

POLICY ON TEACHING ASSOCIATES

This policy is intended to provide a guide to appointment, classification, and evaluation of Teaching Associates.

I. DEFINITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. "Teaching Associate" (Classification 2353, 2354) is a graduate student who is appointed as a university employee in order to provide the student with an apprenticeship experience and financial support for graduate education. Teaching associates serve at the pleasure of the President. Teaching Associates are not members of the Unit 3 (Faculty) Bargaining Unit.
2. Appointment as a Teaching Associate does not confer any rights to permanent appointment to any person. The length of service of a Teaching Associate does not alter the temporary nature of the appointment or confer additional rights upon him/her.
3. Teaching Associates may serve a maximum of twenty (20) hours per week. Work Assignments are to be closely associated with their program of study or the academic department in which they are enrolled.
4. A Teaching Associate with less than twenty (20) hours per week may hold a concurrent appointment in another student classification provided that the maximum number of hours for both appointments does not exceed twenty (20) hours per week.
5. Teaching Associates enrolled in a master's degree may be the instructor of record for lower division courses including introductory laboratories, workshops, and activity classes which are a part of a lecture-laboratory or activity. Teaching Associates enrolled in a doctoral program may be the instructor of record for upper division courses.
6. The responsibilities of a Teaching Associate are to be determined by normal departmental procedures. Responsibilities, under the close supervision of a faculty member, typically include:
 - a. classroom and/or laboratory instruction
 - b. making assignments to students
 - c. preparing course materials
 - d. administering examinations
 - e. assessing student performance, including determining course grades
 - f. tutoring students
 - g. supervising small discussion groups
 - h. assisting students outside of class or laboratory hours
 - i. attending meetings scheduled by the faculty for purposes of briefing, coordination, and discussion of course content and materials
 - j. participating in distance learning activities
 - k. performing other assignments supportive of university instruction.
7. Normally, Teaching Associates are designated to teach courses at the lower division level. In the rare instances that a Teaching Associate range a is considered for teaching an upper division class, the department must (a) provide strong written justification for this appointment and (b) secure approval from the dean of graduate studies, or designee, prior to the beginning of the semester.
8. In introductory classes where the Teaching Associates is the instructor of record, he/she is responsible for instructional content of the course, for planning examinations, and/or for determining the term grade for students under the supervision of a faculty member.

9. Teaching Associates are not to be assigned clerical or routine tasks appropriately performed by hourly student help.¹
10. Each Teaching Associate shall be assigned a faculty supervisor who will be responsible for the completion of duties, supervision of time, and quality of work. It is the responsibility of the department to ensure that the assignment contributes significantly to the quality of the Teaching Associate's graduate educational experience.
11. With the appointment of Teaching Associates in laboratory or activity courses, the department assumes the responsibility for their close supervision, training and evaluation. The department must:
 - a. provide instruction to the Teaching Associates on laboratory safety, objectives of the assigned experiments, teaching materials and methods, and other responsibilities as appropriate
 - b. hold regularly scheduled meetings of all Teaching Associates in multiple-section courses to accomplish the objectives of the course and to coordinate the various class or laboratory sections.
 - c. Evaluate the Teaching Associate in compliance with section VII.
12. Departments are responsible to inform each Teaching Associate about university and trustee policies that relate to his/her assignment and to assist the Teaching Associate in the implementation of these policies.
13. The responsibilities of a Teaching Associate shall be described in the letter of appointment.

II. NOMINATION PROCEDURE

1. All nominations for appointment to a position of Teaching Associate to teach or offer any academic service under the auspices of California State University, Fresno shall be made only after a complete review of the qualifications of the individual and upon the recommendation of the appropriate department or unit.
2. The opportunity to apply for a Teaching Associateship shall be made available to all graduate students and eligible applicants in the department and/or program. Each department shall publicize the opportunity to all graduate students and applicants in the program. Each applicant for appointment as a Teaching Associate shall complete an application for appointment as a Teaching Associate.
3. The department shall acknowledge receipt of all applications for Teaching Associateships.
4. Review of applications for Teaching Associateships shall follow normal department appointment policies. At a minimum, the departmental procedures shall include a review of applications by the program graduate committee or other appropriate committee in the department.
5. Prospective teaching associateships shall be approved on the basis of their qualifications and academic standing. The department shall review the application for each applicant. The department shall determine the specific responsibilities the individual will be expected to perform.
6. If a department recommends an individual for appointment as a Teaching Associate, a the completed application and a nomination form shall be sent to the school dean.
7. A person shall be nominated to perform only those duties authorized by the department committee.
8. Access to application materials is limited to persons authorized access in the conduct of university business. Individual applicants shall not have access to these files.

