

Guidelines for the assignment and responsibilities of Graduate Teaching Associates in the Department of Economics

A. Positions and Responsibilities

GTAs at the Department are hired for one of four possible types of positions: Independent Instructor, Recitation Leader, Administrative Teaching Assistant (Admin TA), and Grader.

Except for independent instructors, the duties of GTAs assigned to one of the other three types of positions are determined by the course instructor. ***However, under normal circumstances, the responsibilities of GTAs should be limited to the tasks listed below.*** These lists should be understood as upper bounds - individual instructors have the discretion to assign only part of these duties to their GTAs.

GTAs must be present on campus and available to perform their work throughout the duration of their contract, including on final exams week. Any exception to this rule must be authorized in writing by the responsible instructors.

If a problem arises during the semester that prevents the GTA to perform his work as usual, the GTA is required to notify the responsible instructor and the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies immediately.

All GTAs must adhere to University policies and regulations related to teaching, such as policies concerning students with disabilities, academic misconduct, students medical issues, etc.

A1. Independent Instructor

Before semester begins:

- Prepare syllabus and upload to required websites.
- Choose a textbook and order from the bookstore.
- Prepare and publish course webpage (e.g. on Carmen).

During semester:

- Hold classes in accordance with the official University calendar.
- Prepare homework assignments, quizzes, and exams.
- Grade all coursework and post grades.
- Hold regularly scheduled office hours.

After semester ends:

- Administer a final exam during the regularly scheduled final exam period.
- Post final course grades at the University registrar before the deadline.

A2. Recitation Leader

Before semester begins:

- Reply to emails and meet with instructor to discuss responsibilities.

During semester:

- Hold recitations as scheduled.
- Attend lectures.
- Attend course-organizing meetings.
- Prepare materials for recitations, including quizzes and homework assignments.
- Grade recitation quizzes and assignments (for graduate courses this includes grading assignments and exams given by instructor).
- Hold regularly scheduled office hours.
- Help Admin TA with the printing and sorting of exams.
- Help administer exams.

After semester ends:

- Help Admin TA with the printing and sorting of final exams.
- Help administer final exam.
- Assign and post final grades to University registrar before the deadline.
- Respond to student grade questions and file grade changes as necessary.

A3. Admin TA

Before semester begins:

- Reply to emails and meet with instructor to discuss responsibilities.

During semester:

- Attend lectures.
- Meet with instructor on a regular basis.
- Arrange and attend course-organizing meetings.
- Upload lecture notes and videos to course website.
- Review and make copies of handouts for lectures and recitations.
- Review and upload online quizzes.
- Be the primary person in charge of printing and sorting exams.
- Help review and administer exams.
- Coordinate with SLDS and arrange makeup exams.
- Grade exams.
- Assist with student inquiries.

After semester ends:

- Be the primary person in charge of printing and sorting of final exams.
- Help review and administer final exams.
- Assist with grading and posting of final grades to University registrar before the deadline.

A4. Grader

Before semester begins:

- Reply to emails and meet with instructor to discuss responsibilities.

During semester:

- Grade course assignments, quizzes, and exams.
- Post grades.
- Help instructor with the printing and sorting of exams.
- Help administer exams and quizzes.
- Hold regularly scheduled office hours.

After semester ends:

- Help administer final exam.
- Grade final exam and post grades.

B. Assignment process

B1. Timeline

- Approx. 3-4 months before the semester starts the office of undergraduate studies sends GTA application forms to all eligible graduate students.
- Students fill out the form and submit to the office of undergraduate studies by the announced deadline. Failure to submit the form on time may result in the student not being hired as GTA for that semester.
- GTAs are assigned to positions based on the criteria listed below.
- Each student receives their assigned position and is asked to confirm that they accept their assignment. If there is any problem with the assignment the student must immediately report the issue to the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies, who will try to resolve the problem.
- The office of undergraduate studies notifies instructors which GTAs are assigned for their courses.
- Students can trade their assigned GTA positions if all parties mutually agree to the trade, and if the trade is approved by the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies. The last date to make any changes in the assignment is 1 week prior to the beginning of the semester.

B2. Criteria for assignment

The assignment of graduate students to GTA positions is determined by the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies in consultation with the DGS, DUS, and Department Chair.

In order to fulfill the teaching mission of the department, all necessary GTA positions must be filled. Furthermore, there are additional constraints that limit the department's ability to assign students to their favorite positions. However, to the extent possible, the assignment will be based on the preferences reported on the GTA application forms.

The following guidelines will be used to determine the assignment of GTAs:

- Due to the large time commitment of satisfying fields' requirements, second year students will get the highest priority in the assignment. If at all possible, these students will be assigned to Grader positions.
- If possible, students on the job market will be assigned to Grader positions during Spring semester in order to minimize the conflict between their GTA responsibilities and job-market activities (e.g., flyouts). Job-market students will also get a higher priority during Fall semester.
- The department will make an effort to maintain fairness by considering past assignments: If a student received an undesirable position (according to their reported preferences) in the previous semester, then they get a higher priority for the current semester, and vice versa.
- If an instructor asks for a specific student to be assigned as their GTA, and if the student has no objections to work in this position, then the department will try to assign the student accordingly.
- For independent instructors, the department will try to match the student's research field to the course they are assigned to teach.
- If possible, a student will not be assigned as an independent instructor to two different courses throughout their career at the department (unless the student indicates that they are interested to independently teach a new course). Similar considerations will apply also to the assignment of recitation leaders and Admin TAs, i.e., the department will try to reduce the number of different courses for which a GTA is assigned throughout their degree.

- Higher priority may be given to students with a promising research agenda and good job-market prospects, as determined by the DGS in consultation with the student advisor.
- Higher priority may be given to students who performed well as GTAs in previous semesters. GTA performance is measured by SEIs and by feedback from the responsible instructor.

C. Stipends

Since different types of GTA positions require different levels of effort and time commitments, GTA stipends vary with the type of position. In particular, independent instructors would receive the highest stipends. The precise pay rate for each type of position is determined before the beginning of the academic year by the Department's chair and fiscal officer in consultation with the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies.

D. Training

The Department may require GTAs to participate in training to improve various aspects of their teaching. Such training would typically occur prior to the beginning of the academic year. The precise nature of the training will be determined by the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies.

E. Dispute resolution

GTAs are expected to comply with the directions of the responsible instructor and perform their duties properly and punctually. The Graduate Program Policies and Procedures document (Section IV.D.) details the procedure in case a GTA fails to meet the requirements of their position. If a GTA disagrees with any of the instructor requirements, and if this problem cannot be resolved between the instructor and the GTA directly, then the GTA should immediately notify the offices of graduate and undergraduate studies. The coordinators will try to resolve the problem in consultation with the DGS and DUS if needed. If no solution can be reached then the Department Chair should be notified and his/her decision would be final.