Standard Appointment Letter of Offer

# Graduate Teaching Assistants

Academic (9 month) Year Appointments (Fall and Winter)

***REVISED April 10, 2024***

#### Preparation Information

* Date the letter of offer after all university signatures are obtained but prior to sending to candidate for signature. Print the final version on letterhead stationery.
* Print the first page of the Award Agreement on letterhead stationery.
* Format the finished letter of offer and award agreement documents so that the signatures are not left dangling alone on a page.
* Bracketed items: choose from the bracketed items, and/or to fill in with information when appropriate. Bracketed items may also provide directions to you regarding information to be put in the letter of offer or award agreement document. The brackets and the unused bracketed notes should be deleted.
* Blank lines: fill in, as appropriate.
* Renumber the conditions that begin on page two of the Award Agreement after you eliminate those that do not apply to your new graduate assistant.

Name

Dear :

On behalf of the [School/College/Division] of and the Department of ,

[We are pleased to inform you that your application for admission to our graduate program beginning the Semester has been approved. You will be receiving official notification of your admission to the Graduate School from the Director of Graduate Admissions. **OR** congratulations on your admission to the Graduate School.] [In addition,]

**OR** we are pleased to offer you an appointment as a Graduate TeachingAssistantfor the \_\_-\_\_ academic year. The term of the appointment is to begin on or about \_\_\_-\_\_\_-\_\_\_ (depending upon when all pre-appointment conditions are satisfied) and extend through \_\_\_-\_\_\_-\_\_\_. Your compensation will be $\_\_\_\_\_\_ [Enter salary figure, not total value of award. This figure should be identical to the figure entered as "Compensation" on page one of the Award Agreement.]Additional benefits and conditions of your award are outlined in the Award Agreement enclosed with this letter. Your appointment classification is contingent upon the specific nature of your assignment. Modifications to your assignment may result in a change in your classification. If such a change occurs, it will not reduce your compensation or your fringe benefits.

This offer is a clear indication of the confidence your department and college have in your academic ability and is made in recognition of your accomplishments and potential. If, as we hope, you find this offer to be satisfactory as presented, would you please indicate your acceptance by signing, dating and returning the original and one copy (enclosed) of this letter and the Award Agreement. An additional copy of each document is enclosed for your file. The WSU Graduate School strongly encourages all colleges and programs to honor the Council of Graduate Schools resolution on responding to acceptance offers: <https://cgsnet.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/CGS_April15_Resolution_Jan312024.pdf>. Correspondingly, an offer for which a signed acceptance is not received within days [for international students, allow enough time to receive and return documents] of the date tendered may be rescinded and become null and void. Should you wish to decline this offer, please write the [Dean **OR** Department Chairperson **OR** Graduate Officer] immediately so that the position might be offered to another candidate.

This offer is contingent upon the completion of a satisfactory background check that is required by university policy for this position, including, but not limited to, a criminal background check. If the university determines that your background check results are unsatisfactory, this offer shall be revoked. This offer is also contingent upon the completion of the campus health and safety requirements or request for a waiver before your start date. These requirements can be found at <https://wayne.edu/coronavirus/vaccine-mandate>. If the University determines that the aforementioned requirement has not been satisfactorily met, this offer shall be revoked.

In compliance with the Clery Act, the University publishes it Security and Fire Safety Report annually. This document is posted on the Wayne State University Police Department website, [www.police.wayne.edu/](http://www.police.wayne.edu/), on the Dean of Students Office website, [www.doso.wayne.edu/](http://www.doso.wayne.edu/), and on the Office of the General Counsel website, [www.generalcounsel.wayne.edu/](http://www.generalcounsel.wayne.edu/). It can be downloaded from any of these three sites. Please take a few moments to read it carefully. It provides an overview of Wayne State’s public safety resources, policies and procedures. This report also provides information on how you can prevent crime and increase your safety and security on campus, so please take a few moments to carefully review it.

We look forward to your favorable response which should be returned directly to the [Dean **OR** Department Chairperson **OR** attention of ].

Sincerely,

[Principal Investigator] Chair[Type in the name]

[Type in the name. This signature is required only in the case of external funding]

Dean [Type in the name]

Enclosures[tax forms, etc.]

I accept the terms and conditions of this offer.

