1. Graduate Research Assistants (RAs) may be supported by grants awarded to their mentors, predoctoral fellowships, or other sources. Nevertheless, all RAs are monthly-paid employees of the College. This means that the employment extends from calendar date of appointment to the end of that appointment, not from the first day to the last day of classes each semester.

2. All RAs receive annual stipends (PHOP: $23,400; PPS: $25,000), paid in 12 monthly installments, as long as funds are available. The university pays all tuition and all required fees. This benefit is called the Graduate Tuition Fellowship, or GTF. All RAs also receive $150/month as a subsidy intended for the purchase of health insurance (international students are required to do so). These benefits are absolutely dependent upon grades. The university will suspend GTF immediately if your GPA falls below 3.0 or if you fail to make adequate academic progress; the programs may show more flexibility and put you on probation before removing your RA employment and stipend support. Loss of employment may require that you pay out-of-state tuition if you are not Texas resident. In the worst case, you may wind up paying out-of-state tuition ($913/SCH) and all fees with no stipend or fellowship support.

3. The university will usually not fund GTF during the summer semester; hence students do not register for courses but still maintain their assistantships. Exceptions will be made for students who must be enrolled in the summer because they will graduate in August, or because a required course is offered only in the summer. GTF will be awarded for a maximum of 10 long semesters and an additional 3 SCHs in the following summer (or fall if the student does CPT in the summer).

4. Stipend support as an RA may extend to 12 long semesters if the student's mentor has funding for this purpose. The University does not permit assistantship employment beyond 12 long semesters.

5. RAs are primarily responsible to their dissertation mentors. RAs are expected to devote themselves full-time to coursework and research for the purpose of completing their Ph.D. degrees. In addition, mentors may assign 'side projects' to fulfill the requirements of a grant or contract that pays the stipend, as long as this activity does not exceed 20 hrs/wk.

6. Sometimes the grant supporting an RA runs out before studies are completed. In such an event, the degree program will make every effort to provide support, either as a TA or RA. Such support cannot be expected to last beyond the 10th semester (+ 3 SCH the following summer). If the student becomes a TA, he/she must comply with all policies relating to such an appointment, and undergo TA training if necessary.

7. In some special cases, an RA will be asked to serve as a TA for a semester of a specific course. During such an assignment, the student will be paid as a TA by the college at same
stipend level, and then revert to RA support after the semester is over. Some TA training may be required.

8. RAs are expected to be available and working at all normal working times.

9. Paid employment outside of dissertation work and RA duties while classes are in session is almost never permitted except with special permission and documentation. An exception is during the summer, when internships are strongly encouraged. If an RA is found to be surreptitiously employed off campus while classes are in session, loss of GTF and assistantship may result.

10. Outside of University of Houston holidays and end of year closure, RAs may take up to ten days of unpaid leave. Approval for leave must be solicited in writing from the program GAA at least 30 days in advance, and this request must be accompanied by signed permission from the student’s faculty advisor. If the student is taking classes, approval also must be obtained from the instructor, with an explanation of how the class time is to be made up. If still longer periods are required, the combining of multiple years’ time may be acceptable, at the discretion of the student’s faculty advisor and the Program Chair. Prolonged absences during a semester may require a termination and rehire, or an official university leave of absence. The programs will try to be as accommodating as possible.

I understand and agree to meet the responsibilities outlined above.

______________________________________________  ______________
STUDENT NAME (print)                              PSID

______________________________________________  ______________
STUDENT SIGNATURE                                 DATE