

University Guidelines for the Use of Graduate Teaching Assistants

The employment of graduate teaching assistantships will be carefully planned and carried out in a manner providing the greatest possible benefits to the university's students, the graduate assistants, the departments involved, and the reputation of the university.

Graduate teaching responsibilities may include assignments such as assisting in laboratory sessions, teaching physical education activities, helping prepare lectures, grading papers, keeping class records, and conducting discussion groups.

In some cases the graduate teaching assistantship may also include primary responsibility for teaching a course and/or for assigning final grades. **SACS requires assistants with primary teaching responsibilities will have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline.** Assistants with primary teaching responsibility will serve under the supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, receive regular in-service training, and be evaluated regularly in accordance with departmental policy.

Each department employing graduate teaching assistants will establish comprehensive policies on the hiring, training, overseeing, and evaluation of the assistants. The appropriate college, under the authority of the college's Director of Graduate Studies, will review the departmental plan and evaluations.

Departmental policies supplement the following institutional guidelines:

Appointment criteria: The Applicant will meet all existing criteria for general graduate assistantships. Recommendation letters should specifically address the applicant's potential as a teacher.

Graduate teaching assistants for whom English is a second language must make a satisfactory score on a test of spoken English before being given classroom assignments, or provide other reliable evidence of proficiency in written and oral communication.

Remuneration: Graduate teaching assistants receive a stipend as well as remission of 10 semester hours per term tuition. The university is committed to working toward equity with other regional graduate institutions in order to attract the best possible students to these assistantships.

Rights and responsibilities: Graduate teaching assistants will have access to such professional development activities as workshops, seminars, or other instructional resources established for faculty growth. Those graduate teaching assistants with primary responsibility in the classroom must comply with the provisions of the USA Faculty Handbook.

Evaluation and reappointment: As with all assistantships, the initial appointment is for one academic year. Teaching assistants may be reappointed for an additional year subject to satisfactory completion of teaching responsibilities, satisfactory academic performance, and timely progress toward the degree. A written evaluation of teaching performance, including input from students as well as supervisors or regular faculty members, should be submitted each semester to the student and maintained on record in the department for those assistants having primary teaching responsibilities for one or more courses.