**LETTERHEAD: UW-Madison, Divisional, or Departmental – select as appropriate**

**TEACHING ASSISTANT “ACADEMIC” APPOINTMENT LETTER**

**EXEMPT TEMPLATE**

***Note: Teaching Assistants must receive an appointment letter for each semester of employment as a graduate assistant.***

[DATE]

[EMPLOYEE LEGAL NAME]

[WORK ADDRESS]

[WORK ADDRESS LINE 2]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

EIN: 396006492

***Optional: Add EMPL ID here or at end of letter***

This letter was delivered electronically to the recipient at: [email address].

Dear [EMPLOYEE NAME]:

Congratulations on your appointment as a [PERCENT] %-time [Teaching Assistant – Standard] or Teaching Assistant – Senior] (TA) appointment in the [OPERATIONAL AREA] of [DEPARTMENT NAME].

Include one of the following two statements in paragraph 1, depending on whether the appointment is part of a support guarantee.

**If the appointment is part of a support guarantee, use:**

This appointment represents the [FALL/SPRING SEMESTER OR ACADEMIC YEAR] of support under your initial guarantee of semesters. Classes begin on [DATE]. Refer to the [Academic Calendar](https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/) for more information.

OR

**If the appointment is not part of a support guarantee, use:**

This appointment is only for [FALL/SPRING SEMESTER OR ACADEMIC YEAR] and does not guarantee reappointment. Classes begin on [DATE]. Refer to the [Academic Calendar](https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/) for more information.

**Appointment Details**:

* Assigned to [COURSE NAME] under the direction of [COURSE INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD]
* [START DATE] through [END DATE]
* Stipend will be [$BIWEEKLY RATE] at the full-time academic pay rate of [$RATE] at [PERCENT] % time and prorated for any partial pay period
* XX hours per week
* Exempt position under FLSA
* Health insurance [included/not included]
* Tuition Remission [included/not included]
* Eligible for Sick Leave
* Includes Probation Period
* English Proficiency required [if applicable]

**Before or shortly after you begin your appointment, you must:**

* Complete Section 1 of Form I-9
* Complete Section 2 of Form I-9 (see I-9 Contact Name) using acceptable documents **within 3 days of staring work**
* Complete Criminal Background Check (CBC) [if required]
* Tell us if you have an existing appointment

**During your appointment, you must:**

* Complete payroll forms (see payroll coordinator name) **within 1 week of starting work**
* Maintain enrollment (2 credits for non-dissertator or 3 credits for dissertator) and satisfactory progress toward your degree
* Complete required training
  + Graduate Assistants Equity Workshop
  + Cybersecurity Awareness Training
  + FERPA: Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Training

**Employment Eligibility and Verification**

**Form 1-9**

You must verify your identity and work eligibility by completing Form I-9. Section 1 of the form must be completed online **on or before your first day of work**. Then, you must complete Section 2 of Form I-9 (see I-9 Contact Name) using acceptable documents **within 3 days of staring work**. For information on the Form I-9 and the list of acceptable documents, please see [the Forms section of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Service website](http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis).

**Criminal Background Check**

CBC may not be required, but for positions requiring a CBC:

Include if conducting a CBC, but it has not been completed yet:

This offer of assistantship depends on the results of a criminal background check. If the results are unacceptable, the offer will be withdrawn, or your existing appointment will be terminated.

Include if CBC is required because they’re in a position of trust:

Your position is considered a position of trust, which means you must complete a criminal background check (CBC) [**every four years** on all current employees and volunteers who hold a position of trust to include an Authorized Adult per [UW 1045: Youth Protection policy](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1045)] or [**every two years** on all current employees and volunteers working with minors as an Authorized Custodian or an Authorized Assistant Custodian per [UW-1045: Youth Protection policy](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1045)].

If you are in a position of trust and have access to vulnerable populations, you must **report any criminal arrest, charge, or conviction** (except minor traffic tickets that are only punishable by a fine) to your division’s Background Check Coordinator [CBC Coordinator’s Name] within **24 hours** or as soon as possible. Failing to report this information violates university policy and may lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal. These rules are in place to help keep our campus community safe for everyone.

**Export Control**

Please note: If you are applying for J-1 immigration status through the University, you may need to go through additional screening to ensure compliance with the federal export control regulations. If you have questions about export control regulations, please contact the [University’s Export Control Office](http://research.wisc.edu/integrity-and-other-requirements/export-control/).

**Payroll**

**Payroll Information:**

You will be paid every two weeks, on Thursdays. Information about your pay schedule, health insurance premium deductions, and taxes is available on the [Payroll Services website](https://hr.wisc.edu/pay/).

