## MODEL LETTER NEW APPOINTMENT FALL 2020 and FALL/SPRING (AY20-21)

**============================================================= TEACHING ONLY**

Date of offer

# Dear :

On behalf of the Department of , I am pleased to offer you a [quarter/third/half-time] appointment as a Teaching Assistant. For the Academic Year (AY) 2020–21, this appointment carries a minimum stipend of [$10,020.50 for quarter-time/$13,227.06 for one-third-time/$20,041 for half-time]. The term of the appointment is for Academic Year 2020-21, and begins on Wednesday, August 19, 2020, which is three full working days prior to the start of fall semester classes. You will receive all payments by direct deposit and you will need to sign up for direct deposit on the University of Iowa self-service web site: <https://login.uiowa.edu/uip/login.page?service=https://hris.uiowa.edu/portal/> .

Your appointment carries a 100% tuition scholarship each semester based upon the Iowa Board of Regents resident graduate student tuition rate for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences which can be found at [https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page.](https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page) You will also receive a fee scholarship for 50% (half) of the mandatory student fees assessed for fall and spring semesters. For a summary of the mandatory fees that are covered, please see <https://registrar.uiowa.edu/mandatory-fees>.

On the following pages, you will find the specific terms of this offer, including more detailed information about the tuition and mandatory fee scholarships and benefits. The University will contribute toward your health insurance as a benefit of this appointment with specific deadlines for enrollment. In addition, you will be expected to follow the other policies of the University, as related to your status as a graduate student in good standing and an employee.

Please let me know as soon as possible, but no later than **April 15, 2020,** whether you accept this offer. If you do accept, I ask that you sign and return one copy of all the pages of this letter and the attachment to (person) at (email) as a pdf file or by regular mail.

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 <http://hr.uiowa.edu/immigration/i-9-information>). 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. For a copy of the Graduate Assistant Employment Agreement see [https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-assistant-employment.](https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-assistant-employment)

Sincerely,

Professor and Chair

TERMS OF OFFER FOR NEW TEACHING ASSISTANT APPOINTMENT

## (it is indicated below which language is required and which language is optional)

**General Terms of Employment**

**(Required)** The initial term of this [quarter/third/half-time] appointment is for [fall/spring] *beginning [choose one: August 19, 2020 three work days before the first day of classes for the fall 2020 semester or January 19, 2021 for the spring 2021 semester* of the 2020–21 academic year. For the academic year 2020–21, this appointment carries a full time tuition scholarship at the resident graduate student rate for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and a 50% mandatory fees scholarship. Tuition for 2020-21 has not been determined yet, and we expect it to be finalized by the Board of Regents in June 2020 at which time it will be posted at <https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page>. Tuition for full time resident graduate students in the Graduate College is based on enrollment for 9 hours or more. This amount shall be prorated for enrollment in a lesser number of credit hours. Your 50% of mandatory fees scholarship will cover one- half of the mandatory fees assessed to you per semester. Mandatory fees are those listed in the tuition/fee tables at [https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.](https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page)  You are responsible for the other half of the mandatory fees assessed and for 100% of all other non-mandated fees.

**(Optional)** You will be required to participate in the College/Department orientation for new Teaching Assistants on [insert date or TBD]

**(Required)** By my signature accepting this appointment, I hereby assign any future Intellectual Property to the University as a condition of my employment and consistent with all of the provisions of the University of Iowa *Intellectual Property Policy* or related policies. Please refer to [https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/administrative-financial-](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/administrative-financial-and-facilities-policies/university-iowa-intellectual-property-policy) [and-facilities-policies/university-iowa-intellectual-property-policy.](https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/administrative-financial-and-facilities-policies/university-iowa-intellectual-property-policy)

**(Optional)** This appointment is contingent upon ( contingencies ).

Examples of contingencies include:

* maintaining a designated GPA (if already departmental practice)
* meeting English proficiency standards (if relevant)
* attendance at orientation and training
* receiving satisfactory student evaluations from your current appointment

(See below for options/examples for additional language for appointments contingent upon specific performance.)

