



# CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

**Title:** Graduate Teaching Assistant Policy

**Date approved by President:** Dec 1, 2025

**Effective date:** Dec 1, 2025

**Responsible Official:** Provost or Provost's Designee

**Responsible University Office or Division:** Office of the Provost

**Related legislation and University policies:** School of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures ([here](#))

**Review Period:** 5 Years

**Relates to:** Faculty, staff, students

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance for legal compliance and equity for students with appointments as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs)

## **Background**

Graduate students at Case Western Reserve University may receive financial support in a variety of ways: tuition credit, tuition remission, teaching assistantships, research assistantships, administrative assistantships, and part-time student employment. This policy provides guidance regarding graduate teaching assistantships. An appointment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) contributes to a student's primary objective of earning a graduate degree by providing training experiences coupled with financial support. This training complements other learning objectives with hands-on instructional activities that build communication skills, content knowledge, and time management skills. The general policy is to assign GTAs teaching and instructive tasks that will provide a useful and meaningful experience in their major field or related field, and/or areas that may serve their future career goals.

## **Eligibility for Appointment:**

To hold a GTA appointment, graduate students are expected to be maintaining progress toward their degree, and meeting the instructional, teaching, and/or training obligations of their

appointment. As of Summer Semester 2025, GTAs may not serve as the Instructor of Record for courses they assist with, but instead must perform their responsibilities under the oversight of a designated Instructor of Record. This policy applies to GTAs only and does not preclude departments from hiring students to teach as an Instructor of Record through employment procedures that are independent of GTA appointments (e.g., student employment positions, internships, fellowships, adjunct instructor appointments) when the student possesses the requisite knowledge and qualifications.

### **Period of Appointment:**

A typical GTA appointment spans a semester or summer session. Duties as a GTA typically begin one week before the first day of classes and end when final grades are due, as determined by the academic calendar. GTAs should be appointed for no less than a full semester, unless prior written approval has been granted by the dean of the academic unit making the appointment.

### **GTA Time Commitment:**

A 'full-time' GTA is considered a 50% appointment, translating to an average of 20 hours of GTA activities per week or less. A GTA's workload may vary weekly, depending on the specific tasks and responsibilities that are required, recognizing that there are inherent peaks and valleys in serving in a teaching role (e.g., periods such as examinations and finals may vary from the regular semester). If a GTA believes their assistantship responsibilities routinely require more than an average of 20 hours per week, they should share such concerns with the Instructor of Record to discuss solutions. If a solution cannot be reached, the Program Director or Department Chair should be consulted as an additional resource. If a resolution is not reached at the department level, the student may elevate their concern to the Dean of the School/College and Dean of Graduate Studies.

### **Additional GTA Guidance:**

Some degree programs may require specific periods of GTA experience to meet degree requirements due to critical skills that can be gained through teaching. These may be in the form of paid or unpaid GTA appointments and are considered as progress towards the degree in these cases. Satisfaction of such degree requirements are considered academic requirements and the expectations for such academic requirements are determined by the academic leadership for that graduate degree program.

GTAs should consult the School of Graduate Studies Policies and Procedures (found [here](#)) as well as their program guidelines regarding policies and practices addressing student holidays, breaks, vacations, and parental and sick leave, as they are expected to follow such policies.

The Office of the Provost requires all GTAs to complete training for their GTA responsibilities. If it has been 3 academic years since your initial training, you must complete the online webinar

again to remain current with university policies and procedures. More information regarding this requirement can be found on the [UCITE website](#).

The individual course assignments and specific GTA responsibilities are at the discretion of the School/College, Department, and the faculty member who is designated as the Instructor of Record. The duties typically expected of a GTA are described in the Graduate Teaching Assistant Policy Appendix.

## **GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT POLICY APPENDIX**

The duties of a GTA may include (but are not limited to):

1. Completion of the university's GTA training course through the University Center for Innovation in Teaching and Education (UCITE).
2. Attending classes.
3. Running a small number of course sessions.
4. Maintaining class Canvas or web pages and email distributions.
5. Assisting faculty members in course and/or laboratory course preparation, including lesson planning, material development, drafting exams, and syllabus revision.
6. Conducting instructional activities such as leading discussion or laboratory class sections, conducting tutorials, and delivering lectures or presentations under faculty supervision.
7. Providing guidance and support to students, including answering questions, facilitating group discussions, and offering academic assistance as determined and identified by the Instructor of Record.
8. Assisting with grading assignments, exams, and other assessments, ensuring accuracy, fairness, and timely feedback to students.
9. Proctoring exams.
10. Holding regular office hours to provide additional support, address student concerns, and offer academic advising and mentoring as determined and identified by the Instructor of Record.
11. Participating in teaching, training sessions, and professional development opportunities as required.
12. Recording and maintaining course grades in Canvas as a safeguard for FERPA compliance and to maintain continuity in the event of unexpected or emergency circumstances impacting a GTA.
13. Adhering to university policies, procedures, and ethical standards, including upholding academic integrity and maintaining student confidentiality.
14. Performing any other duties related to the successful delivery of the course to students as they arise and as identified by the Instructor of Record.