

Explore the career requirements for assistant professors. Get the facts about education requirements, salary, and potential job growth to determine if this is the right career for you.

!!!Career Information At a Glance

Assistant professors are entry-level professorships. Discover the employment outlook and median earnings for these postsecondary teachers by looking through the following chart.

	__Degree Required__		<i>Doctorate degree</i>
	__Key Skills__		<i>Research effectively,</i>
	__Job Growth for Related Occupations (2012–2022)__		<i>19%*</i>
	__Average Salary (2013)__		<i>\$73,140*</i>

"Source: *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics"

!!What Does An Assistant Professor Do?

There are typically three ranks of professors; they are assistant, associate and tenured. You start as an assistant professor, and eventually, you may earn a promotion to an associate professor after an evaluation of your work. Finally, you can earn tenure after a second evaluation. This process can take years.

Most assistant professors apply to tenure-track positions with the goal of eventually securing tenure. Tenure is a permanent employment contract. Whether or not you secure tenure depends on your publication history and teaching record. Research can sometimes be more important than teaching at some universities. The field you choose to study could affect the difficulty of securing tenure.

You could be an assistant professor in any number of fields, including health specialties, business, art, theater or literature. You could also work in fields like biology, engineering, architecture, computer science or creative writing. You will likely spend your time completing research projects and teaching classes. You might also serve on advisory committees for graduate students who are working on a final project.

!!Do I Need a Degree?

Most assistant professors have a Ph.D. in their field of study. However, in some fields, you may need a different degree. For example, a creative writer could have a Master of Fine Arts (MFA) instead of a doctorate degree. Likewise, an assistant professor of law could have a Juris Doctorate (J.D.), and an assistant professor of medicine could have a medical degree. Whatever the field, you must almost always hold a terminal degree. However, in rare cases, universities grant professorships to individuals with substantial professional achievements. For example, former U.S.

Poet Laureate Ted Kooser was granted a professorship after only earning a bachelor's degree based on the merits of his published work.

!!What About the Salary and Job Prospects?

Your salary and job prospects could vary greatly depending on your field of study. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported that the employment of postsecondary teachers in general is expected to increase 19% between 2012 and 2022 ("www.bls.gov"). The mean annual salary was \$73,140, as of May, 2013.