Name: Teaching Assistants hired by the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts

From: Mitch Ylarregui, Graduate Program Coordinator

Subject: ASE Supplemental Assignment Memo

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**Introduction:** Instruction provided by graduate teaching assistants (TAs) is an important component of our undergraduate programs. Service by graduate students as teaching assistants is also a valuable part of graduate education. As a Teaching Assistant or Teaching Fellow in our School, you will be carrying out critical work that is greatly appreciated. We look forward to working with you to create a strong partnership in educating our students.

**General Appointment Information:** The position being offered is covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the University of California and the International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW), AFL-CIO and its Local Union 2865. You can find the complete text of the Agreement at:

[http://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/bx/contract.html](http://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/bx/contract.html)

An ASE who is a University student *may not* hold an academic (includes GSR appointments) or non-academic appointment or combination of appointments that totals more than 50% of full time during the academic year without express advance written approval of the Graduate Dean’s Office. Students on F-1 or J-1 visas are not eligible for exceptions to hold an appointment beyond 50% of full-time.

**Benefits:** ASEs who are graduate students with appointments in eligible titles that total 25% or more of full-time for the entire term are eligible to participate in the University’s Partial Fee Remission and Student Health Insurance Programs in accordance with the policies and provisions established for those programs. Eligible ASEs may also participate in the campus childcare programs, and Childcare Reimbursement Program, and Dependent Care Reimbursement Program outlined in Article 4 of the labor agreement.

**Requirements for appointments:**

- **Academic Standing:** TA/TFs must be in good academic standing (i.e., must not be on academic probation or have had their degree candidacy lapse), have a minimum 3.0 grade-point average, and have no more than two Incomplete grades in upper division and graduate courses on the transcript.
- **Registration and Enrollment:** Appointees must be UC students who are registered and enrolled in a least twelve units of course work during the semester in which they are serving as a TA/TF.
- **Oral English Proficiency:** Students who do not speak English as a native language and do not hold a Bachelor’s degree from an institution in the United States must demonstrate oral English proficiency to be appointed as a TA/TF.
Duties: A 50% TA should expect to spend an average of about 20 hours per week on teaching duties. However, the time commitment may vary considerably from week to week, particularly in courses with a fieldwork component. The total workload for a 50% TA is not to exceed 340 hours per semester or 40 hours in any given week. Should you feel that your assigned duties require a greater time commitment, please discuss the matter with your primary course instructor or, if necessary, with me.

Before classes start
Meet with the instructor in charge of your course to discuss his/her goals for the course and your duties. If the instructor has not contacted you prior to the day before classes start, please contact the instructor to arrange an initial meeting.

Attend any required TA training sessions.

Familiarize yourself with the Academic Calendar and Deadlines, available on the Office of the Registrar web site (http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/schedules). TAs do not assign course grades and cannot approve dropping or adding courses, but you should be aware of these timelines.

Teaching assistants play a central role in insuring that UC Merced’s standards of academic honesty are upheld. Familiarize yourself with UC Merced’s academic honesty policies (http://studentlife.ucmerced.edu, Student Judicial Affairs, Academic Honesty Policy).

You should make reasonable efforts to avoid making it easy or tempting for students to cheat. However, it is your responsibility to be alert to all forms of academic dishonesty and inform the course instructor immediately if you suspect problems.

During the semester
Prepare for class and give clear presentations of the materials to your students. Familiarize yourself with the syllabus for the course and the student learning outcomes. Be sure everything you do in class is related to the goals of the course.

Maintain a professional and respectful relationship with your students.

Be on time for all assigned meetings of your section(s).

Hold at least three hours of office hours per week and be prepared to devote all of that time to meeting with students. Be sure the students in your section(s) and your primary course instructor know your office hours and location.

Attend lectures as required by primary course instructor.

Write or provide questions for quizzes and exams as required by the primary course instructor.

Prepare exams and quizzes ahead of time as requested and report problems to the primary course instructor in a timely manner. Be careful not to divulge specific information about the content of upcoming exams or quizzes to students.

Proctor exams including midterms as scheduled by the primary course instructor and final exams as scheduled by the Registrar. Proctor exams actively to guard against cheating.

Grade laboratory reports, homework problems, quizzes, and exams as required by the primary course instructor.

Return graded materials to students. Note that privacy laws require graded materials be returned to students individually, not placed in a pile to be picked up.
Perform all grading and submit all scores for which you are responsible to the primary course instructor, and/or post scores to UCMCROPS as required, before the designated deadline.

Convey to your primary course instructor in a timely manner any problems with individual students.

**After the semester is over**

Meet with the primary course instructor to be sure that you have completed all grading and provided input needed for grades to be assigned. Provide any other input on the course requested by the primary instructor.

Depending on the date of the final exam, the grading process may extend into the week after the instructional end of the semester.

**Conflicts of interest**

Graduate teaching assistants must refrain from any activity or conduct that creates an apparent or actual conflict of interest. A TA must not assign grades for, or evaluate the work of, anyone he or she is closely related to or has a financial or close personal relationship with. If you think that your TA assignment might involve an actual or perceived conflict of interest, please discuss the matter with your primary course instructor and/or me.

Teaching assistants are allowed and encouraged to offer help to their students outside of regular class or office hours. However, such sessions should be conducted in a professional manner within the duties of the teaching assignment. A TA may not request or accept any form of additional compensation from any student in the course to which he/she is assigned.

**Absences**

TAs are responsible for the education of the students in their sections and should realize it is very difficult to replace a TA on short notice. Should you be unable to meet a scheduled section because of a medical or personal emergency, immediately inform the course instructor and Graduate Program Coordinator, Mitch Ylarregui, and we will attempt to find a replacement. Be prepared to provide documentation of the reason for cancellation. More than three such emergency absences during a semester must be taken as unpaid leave.

**Additional Resources**

General advice, support, and training for TAs: Center for Research on Teaching Excellence (http://crte.ucmerced.edu, TA Support Services)

University of California TA policies: Academic Personnel Office (http://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/policies.asp, Academic Student Employees)

Safety: Environmental Health and Safety (http://ehs.ucmerced.edu)

University of California, Merced General Catalog (http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/resources/catalog)