**FLSA:**

This appointment is exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), which means you are not eligible for overtime pay. This is based on your job duties and salary level according to the U.S. Department of Labor to the Fair Labor Standards Act. You are expected to fulfill the responsibilities of your position regardless of the number of hours worked. Contact your supervisor if you have questions about your work schedule or responsibilities.

**Benefits**

**Tuition\*:**

[Select one]:

You [WILL or WILL NOT] receive remission of your [NONRESIDENT OR RESIDENT] tuition. The tuition remission **does not cover** any special course or segregated fees, which will be your responsibility each term. The Board of Regents determines tuition and fees. For more information, please see the [Bursar’s Office website](https://businessservices.wisc.edu/making-payments/payments-to-students/tuition-remission/).

*\*Students enrolled in a tuition non-pooled (131) program are not eligible for tuition remission. If you are unsure whether the student is in a non-pooled (131) program, you may refer* [*here*](https://tableau.wisconsin.edu/#/views/CurrentStudentsinNon-PooledTuitionPrograms_16342164058570/StudentsinNon-PooledTuitionPrograms?:iid=1) *for a list of all students in these programs.*

Include if eligible for remission:

To be eligible for tuition remission, you must hold a graduate assistant position (TA, PA, RA, or LSA) with at least 33% appointment for the semester. Tuition remission is based on your FTE and hire dates, and it covers the full semester if you meet the requirements. For more details, please visit the Bursar’s Office website and review the information on [TA, PA, RA, and LSA appointments](https://businessservices.wisc.edu/making-payments/payments-to-students/tuition-remission/eligibility-for-ra-ta-pa-and-lsa-tuition-remission/fy26-changes/).

If you have a spring appointment that qualifies for tuition remission, your eligibility for tuition remission will carry over to the Summer term. For specific information, see the Bursar’s Office website regarding [TA, PA, RA, LSA Appointments Summer Term](https://businessservices.wisc.edu/making-payments/payments-to-students/tuition-remission/eligibility-for-ra-ta-pa-and-lsa-tuition-remission/fy26-changes/).

**Health Insurance:**

Include if eligible for health insurance [Individuals are eligible for health insurance if the appointment is at least 33% for one semester]:

You may be eligible to participate in the Graduate Assistant Health Insurance program. It is important to meet all application deadlines. If you need health insurance and wish to enroll, please contact [DEPARTMENT CONTACT] in [DEPARTMENT] in [LOCATION] at [PHONE] or [EMAIL] or contact Madison Benefits Services at (608) 265-2257 or [benefits@ohr.wisc.edu](mailto:benefits@ohr.wisc.edu) **within the first 30 days of your employment**. Read more about New Employee Benefits for non-WRS employees on the [HR website](https://hr.wisc.edu/benefits/new-employee-benefits-enrollment/benefits-for-employees-not-covered-by-the-wrs/).

Include if not eligible for health insurance:

Based on this position, you are **not currently eligible** to participate in the Graduate Assistant Health Insurance program. However, if you previously had grad coverage or your job is extended, please contact [DEPARTMENT CONTACT] in [DEPARTMENT] in [LOCATION] at [PHONE] or [EMAIL] or contact Madison Benefits Services at (608) 265-2257 or [benefits@ohr.wisc.edu](mailto:benefits@ohr.wisc.edu) to determine if you are eligible **within the first 30 days of your employment**. Additional information is available on the [HR website](https://hr.wisc.edu/benefits/new-employee-benefits-enrollment/benefits-for-employees-not-covered-by-the-wrs/).

**Federal Affordable Care Act:**

The University of Wisconsin is required to provide all employees with a Notice of the availability of the Health Insurance Marketplace. The Notice also includes information on health insurance coverage available through your employment at the University of Wisconsin (UW). Beginning in 2014, the federal Affordable Care Act (ACA) requires most everyone to obtain health insurance for themselves and their dependents or pay a penalty when filing their tax returns. Please refer to the notification included at the end of this letter.

**Sick Leave:**

You will also earn sick leave. At the beginning of each appointment period, you will receive [SICK LEAVE HOURS] hours of sick leave. Sick leave must be used in **one-hour increments**. Unused sick leave will carry over to a new appointment period if it is within the same department. Any combination of sick leave carry over and newly accredited sick leave cannot exceed 96 hours. In the event of an unanticipated absence, you must contact me by phone or email before the start of your scheduled work shift. [EXPLAIN THE PROCESS FOR WHAT YOU WANT THE EMPLOYEE TO DO WHEN S/HE IS SICK]. Additional information regarding leave benefits is available in the [Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures](https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp).