Candidate [Type in the GTA’s legal name]  Date

[pc: Office of International Students and Scholars]

**Wayne State University**

# Award Agreement

As a Graduate Teaching Assistant, you will be eligible for inclusion in the University's subsidized medical, vision and dental insurance programs. If you are already covered by a medical insurance program, you may be eligible for an option, which provides cash in lieu of medical insurance coverage. Additional information regarding your benefits can be found by visiting the WSU Total Compensation and Wellness website at:  [www.hr.wayne.edu/tcw/benefits/](http://www.hr.wayne.edu/tcw/benefits/). This offer also includes a scholarship covering up to ten graduate credits of tuition for each semester of your appointment during the academic year.

The estimated value of this offer may be summarized as follows:

Compensation for the 9-month period

 Medical Insurance for 12 months (coverage through spring/summer)

 Vision Care Insurance for 12 months (coverage through spring/summer)

 Dental Insurance for 12 months (coverage through spring/summer)

Tuition scholarship for up to 10 graduate completed credits per semester

of the academic year.

 Estimated Value of Award

[If your assistantship performance and academic progress within the department of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ are satisfactory during this year, we will provide you with an additional year(s) of support.]

[Renewal of appointments is not automatic and depends upon the availability of assistantship positions within our department.]

In anticipation of your affirmative response, we are enclosing certain personnel forms (Employee Data Form, insurance forms, tax cards, etc.) that should be completed and returned with your acceptance. This will facilitate the timely processing of your assistantship appointment and related benefits. The effective date of your appointment will be contingent upon the completion of the pre-employment forms.

Graduate Teaching Assistant awards are granted and continued through the duration of the appointment based on satisfactory academic progress within the department of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and contingent upon the conditions outlined below. Your complete academic record and degree status will be reviewed prior to the starting date to ensure that the appointment requirements have been met. As a GTA, you are represented in employment matters relative to wages, hours and working conditions by the Graduate Employees Organizing Committee/American Federation of Teachers (GEOC-AFT). The terms of employment between the university and represented graduate assistants are governed by the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) between the university and the GEOC-AFT. The nature of your assignment by the department will determine whether this union represents you.

A copy of the WSU/GEOC-AFT CBA may be obtained via the Graduate School website.

<https://gradschool.wayne.edu/funding/assistantships-geoc>

Under current law, GEOC represented GTAs and GSAs have the following options:

1. Pay dues as a member of the GEOC-AFT union.
2. Pay a voluntary fair share fee to the GEOC-AFT union.
3. Do not pay membership dues or agency fees.

To authorize payroll deductions for GEOC membership dues or voluntary fair share fees, you may complete the GEOC Union Membership/Voluntary Fair Share Card, available from the GEOC website:

<https://www.geocwsu.com/become-a-member>

If you do not return a card, no payroll deductions will take place.

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Specifically, it is required that during each semester of your appointment, you will:

 1. Satisfactorily complete a minimum of six credits of graduate coursework or research that contribute directly to the satisfaction of degree requirements. Please note that although a minimum of six graduate credits is required for the assistantship, official University policy defines eight credits as full-time status for a graduate student. You may enroll for no more than twelve credits during your semester appointment. Because your tuition scholarship will pay for a maximum of ten graduate credits per semester, you will be responsible for paying the assessment for credits above that provided by the scholarship.

1. maintain at least a[3.0] [\_\_\_]grade point average
2. provide approximately twenty hours of satisfactory service per week **over** the course of a semester for this half-time appointment. Service activities may include [teaching contact and class preparation time, attendance at weekly course meetings, grading, office hours for students, review sessions].

In addition, please note the following conditions.

1. [Use only if the candidate has not completed requirements for the Bachelor's degree when the offer is tendered.] Since you have not yet completed the Bachelor's degree, this offer is contingent upon the completion of the requirements for that degree (and providing substantiating evidence thereof) prior to the effective date of this appointment. If such requirements are not satisfied by that date, this offer shall be null and void.
2. [Use if the candidate is new or if there has been a break in service and the candidate is returning to the University] Federal law requires an employee to provide evidence of identity and employment authorization. In order to do that, the employee must appear in person to complete the U.S. Government Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification, and provide acceptable documents that verify eligibility to work in the United States. Completion of Form I-9, Employment Eligibility Verification must take place no later than three days of the start date of service to the University. Wayne State University is an E-Verify employer and an additional query will be submitted to the E-Verify system to complete the employment eligibility process.