¹ It continues to be the case that a teaching associate should be required to meet his/her assignment without regard to the specific number of hours required, similar to faculty and other exempt employees. The salary rate is for the term of the assignment, not an hourly rate.

9. Applications for Teaching Associateships are to be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All deliberations on applications shall be conducted in executive session and remain confidential as provided by law. **Violation of this confidentiality is considered to be unprofessional conduct and is grounds for disciplinary action.**

III. APPOINTMENT

1. All appointments shall be based solely on ability and fitness for the position to be filled. For specific qualifications, see Section IV below.
2. The Provost or designee shall make all Teaching Associate appointments. No other person is authorized to appoint Teaching Associates, nor to modify or revise the provisions of any appointment or offer of appointment. No other person is authorized to make statements, either oral or written, which may be construed to be commitments to future appointment by the university.
3. The initial appointment to the position of Teaching Associate may be made for a semester or an academic year. Subsequent appointments depend upon performance, progress toward the advanced degree, and budgets and/or enrollments. The length of the appointment shall be noted in the position offer.
4. All Approved appointments shall be checked by the hiring Department after the add/drop deadline to verify continued eligibility.
5. The Dean of Graduate Studies, or designee, is responsible for ensuring the eligibility and compliance of all applicants.
6. If a contract is canceled, the Teaching Associate must be paid for the hours taught or worked. Classes must be canceled prior to the third meeting.
7. The official offer to a Teaching Associate shall also indicate that the appointment automatically expires at the end of the period stated and does not establish a right to subsequent appointments or any further appointment rights. No other notice shall be provided.

IV. QUALIFICATIONS FOR APPOINTMENT AND REAPPOINTMENT

1. Initial appointment to the position of Teaching Associate shall require:
 - a. possession of an approved baccalaureate degree
 - b. for graduate students with conditional classified standing in the discipline current enrollment in at least six (6) units of graduate study in the program is required.
 - c. for graduate students already matriculating in the program, a pattern of significant and satisfactory progress toward the completion of the graduate degree is required.
 - d. communication skills appropriate to the instructional setting
 - e. evidence of subject matter competence
 - f. other qualifications as necessary to perform assigned duties.
2. Credential students, unclassified students, and graduate students outside of California State University, Fresno are ineligible for a Teaching Associateship.

3. In addition to the qualifications listed above, reappointment to the position of Teaching Associate requires a pattern of significant progress in accomplishing graduate degree requirements. At a minimum, this means
 - a. that the applicant is earning a 3.0 grade point average or better during each semester of appointment
 - b. that the applicant is enrolled in, and completes six (6) units of coursework toward the graduate degree with the exception of thesis/ project semesters. (Withdrawal from a course(s) after the fourth week does not constitute acceptable progress.)
 - c. that the applicant completes all prerequisite coursework in the first semester of appointment unless such prerequisites as listed by the department on the "Graduate Admission Request" cannot be completed in a single semester
 - d. that the applicant meets the requirements for and achieves both classified standing and advancement to candidacy in a timely manner (i.e. has achieved classified graduate standing, advancement to candidacy, and other degree requirements according to University policy announced in the General Catalog).
 - e. that the applicant receives satisfactory teaching evaluations as defined in section VII.

V. REMUNERATION

1. Teaching Associates are compensated according to the campus schedule for Teaching Associate. Reappointment of a Teaching Associate shall be at the same or higher salary level as in the previous appointment.
2. Benefits for Teaching Associates are determined by the Unit 11 CBA.

