

Committee on Educational Policy

Policy on the Appointment and Use of Graduate Student Instructors

“Graduate student instructor” (GSI) refers to a graduate student having primary responsibility for the teaching of a course, e.g., a Teaching Fellow or Associate In, not a Teaching Assistant.

The principles outlined below are designed to permit flexibility in staffing courses and to provide teaching opportunities for graduate students, a valuable component of professional development. However, CEP believes that good educational policy requires that Senate faculty regularly teach in the core of each major program. Regular involvement of Senate faculty in the undergraduate curriculum contributes to excellence and continuity, and ensures that Senate faculty have the first-hand knowledge needed to exercise effective curricular oversight. In addition, excessive use of graduate instructors limits faculty interaction with majors and prospective majors, making it difficult for students to get faculty guidance and appropriate letters of reference, and limits the opportunities of students to interact with established scholars.

CEP criteria for approval of graduate student instructor appointments are as follows:

- The candidate has advanced to Ph.D. candidacy
- The candidate has at least two years (or equivalent) of college teaching experience either as an instructor or a teaching assistant
- The candidate’s teaching is judged to be very good or better based on evaluations from the three most recent teaching quarters
- Course sponsoring unit attests to the candidate’s competence to teach the course in terms of both subject knowledge and teaching ability.
- Designated Faculty Mentor assigned

Process:

Determine if CEP approval is required by answering the following:

*For Lower Division Courses:

1. Has candidate previously been approved by CEP to teach the same course? Yes No

If yes, CEP approval is not needed (all criteria met)

If no, use GSI Appointment Request Form

2. All CEP criteria for approval are met. Yes No

If yes, CEP approval is not needed

If no, use GSI Appointment Request Form

*Questions 1 & 2 must both be yes for CEP to give blanket approval, leaving it to deans and departments to ensure that the five criteria are met.

For Upper Division Courses

All requests for GSI appointments for upper division¹ courses require CEP approval. The normal routing of requests is from the department chair to the appropriate divisional dean, and from the divisional dean to CEP. Concurrence of the Graduate Dean (a brief email suffices) must be sought prior to the request moving to CEP.

- Use GSI Appointment Request Form

The CEP deadline for submission of requests is **the end of the 4th week of the quarter prior to the**

quarter in which the course is to be taught, for example, the 4th week of spring quarter for a course to

¹ Per Systemwide Senate Regulation, SR 750.

be offered in fall. Course-sponsoring units that submit requests after the deadline should bear in mind that CEP approval is not a rubber stamp and have a back-up plan in mind for mounting the relevant course.

GSI Appointment Request Form

The following must accompany this request

- Candidate C.V.
- Graduate Division Confirmation
- Required signatures (electronic approval is acceptable)

Incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor

Course Sponsoring Agency: _____ Quarter to be offered: _____

Student's name: _____

Course Information:

Course number: _____ Course Name: _____

Expected enrollment: _____

Major requirement satisfied: _____

General Education requirement satisfied: _____

Candidate Information:

Date candidate was advanced to candidacy for Ph.D. _____
(Provide Graduate Division confirmation that candidate may be appointed to GSI Title)

If not advanced, what is the expected date of advancement? _____

Quarters Served in a GSI Title: _____

Teaching:

Per APM 410 candidate must have at least two years (or equivalent) of college teaching experience, either as an instructor or a teaching assistant.

If this is the student's first GSI appointment, attach the student's curriculum vitae (CV) on teaching history (as teaching assistant or primary instructor).

In order to prevent duplicity of labor, CEP asks that evaluations of the student's teaching history be reviewed prior to sending the request to CEP. CEP does not require the physical evaluations, only review and confirmation that they are "Very Good" or better by the requestor.

Please list the most recent three quarters of teaching, and the overall evaluations they recieved.

As judged by the attached evaluations, is the students teaching very good or better?

Give a brief assessment of the student's competence to teach the course in terms of subject knowledge and teaching ability.

Research:

Assess the student's research competence as it relates to this course.

Faculty Oversight and Mentoring

The appointing unit agrees to provide faculty oversight and mentoring to the GSI. At a minimum, this entails appointing a faculty member who will:

- a) oversee the course description, reading list, and final grades and evaluations;
- b) review the last three sets of student evaluations for the appointee and meet prior to the beginning of the course to discuss any issues.
- c) meet with the GSI before instruction begins to discuss course content, pedagogy, logistics, tests and assignments, grading and evaluation, and the faculty code of conduct;
- d) conduct one class visit, and follow-up meeting with the GSI, during the first two weeks of the teaching quarter;
- e) be available to discuss matters related to the course throughout the quarter.
- f) act as formal supervisor of any TAs associated with the course, including providing any final evaluation of their role as TAs (since graduate students cannot supervise and evaluate other graduate students).

Name and signature of the on-going faculty member who has agreed to oversee instruction.

Faculty mentor must receive a copy of this page:

(name)

*(signature)

*My signature, whether in writing or transmitted electronically, agrees to oversee the work of this appointment in compliance with CEP's policy.

(date)

Waiver of Criteria for Approval

CEP approval is contingent upon; advancement to Ph.D. candidacy, 2 years of university or college level teaching experience, teaching evaluations demonstrating very good or better competency and a designated faculty mentor. If these conditions are not met, justify why they should be waived.

Incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor

Required signatures: (Please print name following signature/confirmation)

Requestor (Course sponsoring unit head)

Date

I understand that by confirming, I have created an electronic signature that agrees with this appointment recommendation for CEP to review.

Graduate Divisional Dean
(May attach email confirmation)

Date

I understand that by confirming, I have created an electronic signature confirming the student's criteria has been met for CEP to review.

Divisional Dean

Date

I understand that by confirming, I have created an electronic signature approves this appointment recommendation for CEP to review.