**(Required) [Where applicable—choose one]**:

Duration:

1. Specific degree requirements, employment tenure, and assistantship duties vary for each specialty area, with a maximum renewability of (number of semesters/academic years/fiscal years), or the equivalent. Approval of renewal applicants will be based upon factors including the quality of work during the previous appointment, satisfactory progress toward the degree, and satisfactory completion of all duties relating to the appointment.
2. The department of (department) limits assistantship support to (number) years for those pursuing a Master’s degree and to (number) years for those pursuing a Ph.D. Each year, approval of renewal will be based upon factors including the quality of work during the previous appointment, satisfactory progress toward the degree, and satisfactory completion of all duties related to the appointment.

**(Required)** Graduate teaching and research assistant appointments or employment terms and conditions are governed by the University Operations Manual, Graduate College and Department policies, (see <https://opsmanual.uiowa.edu/> and  [https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-assistant-employment](https://www.grad.uiowa.edu/graduate-assistant-employment-2017-2018) and, regarding base wages, a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Regents, State of Iowa and UE local 896/COGS.

**(Required)** The Department/College recommends that you register for fall classes earlier than required to facilitate the scheduling of your courses. Teaching Assistants reappointed for the spring semester are required to register for spring classes by the end of the fall semester, and in no case later than December 31.

**(Required)** The University will classify you as a resident for tuition purposes during the semesters you hold an appointment of 25% time or greater. However, your classification with the University as a whole will remain unchanged if you are a nonresident; you will only be considered a resident for tuition purposes. Your tuition scholarship will be applied as a credit toward your tuition bill. For enrollments of fewer than 9 semester hours, the tuition scholarship will be prorated accordingly (<http://www.registrar.uiowa.edu/default.aspx>). If you hold TA/RA appointments in more than one department, your tuition bill will be credited only once. Fees for full-time residents for AY 2020-21 have not been determined yet. We expect fees to be approved by the Board of Regents in June 2020, at which time they will be posted at <https://www.maui.uiowa.edu/maui/pub/tuition/rates.page>. The tuition and mandatory fee scholarships are contingent upon maintaining your appointment for the entire semester, academic year, or fiscal year.

# **(Required)** 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 UCC.

**(Optional)** The tuition scholarship total noted above (does/does not) include specific scholarships made available by (list specific sources of funding/support, e.g. named scholarships/other financial awards). These specific tuition awards (are/are not) in addition to the total listed above.

**(Required)** Tuition and fees for the fall 2020 semester will be billed on the first working day of August 2020, and for the spring 2021 semester on the first working day of January 2021, with payments due the 22nd of each month. As a University employee, Graduate Assistants may elect to pay their tuition and fees through payroll deduction in order to coordinate the first tuition payment with the first payroll of their academic year appointment. By utilizing payroll deductions, your tuition and fees will be paid in three installments without being charged a reinstatement or deferred payment fee. To utilize this payment option, log into the University self-service site : [HawkID Login for Employee Self Service](https://login.uiowa.edu/uip/auth.page?type=web_server&client_id=hris&redirect_uri=https%3A%2F%2Fhris.uiowa.edu%2Fportal%2Findex.php&response_type=code&scope=workflow.api.hris), click on the University Bill link and authorize payroll deduction through the pay U-Bill button. Please contact the University Billing Office directly regarding any questions you have about University billing procedures.

**(Required)** If you fail to be available to start your appointment on August 19, 2020 or January 19, 2021, if reappointed, 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.

## Benefits

**(Required)** 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: <https://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits/ui-student-insurance> University insurance contributions will start the first of the month after your appointment and submission of an initial insurance application.

## Specific to Teaching Assistants

**(Required)** In addition, we would like to take this time to state our expectations for your effort as a [quarter/third/half-time] graduate assistant. Below is an example of the average effort over the term of your appointment that we expect in our department for a new graduate assistant like you. [**Departments: if you have already created a College approved TA effort chart please use that instead of this template.]**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | Fall 2020 | Spring 2021 |
| Contact Hours |  |  |
| Prep/grading |  |  |
| Office Hours |  |  |
| TA Training |  |  |
| Other\* |  |  |
| Total |  |  |

\*Other work may include, but is not restricted to, handling grade complaints or academic dishonesty, or subbing for TAs who are ill.

