

### 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, either 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.**<sup>1</sup>

#### For Associate In

##### Ph.D. Students:

1. A master’s degree or equivalent training
2. At least one year of college teaching experience, either as an instructor or a teaching assistant

#### For MFA Students

1. Should be in their second to last or last quarter.

#### For Teaching Fellow

1. Advancement to candidacy for the doctorate.
2. At least two years of college teaching experience, either as an instructor or a teaching assistant

#### For both Associate In and Teaching Fellow

3. Teaching is judged to be very good or better based on evaluations from the three most recent teaching quarters.
4. Course sponsoring unit attests to the student’s competence to teach the course in terms of both subject knowledge and teaching ability. 5
5. Designated Faculty Mentor has signed the oversight and mentoring agreement.

#### Process:

Determine if CEP approval is required by answering the following:

#### For Lower Division Courses:

All 5 CEP criteria for either Associate In or Teaching Fellow are met.  Yes  No  
If yes, CEP gives blanket approval, and it is the responsibility of the divisional dean and the department to ensure that the five criteria are met.

#### If no, use GSI Appointment Request Form (below)

#### For Upper Division Courses (Note, conditions 4 and 5 are mandatory)

Has CEP previously approved this student to teach the upper-division course in question (not a different course) and are conditions 1-5 met?  Yes  No  
If yes, CEP gives blanket approval, and it is the responsibility of the divisional dean and the department to ensure that the five criteria are met.

---

<sup>1</sup> Per Systemwide Senate Regulation, SR 750 and per APM 410 and CAPM 700.411.



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 based on evaluations from the three most recent teaching quarters, by the requestor.

Teaching history: *Example text:*

*Fall 2010 – TA for Psych 80 % of students rated the instructor's teaching effectiveness as Very Good or Excellent.*

*Fall 2009 – TA for Psych 1 was admin TA for this course, evaluations not requested.*

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

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

**Research:**

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

Waiver of Criteria For Approval (if needed)

Please state which of conditions 1-3 are not met and justify why they should be waived. (Note that conditions 4 and 5 are mandatory).

**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)

\*I understand by agreeing, I have created an electronic signature, to oversee the work of this appointment in compliance with CEP's policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(date)

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 Division 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.

### Incomplete forms will be returned to the requestor

The CEP deadline for submission of requests is **the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> week of the quarter prior to the quarter in which the course is to be taught**, for example, the 4<sup>th</sup> week of spring quarter for a course to 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.