

Department of Mathematics

Application procedures for Graduate Teaching Assistant positions

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Online applications are available at <http://www.math.purdue.edu/jobs/ta> on or before March 20.

The deadline for applications is June 20—late applications are not accepted. You will receive an update about the status of your application by approximately July 15. If you have questions that are not answered in this document or have trouble uploading documents please contact Ms. S Ponder | ponders@purdue.edu.

1. 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. Non-mathematics graduate students who have passed our screening and are interested in a TA position should contact Dominic Naughton. If you are interested in becoming a mathematics graduate student go to <http://www.math.purdue.edu/academic/grad/>

TA positions are halftime (or 20 hours per week). Applicants must

1. 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 during the TA screening and Teaching Workshops held during the week before fall classes start (roughly speaking, Mon 9-12, T 8-2, W 1-5, Th 8-12, F 10-5).

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

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—they 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. 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 this 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 hired 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.

TAs positions are halftime and are for the fall semester only. 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. Tuition for most, but not all, graduate programs is waived for students who are working as TAs. There will still be some fees that graduate student TAs have to pay—these fees vary according to the home department of the TA. 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.

2. Common problems with submitted applications

The following are some of the common problems we see with submitted applications. The applicant

- is ineligible for half-time fall employment.

- is using employment with us to get a visa.
- is not legally employable by us a week before classes start.
- did not list his or her I-20 or DS-2019 sponsor (for international students only).
- 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.
- did not upload copies of transcripts.
- did not upload copies TOEFL scores and did not explain why (for non-native speakers).

3. Screening day and the Department of Mathematics Orientation Week

Here is an approximate schedule for the screening and Department of Mathematics Orientation Week meetings (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 before 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 noon:	Teaching workshops
Friday morning and afternoon:	Course organizational meetings / Teaching workshops

4. FAQ 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, contact Dominic Naughton: dnaughto@purdue.edu.

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 check with your employer that is okay to break your commitment to them. Mention your employer's contact information in the comment box at the end of the application.

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" for the question about when your graduate studies at Purdue will start 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.

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 My current I-20 / DS-2019 is sponsored by another university currently employing me but I want to join Purdue in the fall. Is that a problem?

A Yes, you should start the transfer process for your I-20 as soon as you can. The Department of Mathematics can't 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 as to 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 and then scan and upload considered 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 in this document. Try to resolve any conflicts you have before submitting your application. List on the application which ones remain. New students should check 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, an outline of any classroom teaching experience or other related experience. We do not take GRE scores, resumes, letters of recommendations, or diplomas into account. 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 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.