**COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES**

**MODEL LETTER OFFERING A NEW TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP (AY 17-18)**

**=============================================================**

 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. The term of the appointment is for [Academic Year 2017-18/Fall 2017/Spring 2018]. Fall 2017 classes begin on August 21, 2017. For the Academic Year (AY) 2017–18, this appointment carries a minimum stipend of [$9,408 for quarter-time/$12,552 for one-third-time/$18,816 for a half-time] and a 100% tuition scholarship each semester based upon the 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> . You will also receive a fee scholarship for 50% of the mandatory student fees assessed for fall and spring semesters.

 On the following page, you will find the specific terms of this offer, including detailed information about the tuition and fee scholarships. Health insurance is also available with this appointment and has 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, 2017 whether you accept this offer. If you do accept, I ask that you sign and return one copy of this letter and attachment. You are also 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 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.

Sincerely,

Professor and Chair

TERMS OF OFFER OF NEW TEACHING ASSISTANT APPOINTMENT

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

**(Required)** The initial term of this [half/quarter/third-time] appointment is for [fall/spring ……….. *beginning [choose one: August 16, 2017 or January 10, 2018], three days before the first day of classes for the [fall ……/spring ……] semester* of the 2017–18 academic year. For the academic year 2017–18, this appointment carries a full tuition scholarship at the resident graduate student rate for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences. You are responsible for 50% of your fees. Tuition and fees for full-time resident graduate students in the Graduate College – registered for 9 credit hours or more – for the 2017-18 academic year are set at $10,113.50. (See tuition scholarship information below.)

**(Required)** The University of Iowa prohibits discrimination in employment, educational programs, and activities on the basis of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual. The university also affirms its commitment to providing equal opportunities and equal access to university facilities. For additional information on nondiscrimination policies, contact the Director, Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity, the University of Iowa, 202 Jessup Hall, Iowa City, IA, 52242-1316, 319-335-0705 (voice), 319-335-0697 (TDD), diversity@uiowa.edu.

**(Required)** You will be invited to attend a general University orientation for Teaching Assistants. This orientation occurs once a year in the Fall. While attendance at this University orientation is optional, it does provide information related to the benefits of your employment.

**(Optional)** You will be required to participate in the …… College/Department orientation …… for new Teaching Assistants on …….

**(Required** In addition we would like to take this time to also state our expectations for your effort as a [half/quarter/third-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 2017 | Spring 2018 |
| 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.

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

 Examples of contingencies include:

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

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

**(Required)** The Department/College recommends that you register for classes earlier than required to facilitate the scheduling of your courses.

**(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. Full-time resident tuition for Graduate College students in 2017-18 are **$4,539** per academic semester (spring or fall) or **$9,078** per academic year. Full time resident fees are $**517.75** per academic session. You will be awarded a 50% scholarship for thes mandatory fees assessed to you. You will be awarded a full tuition scholarship at the resident graduate student rate for the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, which 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.

**(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 2017 semester will be billed on the first working day of August 2017, and for the spring 2018 semester on the first working day of January 2018, 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, you must complete a Payroll Deduction Authorization form, which is available on the University Billing Office web site, located at

<http://ubill.fo.uiowa.edu/files/ubill.fo.uiowa.edu/files/payroll-deduct.pdf>. Please contact the University Billing Office directly regarding any questions you have about University billing procedures.

**(Required)** Your base wages for this position are governed by a collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Regents, State of Iowa and UE Local 896/COGS, the union representing graduate teaching and research assistants at The University of Iowa. Copies of this collective bargaining agreement are available from the Union and may be viewed from either the University web site: <http://hr.uiowa.edu/bargaining/cogs> or from the Union web site: <http://www.cogs.org>.

**(Required)** The University contributes toward health and dental benefits for graduate assistants and their dependents. There are deadlines for enrollment into these plans. The University Benefits Office may be contacted for additional information regarding benefits associated with this appointment at the following link: <http://hr.uiowa.edu/benefits/student>. University contributions will start the first of the month after your appointment and the completion of an initial insurance application.

**(Required)** If you fail to be available to start your appointment three working days before the start of each semester, [choose one: *August 16, 2017 or January 10, 2018*] 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.

**(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 College of Liberal Arts and Sciences’ teaching policies, which are described at <http://www.clas.uiowa.edu/faculty/teaching/index.shtml>. 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.

**(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 2017–18]**:This appointment is guaranteed for the Fall 2017 semester. It may be renewed for Spring 2018 pending the successful review of oral communication competence 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 Tuesday, August 8, 2017.

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>.

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 end of the quarter in which they are hired. In Fall 2017, the final date for completion of the training is September 30, 2017.

(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 2018 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 2017 semester. It may be renewed for Spring 2016 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) .

(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) [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 2018–19 is contingent upon satisfactory academic and teaching performance, as specified in the Department’s (or School’s) Teaching Assistant Renewal Guidelines.

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Signature of Candidate Date