Employees of Wayne State University may present their documents for employment eligibility verification on or prior to the first day of work as long as they have first completed Section 1 of the Form I-9, which may be done by logging on to [www.newi9.com](file:///%5C%5Cwww.newi9.com%5C). Instructions for the completion of Section 1 of the Form I-9 using I-9 eXpress are attached. Please do not complete Section 1 until you are notified that you have cleared the background check that was discussed in your letter of offer. If you are a citizen or permanent resident of the United States and if you have completed the I-9 process at the University within the last three years, you will have already completed this requirement.

3. [Use only for Non-Citizens] Since you are not a citizen of the United States or a lawful permanent resident, this appointment is contingent upon your holding and maintaining approved employment authorization by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. If you work prior to your official start date, the work will be considered to be “unauthorized employment” by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which is a violation of status and basis for termination.  As well, this appointment is contingent upon your holding and maintaining approved employment authorization by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. It is necessary to update this process in the [NAME OF DEPARTMENT] prior to each assignment.

4.[Use only if the candidate's primary language is not English and the responsibilities of the appointment include teaching duties]Graduate Teaching Assistants whose first language is not English must demonstrate competency in spoken English prior to assuming classroom teaching duties. Competency is established through a minimum passing score (50) on the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK) administered and scored at Wayne State University.

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Candidates who obtain a score of 45 on the SPEAK examination are eligible to teach without restriction for one term only. However, they will be required to participate in and successfully complete an appropriate remedial course as recommended by the English Language Institute. To continue unrestricted teaching beyond one term, they must successfully complete such a course or obtain a score of at least 50 upon retaking the SPEAK test.

Candidates who obtain a score of 40 or below may enroll in English 0520 or in more basic courses as assigned by the English Language Institute. These students are to be assigned responsibilities other than classroom teaching, but are to be retained throughout the duration of their contract.

5. [Use for grant accounts only] At least a major portion of your compensation is being derived from grant/contract funds; that is, your appointment is specifically conditioned on subsidy. Any renewal or extension of assignment is entirely dependent upon your satisfactory performance and upon the continuation of the subsidy. Should the subsidy be terminated or reduced, there is no direct, indirect or implied commitment by the Principal Investigator, the Department, the College, or Wayne State University to continue your employment (compensation) beyond the cessation of, or reduction in, the subsidy.

[The remaining sections should be included in all Award Agreements.]

6. Graduate Teaching Assistants may not hold other positions within the University without prior written permission of their assistantship supervisor, their academic advisor**,** and The Graduate School. It is the responsibility of the Assistant to determine whether or not the prior written approval has been obtained before engaging in any additional service assignment. Graduate Teaching Assistants may hold part-time outside employment with the understanding that the first obligation and commitment is to Wayne State University. The outside employment shall not interfere with responsibilities assigned or inherent in the graduate assistant’s position or academic program at the University. A Graduate Teaching Assistant may not teach more than one course at another institute of higher learning or be otherwise employed outside the University for greater than 20 hours per week without consulting with his or her departmentally-recognized academic advisor and receiving a signed confirmation of such consultation from said advisor in advance. A Graduate Teaching Assistant may not use Wayne State University course materials, curricula, or other materials in any outside employment. Upon the request of his/her department chair or graduate advisor, Graduate Teaching Assistants who hold outside employment shall submit a detailed report to his/her department detailing all outside employment.

7. The tuition scholarship pays for graduate credits that are on the plan of work and are completed and/or for courses authorized by the employee’s academic advisor and graduate director to be relevant to the employee’s graduate degree. It will not pay the assessment for undergraduate credits, for audited classes, or for courses from which a student has withdrawn, i.e. not completed.

1. Acceptance of a term appointment is an acknowledgment of notice that service terminates at the end of the period for which appointed; this offer carries no presumption of renewal.
2. The terms of this agreement may not be modified or altered by any oral statements or representations. This agreement may be modified only in writing signed by a university official as authorized by university policy.

10. Assistants are exempt from Social Security payments as long as they are enrolled at least half-time during their appointment.

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Approved by:

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[Principal Investigator] Chair [Type in the name]

[Type in the name. This signature is required only in the case of external funding]

Dean [Type in the name]

Enclosures[tax forms, etc.]

I accept the terms and conditions of this offer.

Candidate [Type in the GTA’s legal name] Date

[pc: Office of International Students and Scholars]