The above chart establishes a guideline for expectations; you are scheduled for a five-day workweek (Monday- Friday) regardless of the appointment percentage, unless altered in writing by your direct supervisor. The exact weekly schedule and assignment of duties will be determined by your supervisor, in consultation with you. It is reasonable to expect small variations in the number of hours allocated to each activity in any given week.

## (Required) [Choose one]

1. As a teaching assistant you will be scheduled to teach (course title/number). In this role, you will be required to (describe the level of teaching responsibility). This specific assignment may change due to unforeseen circumstances. Your teaching supervisor will be .
2. As a teaching assistant, you will be given a teaching assignment, once such assignments have been determined. We will inform you of your specific assignment and who your teaching supervisor will be as soon as your specific assignment is known.

**(Required)** As a Teaching Assistant, you will be expected to follow the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ teaching policies, which are described at <https://clas.uiowa.edu/faculty>(see Undergraduate Teaching Policies and Resources). All Teaching Assistants are required to use the e-mail account and address provided to them by the University. All communication from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will come to Teaching Assistants via e-mail.

**(Optional)** In the event of an absence, it is the responsibility of the teaching assistant to make a good- faith effort to find a replacement. However, the department is responsible for the coverage of classes.

**(Required)** 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 Regents 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.

**(Required) [For those new Teaching Assistants being offered appointment for the full academic year 2020–21]**: This appointment is guaranteed for the fall 2020 semester. It may be renewed for Spring 2021 pending the successful review of oral communication competency at mid-term.

**(Required) [For those Teaching Assistants whose *first* language is not English, including U.S. citizens— required for first-time Teaching Assistants]**: Because this is your first appointment as a Teaching Assistant, 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 officially register for this test with the ESL Office, 1112 UCC, on the ESL registration date.

# The first test, the English Speaking Proficiency Assessment (ESPA), will evaluate your general spoken English proficiency. The test is given in a laboratory setting and recorded digitally. If you pass the ESPA test, you will take the 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. For more information about these tests and to watch a video about the ESPA, please refer to [http://clas.uiowa.edu/esl/tape.](http://clas.uiowa.edu/esl/tape)

Students who submit a 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.

## (Required) [Choose one] [For those Teaching Assistants whose *first* language is not English–– required for first-time Teaching Assistants]:

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). The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences 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. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences 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)** 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. In particular, 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.

**(Required)** All new Teaching Assistants must complete sexual harassment prevention training by the **8th week** of the first semester of employment. In fall 2020, the final date for completion of the training is Friday, October 16.

**(Required) [Where applicable]**: It is possible that a Teaching Assistant would receive a negative review at mid- term for these (above) or other reasons, in which case the result would be termination of the original appointment, and

* a reassignment;
* a reduced level of appointment; or
* a cancellation of the spring 2021 commitment.

Listed below are examples for additional language for appointments contingent upon specific performance.

## (Required) [Where applicable—choose one]:

1. The department commits to this appointment for the fall semester. It may be renewed for spring semester pending the successful review of teaching competence, including oral communication competence, at mid- term.
2. This appointment is contingent upon your matriculation into a graduate degree program at The University of Iowa and upon your full participation in our orientation/training for new/returning teachers. Orientation/training will be held (dates/times) .

**(Optional, where applicable) [For extradepartmental Teaching Assistants]:** In our department, extradepartmental Teaching Assistants do not have the same renewal process as departmental Teaching Assistants. In your specific case, we will make a decision on renewal no later than

(date of extradepartmental allocation ).

**(Required) [For all Teaching Assistant appointments except those Teaching Assistants in their final year of eligibility]:** Renewal of this appointment for the academic year 2021–22 is contingent upon satisfactory academic and teaching performance, as specified in the Department’s (or School’s) Teaching Assistant Renewal Guidelines.

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

Signature of Candidate Date

*Update: February 2020*