Chapter 5: Guide for Teaching Assistants

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Teaching Assistant - Job Code 002310

Description

Teaching Assistant (TA) assists in the instruction of an upper or lower division course at the University under the supervision of a faculty member. The TA primarily assists the faculty member in charge of the course by conducting discussion or laboratory sections that supplement faculty lectures and by grading assignment and examinations.

A TA may also assist with the development of assignments or exams, hold office hours, and proctor exams. In the case of basic language, reading and composition, some other skills-building courses, and a few other courses, a Teaching Assistant may lead the class meetings, but as with all other TAs, the general instructional content of the course as well as the official assignment of student grades and decisions on grade appeals are the responsibility of the faculty member in charge of the course. In no instance shall a Teaching Assistant be assigned responsibility for the entire instruction of a course.

Use of Title

No prior approval is required for use of this title.

Eligibility

Students appointed to this job code must meet the graduate student academic eligibility criteria listed in Chapter 3.

An international graduate student whose undergraduate degree is not from an English-speaking college or university, or who has serious pronunciation problems, may not serve as a TA until s/he has been certified to have the requisite English language skills. This English language policy does not apply to a student who serves as a TA which is conducted in his/her native language. For further information, contact the English Language Program for International Instructors, Teaching + Learning Commons, (858) 534-3981

Appointment Process

IA System

The Office of the Executive Vice Chancellor has developed an online system that helps academic departments and programs to facilitate the assignment and hiring process for students applying for TA, Reader, Tutor, Undergraduate Instructional Apprentice, and Associates-In positions.

The Instructional Assistant Data Management System (IA System) allows departmental staff to create custom questionnaires for Academic Student Employee (ASE) positions they want to fill, and provides a way for students to apply for those positions online. Departments and programs that already know who will fill these positions can simply assign the students and send them offers through the system.

The IA System provides additional data from various campus resources on each applicant, to help facilitate the decision-making process and to provide a single repository for relevant data. The system also provides the opportunity for instructors to select and rank applicants, if the department /program wishes to include instructor input in the decision-making process. The IA System also streamlines the approval process for graduate students being hired outside their home departments.

Once a final hiring decision is made, departmental staff assign the student to a class and make an offer through the IA System. The student is sent an e-mail notification, which includes instructions and a link back to the system, where he/she can accept or decline the offer. For paid assignments, the system generates a PDF appointment letter, which the student is required to open before he/she can accept the offer.

The ASE assignments also make it easy for an academic department or program to participate in the online Evaluations system. This system, which launched in Spring 2012, allows students to evaluate their ASEs and graduate courses, and instructors to evaluate their ASEs.

To obtain access, please contact ATS at ats@ucsd.edu. To start the recruiting process for your department, go to http://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu /Modules/ASES.

Oath Signature Date

When using a 10/01 start date for a new hire TA, the oath must be signed on or before the first day of the quarter (not the pay period). For example, if fall quarter begins on 9/22, the oath must be signed by that date, not on 10/1 which is the pay period start date.

IMPORTANT: If the oath is not signed on time, a damages' claim must be submitted. Refer to PPM 395-2 for instructions.

Pay Rate

Graduate student Readers should be paid using the graduate rate listed on the Student Academic Title Rates sheet. Changes to the standard begin /end dates and changes to percent time in the middle of the quarter will affect pay. In order to pay the student correctly, it is necessary to calculate a TA Daily Rate of Pay.

Pay Schedule

Teaching Assistants are paid monthly.

Position Begin and End Dates

Appointment Begin and End Dates: Service Period v Pay Period

TAs have a service period (dates worked) that is different than the pay period. The service period is the first day of the quarter through the last day of the quarter (ex. fall quarter begins mid-September and ends mid-December). The standard pay period in UCPath will ALWAYS be entered with the following appointment and distributions begin and end dates:

- Fall   10/01 - 12/31
- Winter   01/01 – 03/31
- Spring   04/01 – 06/30

These standard pay period dates were established so that TAs receive three equal paychecks per quarter regardless of the actual quarter begin and end dates.

IMPORTANT: Due to the differences between pay period versus service period, no changes can be made at a appointment in the middle of the quarter or the system will pay the TA incorrectly.

Changes to the standard begin/end dates and changes to percent time in the middle of the quarter will affect pay. In order to pay the student correctly, it is necessary to calculate a TA Daily Rate of Pay.

TA Appointment End Dates
Ending a TA early may affect student eligibility to receive fee payments.

Spring Quarter TA and Other Summer Appointments

A graduate student appointed as a TA spring quarter may be appointed (depending on the Home Department's summer support policy) up to 100% time as a GSR (or other title) beginning the day after the quarter ends (midJune). Although it may look like the student is appointed up to 150% time, the TA service period ends the last day of the spring quarter so it is not a conflict. See Appendix: 100% Employment During the Summer.

TA Fee Deferment and TA Loan Program

TAs may be able to apply for the TA Loan Program (available fall quarter only) or the TA Fee Deferment Program. See Appendix: TA Fee Deferment and TA Loan Programs for additional information.

Graduate Student Employment Policy & Procedures