UNL Department of Mathematics
Progress benchmarks for GTA's
2016-17

GTAs are required to take at least two courses (6 hours) in Mathematics and a total of nine credit hours overall each semester. GTAs who perform well in their teaching duties and make good academic progress toward their degree can expect support in subsequent years.

Each letter of offer to a new GTA contains the statement above. It reflects a philosophy that while it is important to do a good job as a teacher, GTAs are hired in order that they may pursue a graduate degree in our department. When making reappointment decisions, priority is given to students based on their progress toward a degree. Students in their first three semesters are judged primarily on grades and courses passed. Consistent with the "good academic progress" requirement, salary increases above the starting level are tied to filing the appointment of supervisory committee form after passing the qualifying exams and completing the PhD coursework requirement, and to passing the comprehensive exams and making progress toward the degree. The chart below is a guide to "good academic progress." Time is measured in semesters after enrolling in our program. Reasonable adjustments are made for those who begin work at UNL with graduate credit.

Goal	Desirable Progress	Acceptable Progress
Pass TSE (foreign TAs)	Prior to admission	1 year
Masters Degree	2 years	5 semesters
Complete PhD Coursework Requirement	2 semesters	4 semesters
Pass Qualifying Exam	3 semesters	4 semesters
Form Supervisory Committee	4 semesters	5 semesters
Pass Comprehensive Exam	5 semesters	6 semesters
Ph.D. Degree	5 years	6 years

Students must be making good academic progress towards the PhD to receive continuing support. Support for 5 years and beyond will be decided in consultation with the student's supervisory committee. Support for the 6th year is not guaranteed, and will be decided on a case by case basis: we will try to provide support for the 6th year for students who need that year to finish, if our budget allows it. Support for the 7th year is extremely unusual and will be decided on a case by case basis. Students will not be supported beyond the 7th year.

The guidelines may be inappropriate for some students. Each TA is welcome to discuss their particular background and goals and reach mutually acceptable definitions of "good academic progress". Appointments beyond the "Acceptable" level listed above will be made on a case by case basis.