

Department of Mathematics

Application procedures for Graduate Teaching Assistant positions

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The application link will be available on the website at <http://www.math.purdue.edu/jobs/ta> after Spring Break.

The deadline for applications is listed on the website--late applications are not accepted. If you have questions that are not answered in this document, please contact Shaun Ponder via e-mail at ponders@purdue.edu.

Information

The Graduate Teaching Assistant (TA) application process described here is for Purdue University graduate students not in mathematics, who have never been employed as TAs by the Department of Mathematics and have not passed our screening. Non-mathematics graduate students who have passed our screening should contact Shaun Ponder (ponders@purdue.edu) and request a schedule card. If you are interested in becoming a mathematics graduate student go to <http://www.math.purdue.edu/academic/grad/>

TA positions are halftime. Applicants must

1. either be, or plan to be, a full-time graduate student at Purdue University;
2. not be employed by another department;
3. be eligible to start half-time employment a week before fall classes start;
4. be free for the whole week before fall classes start.

A complete application consists of (1) a completed application form, (2) an unofficial copy of all your post high school transcripts, including Purdue transcripts, and (3) an unofficial copy of your TOEFL scores if you are not a native English speaker.

Applications for TA positions are only accepted from around mid-March until June 14.

Please note that student-generated printouts of transcripts are not always acceptable. Application materials submitted electronically will not be accepted. Incomplete applications will not be accepted unless there is a justification as to why they are incomplete, e.g. you are waiting for certain work authorization documents.

International students should only apply if their visa status allows – or will allow – them to start employment a week before the start of fall classes. You can submit a TA application while you are still waiting to receive a visa; state the visa sponsor (the person or institution that guarantees you have sufficient funds to be a graduate student at Purdue) on your TA application. Note that your visa sponsor is not always the same as your I-20 issuer. There is not sufficient time during the week before classes start to change visas, I-20 sponsorship, DS-2019 sponsorship, or obtain employment permission from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS). International students with questions about their employment eligibility should contact their department or Purdue ISS at (765) 494-5770. You should not wait for

your visa to arrive before you send in your TA application — just update us when you receive new visa information.

A group of applicants will be invited to participate in a screening to evaluate teaching and communication skills held during the Department of Mathematics Orientation Week that takes place the week before classes start. We make TA offers to applicants based on their performance in the screening. Applicants who perform well at the screening but are not hired are placed on a waiting list for employment that remains active for one year. Newly hire TAs and those willing to stay on the waiting list must attend mandatory teaching workshops throughout the Department of Mathematics Orientation Week. Additional information about the screening and workshops (specific dates, locations, and how to prepare for it) will be provided later. Applications are not carried over to the following year. Applicants not chosen for the screening or those who were invited for the screening but were not hired must reapply.

TAs positions are halftime. TAs should expect to work on average 20 hours per week (including finals week). A TA's assignment may change from semester to semester. The current pay rate for new TAs is listed on the application form. TAs should check with their departments about tuition and university fees. TA employment is on a semester-by-semester basis. Whenever possible, we extend employment for TAs whose performance is good, who are full-time students working towards a degree and are not employed elsewhere. We always employ fewer TAs in spring than in fall because of lower student enrollment.

Common problems with submitted applications

The following are some of the common problems we see with submitted applications. Some of these are explained further in the FAQ later. Please check that these do not apply to you or your application:

- You are ineligible for half-time fall employment.
- You are using employment with us to get a visa.
- You are not legally employable by us a week before classes start.
- You did not list your I-20 or DS-2019 sponsor (for international students only).
- You scored too low on an OEPT and were not subsequently certified by OEPP—if you are currently enrolled in ENGL 6200 then you still can apply to be a TA but you must be certified before the screening.
- You are not free for the whole period listed on the application form and you did not explain why.
- You did not include copies of transcripts or TOEFL scores and did not explain why (for non-nativespeakers).
- You did not provide all information asked in the application form and did not explain why it could not be provided.

For any questions not answered by the FAQ section at the end of this document please contact Shaun Ponder ponders@purdue.edu.

Screening day and the Department of Mathematics Orientation Week

Schedule outline for the screening and Department of Mathematics Orientation Week (the week before classes start). A more complete outline with specific times and locations for the week is sent to those invited for the screening and a complete schedule is distributed at the first meeting listed.

Monday morning:	Pick up materials and check-in.
Monday until noon:	General Information about screening
Tuesday until noon:	Screening
Wednesday morning:	Notification of screening results by email
Wednesday noon—5pm:	Teaching workshops
Thursday morning until 2pm:	Teaching workshops
Friday afternoon:	Course organizational meetings

Frequently asked questions

Q: I applied in the past but was not chosen for a screening. Can you use my old application?

A: No.

Q: If I am invited for the screening, can I postpone it until the following year?

A: No.

Q: I participated in a screening in the past but failed. May I apply again?

A: Yes.

Q: I passed a screening in the past but was not hired. Do I need to apply again?

A: No, send email to dnaughton@purdue.edu but read the [OEPP FAQ](#) below first.

Q: I have accepted fall employment from another employer. May I submit a fall TA application with the aim of getting spring employment as a TA with the Department of Mathematics?

A: No. We have limited screening slots and must use them for applicants who are available for half-time fall employment.