**Graduate Assistant Policies and Procedures**

Additional employment policies regarding your assistantship are outlined in the [Graduate Assistantship Policies and Procedures](https://hr.wisc.edu/policies/gapp). This letter highlights key aspects you need to know about your appointment.

**Enrollment and Academic Progress:**

You must be enrolled as a graduate student each semester while holding this position. That means:

* **Non-dissertators** must be enrolled in 2 graduate credits
  + Must be numbered 300 or higher
  + Course must be taken for a grade (not pass/fail or audit)
* **Dissertators** must be enrolled in 3 graduate credits
  + Must be numbered 300 or higher
  + Must directly relate to dissertation research

[Add unit-specific requirements here]

In addition, you are required to **maintain satisfactory progress** toward your degree. For additional information, refer to the [Graduate School: Satisfactory Progress policy](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1218). For more specific enrollment information, see the Graduate School’s website on [Enrollment Requirements](https://policy.wisc.edu/library/UW-1208).

**Responsibilities and Work Schedule:**

The number of hours you are expected to work depends on the percentage listed in your appointment. If you have any questions about how many hours you should work, ask right away. Before the semester starts, talk with your supervising faculty or staff member to understand your job duties and responsibilities. If you have an F or J visa, you can work up to 20 paid hours per week while classes are in session.

(Include if English Proficiency is required) To do this job, you need to be able to speak and write in English. If you need help with this, your supervisor can connect you to support resources. If you are not able to do the job duties, your appointment may be cancelled.

**Concurrent Appointments:**

Before accepting any additional new appointments, you must inform all department administrators and supervisors, who will in turn notify the [SCHOOL/COLLEGE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE]. It is your responsibility to be aware of the requirements for holding concurrent appointments. The concurrent appointment policies are found at [Policy for Supplementation and Concurrent Appointments](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=33321) and [Policy for Maximum Levels of Graduate Assistantship Appointments](https://kb.wisc.edu/gradsch/page.php?id=33322).

The probationary section below must be included for all first-time appointees. If the department wishes to require a probationary period for an appointee who has previously served as a project assistant or as a teaching assistant in another department, this probationary section must be included in the appointment letter.

**Probation Period:**

The first semester of your appointment (whether it’s for one semester, the full academic year, or two separate two-month summer jobs) is your probationary period in the Department of [DEPARTMENT NAME]. During this time, your work and ability to do your job will be reviewed.

If you work as a Teaching Assistant in a different department after your first appointment, that department may also require a probationary period. However, it cannot be longer than your original probation period.

If you’ve worked before as a Teaching Assistant or Project/Program Assistant in another department and think that experience might count toward your probationary period, you need to let your new department know within two weeks of the date on this letter so they can decide if it applies.

**Compliance**

**Compliance Obligations:**

UW-Madison prohibits discrimination against applicants, employees, students, and visitors to campus who wish to participate in University programs or activities. Learn more about relevant law, policies, resources and complaint procedures and protected bases on the [Office of Compliance’s website](https://compliance.wisc.edu/eo-complaint/).

**Reporting Responsibilities:**

**Child Abuse or Neglect**

Under Wisconsin Executive Order #54 (EO 54), all UW–Madison employees must report child abuse or neglect if they see it or hear about it while doing their job, and if they have a good reason to believe it has happened or might happen. You must report it right away to Child Protective Services (CPS) or law enforcement. If the situation involves a UW employee, happens on campus, or takes place during a UW–Madison event, you also need to tell the Office of Human Resources, Workforce Relations.

If you are a mandatory reporter under Wis. Stat. 48.981(2)(a), you must also follow the state’s reporting rules. If you work in a healthcare setting, only report what is allowed under HIPAA.

Read more about [Reporting responsibilities](https://compliance.wisc.edu/titleix/mandatory-reporting/#all-uw-employees) for all UW–Madison employees.

**Sexual Assault**

Under Chapter 36 of the Wisconsin State Statutes, you are required to report if a UW-Madison student tells you they have been sexually assaulted or witnessed the sexual assault of another student. Use the [Campus Incident Reporting form for Sexual Misconduct and Clery Violations](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMadison&layout_id=11). Contact the Sexual Misconduct Resource and Response Program with questions.