VI. TUITION WAIVERS

1. Background

CSU Executive Order 611 (EO611) allows campus presidents or their designees to waive tuition for graduate students employed as TAs (Class Code 2353 and 2354). Funding for the waivers depends on discretionary allocations from the campus president.

2. Definitions

TA – TA is a graduate student who is appointed as a university employee and typically teaches lower division courses, including laboratories, as the instructor of record.

Tuition waiver – EO611 restricts waivers to tuition only. University fees such as health and activities fees, non-resident fees, international student fees, parking, individual course fees, graduation and other processing fees are not included in the waiver.

3. Student Eligibility

Funding for TA tuition waivers is dependent on the fiscal resources of the university, and are therefore not guaranteed. To be considered for a TA tuition waiver, students must

- a. be admitted to an approved graduate degree program at Fresno State,
- b. be hired as a TA within the department housing the graduate degree,
- c. complete a FAFSA by the published priority deadline, and
- d. be ineligible for a State University Grant (SUG).

4. To maintain eligibility for a TA tuition waiver, students must
 - a. meet all qualifications described in IV.3
 - b. teach at least 2 sections or 3 WTUs (.20 FTE) of coursework,
 - c. have classified standing

5. Terms

Only TAs are eligible for tuition waivers. GAs (Graduate Assistants) or RAs (Research Assistants) are not eligible. TA tuition waivers are limited to 4 semesters at the university, excluding summer semesters. Tuition waivers for doctoral students will be no greater than the maximum amount provided to masters students in the department of their employment. Tuition waivers for doctoral students will also be limited to a maximum of 4 semesters, excluding summer semesters.

6. Distribution of Funds

Early each spring semester, the Provost, in consultation with the President, will announce the amount of funds available for TA tuition waivers for the next academic year. The funds will be distributed through the Division of Graduate Studies to colleges hosting TAs. The distribution will be based upon the number of the eligible TAs from the prior fall semester. While the university endeavors to fully fund all eligible TAs, if the allocation of funds is not sufficient, each dean, in consultation with the affected departments, will determine how to divide the available funds.

7. Procedures

- a. To receive a TA (TA) tuition waiver, students must file a FAFSA each year by the published priority deadline.
- b. Students who enroll in 6 units (equivalent to 4 weighted graduate-level units) or less will receive funding based on half-time enrollment and those who enroll in more than 6 units will receive support based on full-time enrollment.
- c. Departments will forward the names and student ID numbers of eligible TA tuition waiver recipients, and copies of their TA contracts for the next academic semester, to the Division of Graduate Studies office one week prior to the Early Registration fee payment deadline (approximately July 31st for the fall semester, and December 1st for the spring semester).
- d. Graduate Studies personnel will verify enrollment for those recommended, and will work with the Financial Aid office in identifying TA's who have been awarded a State University Grant (SUG). In order for a TA to be eligible for a tuition waiver, the student must not have received a SUG.
- e. Graduate Studies personnel will post the fee waivers to the student accounts. It is important for students and their departments to adhere to the deadlines established by Graduate Studies. If the fee waiver is not processed in a timely manner, Accounting Services will defer tuition until such time as the waiver is processed.

VII. EVALUATION

1. Each Teaching Associate who teaches a class shall be evaluated on a regular basis according to the schedule outlined in the Policy on the Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness for temporary faculty. The results of these evaluations shall be placed in the academic file of the Teaching Associate.
2. The Policy on Assessment of Teaching Effectiveness includes both Student Ratings and Peer Evaluations. In the case of Teaching Associates, all Peer Evaluations will be completed by faculty.
3. Any additional performance evaluation methods, timelines, or criteria will be given to the TA within 14 days of appointment.
4. Draft evaluations shall be given five days prior to placement in the personnel file. The TA shall be provided the opportunity to meet with the Chair or appropriate administrator to discuss the draft. The request to meet shall be made within five days of receipt of the draft evaluation. The meeting with the Chair or appropriate administrator must take place within 10 days of the request. A final copy of the evaluation will be provided to the TA within five days after placing in the personnel file.

Reference:

CSU classification and qualification standards: Teaching Associates

Link to: http://www.calstate.edu/tier3/HR-Adm/pdf/E99/Teaching_Associate.pdf

Recommended by Academic Senate

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