



SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES, HUMANITIES AND ARTS

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Name: Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows hired by the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts (SSHA)

From: Holley Moyes, Associate Dean

Subject: ASE Supplemental Assignment Memo

Introduction: Instruction provided by graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) and Teaching Fellows (TFs) is an important component of our undergraduate programs. Service by graduate students as teaching assistants is an integral part of graduate education. As a Teaching Assistant or Teaching Fellow in the School of Social Sciences, Humanities and Arts (SSHA), graduate students engage in critical work which is highly valued and appreciated. We look forward to working with you to create a strong partnership in educating our undergraduate students.

General Appointment Information: All TA and TF appointments are made in accordance with the University of California's Academic Personnel Manual (APM) 410, UAW labor agreement and the UC Merced Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook.

A TA or TF who is a University student may not hold an academic appointment, including an appointment as a Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) or a non-academic appointment or combination of appointments that exceeds 50% full time or no more than 340 hours per semester during the academic year. Exceptions require advanced written approval from 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: Academic Student Employees (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 TAs or TFs 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: All students must be in good academic standing as defined in the Graduate Policies and Procedures

https://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/sites/graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/files/documents/PDFs/uc_merced_graduate_policies_and_procedures_handbook_18-19.pdf .

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 or TF. Graduate students do not need to be registered in courses during summer session; however, they must be an active UCM graduate student.

Oral English Proficiency: International and U.S. Permanent Resident graduate students who are not citizens of countries where English is either the primary or dominant language, as approved by the UCM Graduate and Research Council, and who wish to be considered for appointment as a TA or TF, must pass an approved oral English proficiency examination. There is no exception to this requirement. Additional requirements for international students seeking employment can be found in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook.

Workload and Responsibilities:

For current semester course assignments, please refer to your Appendix C (Description of Duties). In addition, as an Academic Student Employee, the terms and conditions of your appointment are described in the 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:

<https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units> .

Most TA appointments are at 50% time. A 50% TA or TF should expect to spend an average of 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. You are also welcome to contact SSHA Graduate Support staff at ssha.grad@ucmerced.edu

Before classes start

All TAs or TFs must accept or decline their appointment within one week of receiving the Academic Student Employee: Description of Duties (Appendix C). Failure to accept an appointment in writing within one calendar week of receipt will nullify the appointment.

Meet with the instructor in charge of your course to discuss the 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.

If you are assigned to a course with multiple TAs or TFs, please work together to determine who will cover which section and then report your final sections/schedules to your primary course instructor and SSHA Graduate Support staff.

Familiarize yourself with UC Merced's academic regulations regarding such issues as grading policy, dropping and adding courses, etc. TAs do not assign course grades and cannot approve dropping or adding courses, but you should be aware of the policies.

TAs and TFs play a central role in ensuring the UCM Academic Honesty Policy is upheld. All TAs or TFs should familiarize themselves with the UCM Standards of Conduct available at <http://studentconduct.ucmerced.edu/> .

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 two 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. Information about student privacy: <http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/policies/family-educational-rights-and-privacy-act-ferpa>

Perform all grading and submit all scores for which you are responsible to the primary course instructor, and/or post scores to CATCOURSES 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 you 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

TAs and TFs 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 one of the Graduate Program staff.

TAs and TFs are allowed and encouraged to offer help to their students during regular class, office hours, or scheduled appointments. These sessions should be conducted in a professional manner within the duties of the teaching assignment. TAs and TFs 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 SSHA Graduate Support. Be prepared to provide documentation for the reason for cancellation. More than three emergency absences during a semester must be taken as unpaid leave.

Request for Leave and Coverage (Absences)

In order to ensure proper coverage for leaves other than long-term leaves, TAs and TFs are expected to contact their supervisor to request leave as soon as the need for the leave becomes known but not less than one (1) working day in advance of the commencement of the leave unless the leave is for an unanticipated personal or family illness or bereavement. Requests for leave shall be made in writing with information about the nature of the leave and probable duration. Upon request, the TA or TF is required to provide appropriate documentation. While it is the University's responsibility to make arrangements for coverage, the TA or TF will assist as reasonably possible. If you are unable to meet a scheduled section because of a medical or personal emergency, immediately inform the course instructor, instructional lab staff, and/or one of the Graduate Program staff. Be prepared to provide documentation of the reason for cancellation. For more information refer to the Collective Bargaining Agreement, Article 17 Leaves,

https://ucnet.universityofcalifornia.edu/labor/bargaining-units/bx/docs/bx_2010-2013_17_leaves.pdf

Re-appointment and Evaluations

In accordance with UC Academic Personnel Manual 410, all TA and TF appointments are self-terminating unless the appointee is otherwise notified. Each TA may be evaluated at the end of every semester for adherence to the requirements listed above. If the work has been judged satisfactory, the TA will be eligible to be reappointed for future teaching.

Comments may be solicited from other faculty, instructors, or laboratory coordinators with whom the TA interacted.

Student teaching evaluations will be considered.

Additional Resources

University of California TA policies <http://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/academic-personnel-policy/index.html>

Academic Personnel Manual 410 <https://www.ucop.edu/academic-personnel-programs/files/apm/apm-410.pdf>

University of California, Merced Academic Personnel Office: <http://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/>
<http://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/resources/academic-titles/graduate-student>

Graduate Student Child Care Reimbursement Policy:
<http://academicpersonnel.ucmerced.edu/node/300>

Laboratory safety: Environmental Health and Safety: <http://ehs.ucmerced.edu/>

General advice, support, and training for TAs: Center for Engaged Teaching and Learning:
<http://cetl.ucmerced.edu/>

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