

Graduate School Guidelines

- **Graduate Courses in College/University Teaching**
- **Graduate Courses Providing Mentored Experiences in College/University Teaching**

Overview

Courses devoted to learning about college teaching and courses providing mentored experiences in college teaching must be consistent with Graduate School and university policies related to teaching by graduate students.

Specifically, such courses must not put a graduate student in the position of being a “volunteer GA,” where a graduate student is providing significant instruction without compensation and other associated benefits. See the following section of the *Graduate School Handbook*:

Section II.8.2.6: Volunteer GAs. Under no circumstances should graduate students serve as “volunteer GAs,” that is, with no stipend, at a stipend not commensurate with the expected load, or without an appropriate payment of tuition and fees. Course credit cannot be awarded to a student performing in the role of a GA in lieu of a stipend. Circumstances that may warrant an exception to this policy must be approved in advance by the Graduate School on a case-by-case basis.”

Principles for course development

- Course credit cannot be awarded in lieu of a stipend to a student performing in the role of a GA.
- Graduate courses in disciplinary college-level teaching must be distinct from GTA appointments.
- The type and amount of “teaching” engaged in by graduate students enrolled in graduate courses in disciplinary college-level teaching must be limited and directly supervised by a faculty member. For instance, it is appropriate for a student enrolled in such a course to be required to give one lecture in a faculty member’s course or to develop sample course materials that may be used in a specific course. It is not appropriate for graduate students to be enrolled in a disciplinary college-level teaching course and be responsible for independent teaching of another course or recitation section without compensation and benefits commensurate with a GA appointment.
- Students with a paid GA appointment may participate in a separate course-based mentoring experience during the same quarter as their paid GA appointment.

Caution

1. Do not use graduate students in mentoring or college teaching courses to provide substantial instruction unless such instruction is recognized as part of a GA appointment.
2. Avoid using language in syllabi or other materials suggesting that a student is responsible for teaching the same or a related course. The graduate student must be distinct from the instructor of record for the course.

Examples:

- **Not Acceptable:** “Students will be required to design and/or co-lead an online discussion associated with the course in which they are teaching.”

Problem: Language suggests that the student has teaching responsibilities for the same or another course.

Acceptable: “Students are required to design and/or co-lead an online discussion under the supervision of the faculty instructor of record for a particular or under the supervision of an approved preceptor and in the educational program run by that preceptor.”

- **Not Acceptable**: The course requires “structured teaching activities, including participation in didactic and case-based classes in the College’s all-online non-traditional Ph.D. program. Teaching responsibilities may include classroom instruction, development of course materials, testing, and other methods of student evaluation.”

Problem: Language suggests that the student has primary teaching responsibilities rather than is participating in a mentored teaching experience.

Acceptable: “Students are required to observe faculty members who are teaching in the online non-traditional Ph.D. program. Faculty will mentor students in the creation of appropriate course materials and the use of appropriate modes of instruction and student evaluation.”

- **Not Acceptable**: “The Teaching Skills Curriculum is designed in a modular format to encourage flexibility and facilitate its transfer into the TA’s classroom activities.”

Problem: Student is identified as a GTA, which he or she is not.

Acceptable: “The Teaching Skills Curriculum is designed in a modular format to encourage flexibility and to facilitate its transfer into the student’s future teaching responsibilities as a GA, future faculty member, or professional.”

- **Not Acceptable**: ““You will co-teach “XYZ 994-Moral Development” during Spring Quarter 2006.”

Problem: The student is participating in XYZ 994 as part of a mentoring course. The student is not being compensated to teach or co-teach XYZ 994. Further, graduate students are not permitted to teach graduate students.

- **Acceptable**: “As part of the requirements for XZY 925: Mentored Teaching Experience, the student will observe faculty member x as he teaches XYZ 994. The student will have opportunities to prepare course materials and to provide limited, supervised, and mentored instruction in XYZ 994.”

For Assistance

For questions and consultations, please contact the Graduate School at 292-6031.