**Required Training:**

**Graduate Assistants Equity Workshop**

You must attend and participate in a professional development session for Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Program/Project Assistants (PAs) focusing on diversity, discrimination and harassment, presented and sponsored by the Office for Equity and Diversity, the McBurney Disability Resource Center, the Theatre for Cultural and Social Awareness and the Office of Human Resources.  You will receive information about relevant laws, policies, regulations and resources; explore the practical application of these policies to classroom and learning environments; and engage in facilitated conversations designed to promote interdisciplinary dialogue and excellence through diversity. These sessions promote the development of competencies that sustain and strengthen UW-Madison's position of preeminence in research and higher education and advance critical campus strategic priorities. You can register for the workshop and access materials on the [Graduate Assistants Equity Workshop](https://diversity.wisc.edu/graduate-assistants-equity-workshops/) webpage.

**Cybersecurity Awareness Training**

You must complete the annual mandatory Cybersecurity Awareness Training if you have not already done so. Information about the training and the registration link is available on the [Cybersecurity website.](https://it.wisc.edu/about/division-of-information-technology/enterprise-information-security-services/office-of-cybersecurity/cybersecurity-awareness-training/)

**FERPA: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Training**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), as amended, is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records, governs access to those records, and regulates the disclosure of information. All employees of UW–Madison are required to uphold FERPA principles and ensure the confidentiality of student records.

You must complete the online training course on student privacy rights. This course is accessible to anyone with NetID credentials through the [FERPA Training](https://registrar.wisc.edu/ferpa-training/) website. Visit [FERPA Overview](https://registrar.wisc.edu/ferpa/) for additional information.

**Disability and Pregnancy-Related Accommodations:**

It is the policy and practice of the University of Wisconsin-Madison to consider reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals [with disabilities](https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/americans-with-disability-act-ada/) or[pregnancy-related conditions](https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/pregnant-workers-fairness-act/). You may contact the appropriate [Divisional Disability Representative (DDR)](https://employeedisabilities.wisc.edu/divisional-disability-representatives-ddr/) at any time if you need a reasonable accommodation to perform the essential functions of your position or if you have other workplace barriers (e.g. parking, job-related training).

**Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act:**

All employees, faculty and staff are strongly encouraged to help make the University a drug-free workplace. You can do this by learning about substance abuse (its dangers and warning signs), encouraging others to avoid substance abuse, and getting help if you need it—either for yourself or for someone you are concerned about. Please review the [UW-Madison Compliance with the Drug-Free Schools & Communities Act](https://alcoholanddruginfo.students.wisc.edu/dfsac-act/), which is provided to all employees as part of their orientation to the University community.

To accept the terms of this position, please sign and date below and return to [NAME, TITLE, LOCATION, EMAIL].

Sincerely,

(SIGNATURE MUST BE HANDWRITTEN OR A PHOTOCOPY, NOT TYPED)

[SUPERVISOR]

[TITLE]

***Optional: Ref: Job #***

***Optional: Add EMPL ID here or in address field on page one of letter***

Attachment: Position Description (if applicable)

Federal Affordable Care Act Notification

Cc: [DEPARTMENT FILE]

[NAME OF SCHOOL/COLLEGE] Human Resources Office

I accept the position of Teaching Assistant in the [OPERATIONAL AREA] in the [DEPARTMENT/PROGRAM].

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

[EMPLOYEE NAME] DATE

**Federal Affordable Care Act Notification**

The University of Wisconsin is required to provide all employees with a notice of the availability of the Health Insurance Marketplace and information on health insurance coverage available through your employment at the University of Wisconsin (UW). The Health Insurance Marketplace Notice is enclosed.

Although almost all individuals have been required to maintain health insurance because of what is called the Individual Mandate under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), beginning on January 1, 2019, individuals no longer have to comply with the Individual Mandate. However, individuals may continue to obtain health insurance coverage through employer-sponsored coverage with the UW, a governmental plan, such as Medicare, or the Marketplace (also known as the Exchange), which was created as an option for individuals to purchase health insurance (potentially with premium assistance).

**If you are eligible for and plan to enroll in the State Group Health Insurance plan through your employment at the UW, you do not need to enroll in coverage through the Marketplace, unless you choose to do so**. Most UW employees who are eligible for State Group Health Insurance will not be eligible for a premium subsidy for coverage purchased through the Marketplace.

For information about the Health Insurance Marketplace and options available to you, please visit the following websites:

* [HealthCare.gov](https://www.healthcare.gov/): for detailed information about health plans available to you, eligibility, premiums and premium subsidies, FAQs….
* [Universities of Wisconsin Affordable Care Act webpage](http://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/aca/)

**If you need this information in another language,** please visit [HealthCare’s Language Resource page](https://www.healthcare.gov/language-resource/) or call HealthCare.gov at 1-800-318-2596.

If you have questions about your eligibility for health insurance through your employment, contact your [Human Resources representative](http://www.wisconsin.edu/ohrwd/benefits/contact/).