Q: I have accepted quarter-time fall employment from another employer. May I still submit a fall application to get further quarter-time appointment as a TA with the Department of Mathematics?

A: No. We have limited screening slots and must use them for applicants who are available for half-time fall employment.

Q: I have accepted fall employment from another employer but will resign from it if offered employment by the Department of Mathematics--may I still apply?

A: Yes, if you include with your application a letter from your fall employer stating that it is acceptable for you to break your commitment to them three days before classes start.

Q: Do I have to be formally accepted by Purdue as a graduate student before submitting an application?

A: No, but you should write, "pending being accepted" and update us later.

Q: I am a new student and am waiting to get my I-20, DS-2019 or visa. May I submit an application now?

A: Yes, but we must know the type of visa you're waiting for and your I-20 or DS-2019 sponsor. In the I-20, DS 2019, or visa section of the application form write "pending" for the question "expires on" if you are currently waiting for one or more of these documents.

Q: What do you mean by "sponsor listed my I-20 or DS-2019"?

A: Your sponsor is the person or institution who guarantees you will have sufficient funds to be a Purdue graduate student—not always the same as your I-20 issuer.

Q: I need this TA position to afford to come to Purdue — Is this going to work? Or I need this TA position in order to list a sponsor on an I-20 or DS-2019, to get a visa, to renew or extend one or more of these documents—is this possible?

A: Only if you get an early TA offer from us--a commitment that we will employ you before you participate in the screening. Early offers are rare and require documented United States College or high school teaching experience. Write "please consider for an early offer" on the top of your application form if you wish to be considered for one.

Q: My current I-20 or DS-2019 is sponsored by another university where I'm currently employed, however, I want to join Purdue in the fall. Is that a problem?

A: The Department of Mathematics cannot employ you as a TA until your previous university transfers your I-20 or DS-2019 to Purdue. There is not enough time between the screening and the start of classes (3 business days) for this transfer to take place or get a new I-20.

Q: I am an international student but was not required by Purdue to submit a TOEFL score. What should I put down for TOEFL score on my TA application?

A: Write "not applicable" and give a brief explanation why you were exempted by Purdue from submitting a TOEFL score.

Q: I took the TOEFL a long time ago—my results have a different format than current TOEFL results. Is this okay?

A: Yes, if your results show the breakdown of the total TOEFL score in the various categories.

Q: I am an international student and have not taken the OEPT so I'm not certified by OEPP yet. May I still apply for a TA position in the Department of Mathematics?

A: Yes. Passing our screening gives a TA partial certification from OEPP—it enables a graduate student to work as a TA in the Department of Mathematics but not in other departments.

Q: I am an international student, have taken the OEPT, failed it, and am consequently not certified by OEPP right now. May I still apply for a TA position in the Department of Mathematics?

A: Since you failed an OEPT you must first become certified by OEPP. A Department of Mathematics screening does not override a failed OEPT. Before we can consider your application you must become certified by OEPP.

Q: Is a transcript that I print out myself from my school's student system sufficiently official?

A: Yes, if the transcript states your name and lists the semester and grade for each course you took.

Q: Should I wait for this semester to finish and I receive an up-to-date transcript before I submit an application?

A: No. You can update your application with new transcript information later.

Q: I am not free for the whole period mentioned in the application form. Will I be considered if I apply?

A: It depends on what schedule conflicts cannot be resolved. Look at the tentative schedule for the screening on the last page of this document. Try to resolve any conflicts you have before submitting your application. List on the application which ones remain. New students should check with their departments whether their departments have any planned activities for the week before classes start before submitting their application. We cannot adapt our schedule to accommodate yours. Most departments are willing to excuse their students from activities that conflict with ours (because our screening and workshops are employment related) but you must get your department's permission before applying.

Q: Should I submit an incomplete application now and update it later?

A: Yes, if you cannot complete it before the deadline because you are waiting for other documents.

Q: Should I submit GRE scores, resume, letters of recommendations, or diplomas?

A: No—just the information we ask for on the application form: transcript and, if applicable, a handwritten outline of any teaching experience. We do not take GRE scores, resumes, letters of recommendations, or diplomas into account. Including those documents just makes your application package bulkier. Since the application instructions do not ask for them, it would be unfair to those applicants who do follow the instructions if we were to read and use such documents.

Q: May someone else submit an application on my behalf? May I submit an application on behalf of someone else?

A: Yes. The person submitting the application may sign the form and should then list his or her name and email address at the bottom. The applicant will ultimately be responsible for ensuring that all information provided is accurate.

Q: May I send email after submitting my application to make sure you received it?

A: **We would prefer if you didn't**—applicants who send their materials via mail will receive email confirmation of receipt within two weeks. You should email ponders@purdue.edu if you have not received email within this time frame. Do not send us email right after emailing your application and please take into account that international postal mail can be slow.

Q: May I set up an appointment to discuss my application or chances at being hired in person or to set up an interview or a special screening?

A: **We do not meet applicants personally and have no screenings outside the official one.** We do not have enough staff to meet with every person requesting a private meeting. We do need to be able to reach you by phone though. Send us email with any updates to your phone number contact information, e.g. let us know if your phone number changes once you arrive in West Lafayette or Lafayette.