are in charge of a lab section, you are expected to obtain a C certification (assist in a lab with immediate supervision) by the end of your first year. Your college will **not** approve any appointment forms for second year teaching assistants who have not met this criterion.
3. If you are a teaching assistant in a foreign language department, you are expected to obtain a C-level certification (teach a foreign language class where the language of instruction is not English).

**[Required for Teaching Assistants] Iowa Board of Regents’ Teaching Proficiency Standard**

The Iowa Board of Regents’ policy on teaching proficiency standards for teaching assistants is designed to ensure that all teaching assistants are proficient in their instruction. In consonance with the Regents’ policy, each department or program has prepared a plan on how they intend to monitor their respective teaching assistants.

First-time teaching assistants (those who have not taught at the University of Iowa previously) will have a preliminary assessment conducted by their employing department within the first eight weeks of the semester in which they have assigned teaching duties.

**University Email Accounts**

All graduate assistants are required to use the e-mail account and address provided to them by the University for all email communication related to your graduate assistantship. Please note that all official university, college, and department email communications will be sent to your University e-mail account.

**Intellectual Property Policy**

By accepting this appointment, you agree to assign any intellectual property developed within the scope of the graduate assistantship to the University as a condition of your employment and consistent with all of the provisions of the University of Iowa *Intellectual Property Policy* or related policies.

Please refer to the [University of Iowa Intellectual PropertyPolicy](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/administrative-financial-and-facilities-policies/university-iowa-intellectual-property-policy).

**Performance Management**

Graduate assistants who receive a negative review or demonstrate unacceptable performance may be subject to one or more of the following measures, taking in consultation with the applicable associate dean of graduate education and local human resources:

* a professional improvement plan, and/or
* a reassignment.

Performance measures beyond those listed above will be undertaken *only* in consultation with the applicable associate dean of graduate education, local human resources, and University Employee and Labor Relations. Those measures may include or result in the following:

* a reduced level of appointment,
* a cancellation of the spring 2025 commitment, and/or
* termination of the appointment.

**Family Educational Right Act (FERPA) Training Requirement**

The Family Educational Right Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects privacy of student records. In accordance with that law, the University requires course instructors, including Graduate Teaching Assistants, to complete the University of Iowa’s [FERPA training](https://registrar.uiowa.edu/faculty-and-staff-ferpa-training). Therefore, all teaching assistants must complete the training/term **before the semester starts**.

Graduate Teaching Assistants are required to retake FERPA training every three years.

**Harassment Prevention Education Requirement**

The University of Iowa is committed to the creation and maintenance of a positive work environment for all. Toward this goal and per the University of Iowa’s [*Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct*](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/community-policies/sexual-harassment-and-sexual-misconduct/education-programs), you are required to successfully complete an approved harassment prevention education course during the first two months (six months if not identified as an academic administrative officer per the policy) of employment and to complete periodic trainings as outlined in the university’s Policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct. Once you begin employment, you may satisfy this requirement by completing an approved online course or instructor-led course (if available).

To view your initial due date for completion of this course, log in to the [UI Compliance & Qualifications system](https://compliance.hr.uiowa.edu/my_compliances), locate the “Harassment Prevention” compliance on your dashboard, and click “View Details.”  The appropriate harassment prevention courses based on your current role at the university will be displayed. Simply click the “Enroll in Course” button to begin.

Further information about the education requirement and login instructions are available on the Office of Institutional Equity’s [Harassment Prevention Education](https://diversity.uiowa.edu/programs/training-programs/harassment-prevention-education-course-information) website.

**Resource for Questions**

In the meantime, if you have questions regarding this appointment and/or included benefits, please contact me at **[**j-doe@uiowa.edu], **[319-335-xxxx]** or Professor **[insert DGS]** at **[**j-doe@uiowa.edu], **[319-335-xxxx]**.

Please let me know as soon as possible, but no later than [**date**], whether you accept this offer. If you do accept, I ask that you sign and return one copy of all of the pages of this letter to **[person]** at [**email**] as a pdf file or by regular mail.

Sincerely,

Signature of Chair **[DEO or DGS]** Date

I ACCEPT THIS GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP APPOINTMENT UNDER THE TERMS DESCRIBED ABOVE.

Signature of Candidate Date

*Updated: January 2024*