Enhanced Graduate Teaching Assistantship Policies

In effect for Academic Year 2015-2016

To recruit very high achieving students to our doctoral programs, the Office of Research and the Office of Graduate Studies offer the Enhanced Graduate Teaching Assistantship (EGTA) program. To standardize this program across all of our doctoral programs, the following EGTA policies are in effect.

General Policies

- EGTA positions are distributed to programs at the discretion of college and school Deans.

- Every year colleges/schools should develop effective recruiting strategies for these nationally competitive positions so that we can fill them with the best students possible.

- EGTA stipends and accompanying full tuition fellowships are for 9 months and, unless otherwise specified, may only be initially awarded to new students in Ph.D. or BS to Ph.D. programs. [Select programs offering the terminal MFA or similar terminal master's degree may be eligible for EGTA positions upon approval by the Office of Graduate Studies.] Programs may elect to award EGTAs to eligible students admitted in the Fall and Spring semesters.

- New doctoral students offered EGTA funding are guaranteed up to five years of funding. Within this framework, Ph.D. programs have the flexibility to manage their resources and offer less than five years of EGTA funding to these students. This funding may consist of some combination of Enhanced Graduate Teaching Assistantships (EGTAs) with full tuition fellowships and grant-funded research assistantships that may include some tuition coverage. For Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) programs, this support may also include graduate teaching assistantships with STEM tuition fellowships, or grant-funded research assistantships with STEM tuition fellowships.   (Please see http://www.uta.edu/research/administration/graduateTuition/ for the current UT Arlington STEM Doctoral Research and Teaching Assistant Fellowship Policy.)

- If a student vacates an EGTA position, the position may be reassigned to another qualified student (see Eligibility for Award).

- An EGTA award is not transportable across degree programs. EGTA funds are tied to EGTA positions in departments rather than to students. If a student changes their degree program, the award does not follow him or her to the new program. A vacated position may be reassigned to another qualified student in the same department (see Eligibility for Award).

- Stipends of EGTAs who convert to GRAs must have their stipends set between 75% and 100% of their EGTA stipends. The Office of Research and the Office of Graduate Studies will enforce this requirement. Ph.D. programs and departments may develop policies that encourage EGTAs to become GRAs and must notify the Office of Graduate Studies of these policies.

- No individual faculty mentor can have more than 2 students holding an EGTA appointment in their research group. Deans may establish policies in their college/school that further restricts this limitation.

Eligibility

- To be eligible for EGTAs, newly admitted students must have a GPA of at least 3.0 in their last 60 undergraduate credit hours plus at least a 3.25 GPA in any graduate level credit hours, be unconditionally admitted to their degree program, and satisfy English proficiency requirements necessary to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. Ph.D. programs may set higher requirements but must notify Joe Jackson (jackson@uta.edu) in the Office of Graduate Studies describing these additional requirements.

- Programs may reassign available EGTA funds from vacated positions to support Ph.D. students who have passed their comprehensive examinations and who have not previously held an EGTA. Such students are eligible to receive up to two years of EGTA support and will be expected to graduate within five years of initial admission to the doctoral program. Joe Jackson (jackson@uta.edu) in the Office of Graduate Studies must be notified of these appointments.

- New doctoral students with significant initial external funding through programs such as GAANN, the Vietnam Education Foundation (VEF), Vietnam International Education Development (VIED), CONACyT, and LSAMP Bridge to Doctorate are eligible to receive EGTA funding later in their studies when their external funding has ended. However, the number of years of support provided jointly through external funding and EGTA funding may not exceed 5 years.

- An EGTA may not be offered to a student who does not meet the above requirements unless an exception request and justification has been reviewed and approved by the Office of Graduate Studies. Units seeking an exception must submit the Assistantship Exception (Assist EX) form in WebNow (https://imagenow1.uta.edu/webnow. Information regarding the Assistantship exception process is available on the Office of Graduate Studies website (http://grad.uta.edu/faculty/forms/ - fellowships). OGS will notify the unit in WebNow of the approval or disapproval of the exception.

Tuition Funding

For each long semester (fall and spring):

- Doctoral EGTA students who have not yet passed their comprehensive examinations and advanced to candidacy must be enrolled full time (i.e., 9 hours) and appointed 50% time. These students will receive tuition fellowships for 9 hours of coursework related to their program of work. Tuition expenses for enrollment in excess of 9 hours will not be covered by the EGTA program.

- After passing their comprehensive exams and advancing to candidacy, doctoral EGTA students must enroll in at least 6 hours until their final semester (see below). These students will receive tuition fellowships for 6 hours of coursework related to their program of work. Tuition expenses for enrollment in excess of 6 hours will not be covered by the EGTA program but must be assumed by sources other than the Office of Research (e.g., the student, the department, the college, a grant).

- In their final semester, doctoral EGTA students may enroll in a 3-credit dissertation course (7399). These students will receive tuition fellowships for enrollment in 3 hours of coursework. For final-semester students who must enroll in an additional 3 hour course, requests for additional tuition fellowship support will be considered by the Dean's Office of the College or School on a one-by-one basis. For all students in their final semester, however, tuition for enrollment in excess of 6 hours will not be covered by the EGTA program but must be assumed by sources other than the Office of Research.

Eligibility for Continuation

- Continued support is dependent upon a student making acceptable progress toward his or her degree and satisfactory performance as a GTA or GRA. Determination of a student's "acceptable progress" and "satisfactory performance" are at the sole discretion of the department chair, in consultation with the student's dissertation supervisor, the graduate advisor, and the chair of the Graduate Studies Committee responsible for the student's degree program.

- An EGTA who falls below the minimum requirement of a 3.0 GPA will lose the EGTA and tuition fellowship. Said student may be supported on a regular GTA with no tuition fellowship for one semester. Students meeting eligibility requirements by the end of that semester may be reappointed as EGTAs. However, the restored EGTA appointment will not be extended to cover the semester in which the student was ineligible for the EGTA and tuition fellowship. Programs should establish a clear policy on restoring EGTAs to all students who return to good academic standing or satisfy the English proficiency requirement and notify the Office of Graduate Studies about this policy.

Duration

New doctoral students offered EGTA funding are guaranteed a maximum number of years of support as defined by the department, but this maximum may not exceed five years. Students who previously have not held an EGTA but have passed their comprehensive exams are eligible for a maximum of two years of EGTA support.

Awarding EGTA Positions

Programs may offer EGTA support packages to students meeting all minimum requirements set by the Office of Graduate Studies and any additional requirements set by the admitting department. So that we can track awards, units must cc the Office of Graduate Studies (gradfunding@uta.edu) when an offer is made. Units are responsible for entering the appropriate service indicator for all EGTAs in MyMav. Job code 0066 must be used for all EGTA position appointments. The Office of Graduate Studies has available a template of an offer letter for awarding EGTA appointments.

Assessment

The goal of the EGTA program is to create a foundation for improving our doctoral programs and degree production. Accordingly, the Office of Research has charged the Office of Graduate Studies with regularly assessing the performance of our Ph.D. programs. **Those programs not graduating their EGTA doctoral students at a significantly better rate than the University's 3-year average Ph.D. graduation rate will lose EGTA position(s).** Preference for continuing to invest in EGTAs in a program will be based on these graduation rates and, if appropriate, on the conversion of enhanced GTAs to GRAs. A unit may request an additional year of EGTA funding for a student because of unusual circumstances. The Office of Graduate Studies will review and approve or deny the request. Both the program's retention and graduation rates for students who have received EGTA positions in the department will be important evaluation criteria.

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