



# How much can I work?

## ***Can I have multiple assistantships?***

Sure! Many grad students simultaneously hold more than one assistantship (e.g., an RAship and a TAship, or a TAship and a grader/reader position).

## ***What's the maximum percentage I can work?***

Legally, there's no maximum percentage for U.S. citizens and permanent residents. For international students, however, most visas require that you not work more than 50% (either in one position or as a total of all your positions); check your visa status and rules.

## ***So what's the big deal about working more than 50% - or more than 75%?***

There is no contractual prohibition against working more than 50%. However, some departments may try to put rules in place to discourage graduate students from working more than 50%. (There's sometimes a paternalistic assumption that you will not be able to handle the extra workload and still make good progress toward graduation.) Even if such rules are in place, you can ask for waiver.

In instances of working 76% or more, however, there's also a financial issue: payroll taxes. Once you are working 76% or more as a university employee, the federal government no longer considers you a student for payroll tax purposes. That means you will pay FICA taxes - and the university will have to pay the employer's share of FICA taxes, too. Because of this, you could actually end up with less take-home pay working at, say, 80% versus 50%. Be sure to analyze your own particular case, however, since everyone's tax situation is different.



**Contact your department steward or the TAA office  
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with any questions or concerns.**