



**San José State**  
UNIVERSITY

A campus of The California State University

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Office of the Academic Senate • One Washington Square • San Jose, California 95192-0024 • 408-924-2440 • Fax 408-924-2451

**S00-7**

At its meeting of May 1, 2000, the Academic Senate passed the following Policy Recommendation presented by Annette Nellen for the Professional Standards Committee.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION  
MODIFICATION TO S99-2  
THE EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHING ASSOCIATES AND  
GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

Whereas: University Policy S99-2, The Employment of Teaching Associates and Graduate Assistants, specifies that students are only eligible for employment as a Teaching Associate (TA) or Graduate Assistant (GA) if they are enrolled in at least three units of coursework per semester, or at least one unit if it is the final semester before receiving their degree.

Whereas: The eligibility requirement of UP S99-2 is too restrictive to departments and students with respect to graduate students who have already worked as a TA or GA, and are enrolled in fewer than three units while they complete degree requirements.

Whereas: The four semester and six semester maximum for TAs and GAs, respectively, will continue to be part of the eligibility for employment as a TA or GA; therefore be it,

Resolved: That S99-2 be modified as shown in the attached policy.

**ACTION BY THE UNIVERSITY PRESIDENT: Approved by President Robert Caret on  
May 17, 2000.**

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHING ASSOCIATES AND GRADUATE ASSISTANTS**

### **1. Purpose of Employment.**

The employment of Teaching Associates and Graduate Assistants at San Jose State University provides graduate students with an opportunity to gain supervised teaching experience in fields related to their advanced study, while simultaneously maintaining the highest possible standards of undergraduate instruction. To these ends, each school, department or program employing Teaching Associates (TAs) or Graduate Assistants (GAs) shall, in consultation with the AVP for Graduate Studies and Research and the AVP for Faculty Affairs, develop and maintain guidelines for their employment, establishing the application process, qualifications, job descriptions, placement in the pay scale, process for removal due to unsatisfactory performance, rights and obligations, expected progress toward the degree, and minimum grade point average. These guidelines shall be distributed to all graduate students and supervising faculty members in the employing school, department, or program.

### **2. Eligibility for Employment.**

To be eligible, graduate students shall be enrolled in classified status in a graduate program of study, for a minimum of three units of coursework per semester. For one semester only, students who have already served as a TA or GA who are currently enrolled in fewer than three units are also eligible for employment. If fewer than three units a student should be enrolled in at least one unit or be in the process of completing a Satisfactory Progress (SP) grade. Exceptions to the eligibility requirements will only be granted in rare and unusual circumstances. Exceptions can be obtained via departmental petition approved by both the Office of Faculty Affairs and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research.

Students shall have had a course or workshops leading to competency in teaching in the discipline, or teaching experience, prior to working as TAs, but they shall not be required to enroll repeatedly in such a course, or series of courses, credit-bearing or otherwise, as a condition of employment. All TAs and GAs shall work under the close supervision of a faculty member, and the school, department, or program employing them shall bear the financial burden of their supervision. Students shall not earn academic or intern credit for serving as a TA or GA. Appointment as a TA shall be limited to a total of four semesters. Appointment as a GA, or any combination of GA and TA, shall be limited to a total of six semesters. Use of the Teaching Associate classification shall not result in the layoff of regular faculty.

### **3. Limitations on Employment.**

In any one semester, a student shall be employed as a TA or GA, or any combination of the two, for no more than twenty hours per week. Normally, the maximum TA assignment is considered to be six weighted teaching units (WTUs) of lecture or discussion sections or eight WTUs of laboratory sections. Any assignment that combines lab and lecture sections, that includes other types of class configurations, or that exceeds these recommended maxima must be clearly defined in the departmental TA guidelines and approved in advance by the AVP for Faculty Affairs in consultation with the AVP for Graduate Studies and Research. Detailed justification is required to establish that such assignments do not commit the TA to an instructional assignment that exceeds the twenty hour per week guideline.

According to the need for their services, GAs shall receive semester appointments of 5, 10, 15, or 20 hours per week. These semester appointments are in contrast to the employment of Student Assistants and Research Assistants, who may be either undergraduate or graduate students, and who are hired on an hourly basis. Unlike TAs and GAs, Research Assistants may not be paid with instructional funds, nor may they be assigned any teaching duties, nor may they serve any directly instructional function. Student Assistants may be paid with instructional funds and may serve as readers or tutors, but -- unlike TAs and GAs -- they may not perform both functions for a particular class, nor may they make presentations in a class.

### **4. Graduate Assistants.**

A Graduate Assistant provides instructional support, and may assist faculty or teaching staff with various professional and technical activities, and may also be assigned instructional duties in support of a specific course, such as grading student work, creating teaching aids and course materials, and meeting with students from the

course for discussions or tutoring. GAs shall not be responsible for the instructional content of a course, for selection of student assistants, for planning examinations, or for determining the final course grades of students, nor shall they be assigned responsibility for instructing the entire enrollment of a course, or for providing the entire instruction of a group of students enrolled in a course.

#### 5. Teaching Associates.

A Teaching Associate is an instructor who may perform any and all of the duties of GA, and, under faculty supervision, may also be in the instructor of record, normally for a lower-division course, or for a seminar or laboratory section of a large lower-division course. Teaching Associates shall work under the supervision of an individual faculty member designated by the Department Chair. Such supervision shall include periodic meetings between the supervising faculty member and each TA over the course of each semester, in addition to at least one classroom visitation by the supervising faculty member per section per semester. For each section taught, the classroom performance of TAs shall be evaluated in writing by the supervising faculty member, as well as by the students using the university's standard "Student Opinion of Teaching Effectiveness" (SOTE) surveys.