

Graduate Teaching Assistant Overview

Description

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTA) support and assist faculty with teaching and learning activities and tasks. A GTA performs all duties under the supervision and direction of the faculty member responsible for the course. Colleges, departments, and supervising faculty determine whether supervision is in person based upon GTA and course needs.

Tasks for this role could include:

- Conduct classroom instruction under the direction/supervision of RIT faculty
- Set up and lead laboratory section(s)
- Lead a discussion/recitation section in support of a course
- Hold a tutoring session in support of a course taught by a faculty member
- Post materials in MyCourses and respond to student questions in person and virtually
- Hold regular office hours
- Grade student work, which can include posting grades in MyCourses. (Faculty supervisor must enter final grades in SIS)

Details:

- Exempt employee
- Paid a regular bi-weekly salary
- 20 hours per week maximum during the academic term while classes are in session
- Students in this role may receive tuition remission. Tuition remission is uncommon for master's students and is dependent on department funding. More information about tuition remission is available [here](#).

Position requirements

1. Student is a full-time or full-time equivalent graduate student at RIT's Henrietta campus
2. Student is under the close supervision of RIT faculty/staff
3. The teaching environment is provided by RIT
4. A GTA cannot exceed 100% effort, which is the equivalent of 20 hours per week. If a GTA is at 100% effort, they cannot hold in any other work position on campus (i.e. GRA, GTRN, GA)
5. All students in a GTA position must complete a required, asynchronous training, *GTA Foundations*, in MyCourses each academic year

Student Pay

- GTA pay rates must fall within the minimum and maximum salary rates defined in the Graduate Assistant Payrates document posted on the student employment website under [Graduate Assistant Guides](#).
- GTAs are entitled to time off during break weeks between academic terms and observed University holidays. Academic terms are considered active times for teaching, and requests for time off are granted at the sole discretion of the faculty advisor. Salary payments cannot be reduced or modified for leave, vacation, or sick time during the academic term. GTAs are eligible for certain time off benefits, including New York State Paid Sick Leave and Paid Family Leave.
- *Tax Treatment:* For U.S. citizens and resident aliens, GTAs will receive an Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W2 at the end of each year documenting the gross payment amount. GTAs typically have taxes (Federal and New York State) withheld from GTA payments. The amount of tax withholding depends on the IRS Form W9 completed by the student. More information is available <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/on-campus-employment#faq>.
 - International students may have other taxes withheld from GTA payments. This depends upon whether the US has a tax treaty with the student's home country.

Please refer to the guidance from International Student Services for more information. <https://www.rit.edu/iss/taxes>

- GTA Students are encouraged to file a US Income Tax return by April 15th to possibly receive a tax refund. Students are encouraged to consult with a professional tax advisor about their individual situation.

Student Actions for a GTA position

Students will need to take the following steps for a GTA position.

- Confirm you are enrolled full time or full-time equivalent for the term
- Ensure your current address in SIS is up to date and a U.S. address. Students must keep their SIS information up to date with their current address.
- Complete your I 9 <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/on-campus-employment#completing-the-i-9>
- Complete all steps in your task list in Workday including federal and state withholding forms, paid family leave waiver, and setting up direct deposit.
- Complete any Glacier paperwork (international students)
- Accept the GTA position

Questions and Contacts

- For questions about a student's GTA position or payment, contact studentemployment@rit.edu
- For questions about the GTA position or expectations, contact your faculty advisor
- Guidelines and forms for GTA supervisors are available here: <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/employers/on-campus-supervisors>
- On campus employment information for students <https://www.rit.edu/careerservices/students/on-campus-employment>

Graduate Teaching Assistant FAQ

Are GTAs required to take a teaching course or complete training prior to being hired into the role?

All students in a GTA position must complete a required, asynchronous training, *GTA Foundations*, in MyCourses each academic year. Some colleges/departments may require additional training, course preparation, or program status for students to qualify for a GTA position.

What does 'exempt employee' mean?

It means that the position is exempt from certain provisions in the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) and New York labor law. Teachers are considered exempt. GTAs qualify for the teaching exemption because, in addition to a variety of classroom-related duties, they lead lab sections and conduct classroom instruction under the direction of a faculty member. Positions that are classified as exempt must meet very specific criteria, and they are not eligible for overtime pay.

If a student has an assistantship appointment that is 50% in a GTA role and the balance as a Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), how is the student paid?

The student will be paid a bi-weekly salary for their GTA position and a bi-weekly stipend for their GRA appointment. Both payments are made on the same schedule.

However, these two payments are taxed differently, with employment taxes withheld for the GTA at the time of payment. For more information on taxes on GRA stipends, please refer to the [GRA Overview guide](#).

Can a GTA teach a course in addition to their GTA responsibilities?

Graduate students may be hired and paid as adjunct faculty, but the offer must be approved by the Dean of the college prior to hiring the graduate student in that role. Any questions about this process should be referred to Human Resources. Students working multiple roles must still adhere to the 20 hour per week limit.

Does a GTA receive tuition remission?

Students in this role may receive tuition remission, though it is uncommon for master's students. Tuition remission for master's students is dependent on department funding. More information about tuition remission is available [here](#).

Can a graduate student be a GTA and GRA at the same time?

Yes, a graduate student can be a GRA, GTRN, GTA, and/or Graduate Assistant (GA) position concurrently. The effort of all positions cannot exceed 100% or 20 hours per week during the academic year. Supervisors and students must follow the requirements, set-up, and tracking for each position. The student will receive a salary and/or a stipend based on how each position is managed and payments are made.

Can a student work in a GTA position remotely?

Under some circumstances, students can be granted permission to work in a GTA position from a remote location. The policy for remote student work can be found [here](#). Students and supervisors seeking approval must fill out the [remote work request form](#).

Can a student be in a GTA position while they are in a fellowship program?

In some cases, receiving financial support from one source prohibits additional support from another. If a student is already receiving fellowship support, the Graduate Program Director should contact [Sponsored Programs Accounting](#) (SPA) before offering a graduate assistantship, especially if either the fellowship or GTA appointment is federally-funded.

Both merit-based scholarships and tuition remission are non-taxable payments made to a graduate student for qualified education expenses such as tuition and fees. Both payments are made directly to a student's account by the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. Graduate assistants (GRA, GTRN, GTA, or GA) can receive both tuition remission and a merit-based scholarship.

Graduate assistantship policy requires students to be matriculated and enrolled full-time in a graduate program. What should be done when a student is completing their thesis or dissertation and no longer taking classes?

During the academic year, the student must be registered for the equivalent of 9 credit hours through a combination of course credit and equivalency as defined by the Registrar's Office to receive tuition remission and/or a wage or stipend in a graduate assistantship position (GRA, GTRN, GTA, GA). The academic department should send a completed [Full-time Equivalency Form](#) to the Registrar's Office.

Can an international student work another job on or off campus while in a GTA position?

International students should consult with [International Student Services](#) before participating in any form of off-campus employment. More information is available at their website: <https://www.rit.edu/iss/employment>.

Is a US address required in SIS for a student to be hired in Workday, or can they keep their permanent, international address?

Yes, a U.S. address is required in SIS for a student to be appointed (or hired) into any role. The student will not be able to be hired, and the supervisor will be instructed to refer the student to SIS to update their address. The U.S. address is required to be able to pay a student.