

Augusta University

Policy Library

Graduate Teaching Assistant Policy

Policy Owner: SGS - Administration

POLICY STATEMENT

All individuals teaching on behalf of Augusta University, whether in a classroom, lab, or on-line, must meet the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) credentialing requirements for faculty. When Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) are used to provide course instruction, these guidelines apply. The following are the university-wide, minimum standards for GTAs. Departments may adopt additional or more stringent standards to credential or certify instructors. Academic programs which do not use graduate students in instructional roles would not be affected by these standards. These requirements do not apply to the use of GTAs to provide supplemental instruction and voluntary tutorials which may be held in addition to regular class meetings

To provide high quality instruction in all Augusta University courses and to comply with the standards of the Georgia Board of Regents and SACSCOC.

AFFECTED STAKEHOLDERS

Indicate all entities and persons within the Enterprise that are affected by this policy:

- | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Graduate Students | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health Professional Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Visitors |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate Students | <input type="checkbox"/> Vendors/Contractors | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: | | | | |

DEFINITIONS

See *Appendix A*

PROCESS & PROCEDURES

Definition and Eligibility

Note: Until such a time when the sole position of the GTA is approved, all Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) at Augusta University will also be Graduate Research Assistants (GRAs) and will have assigned responsibilities in both areas (GRA/GTA).

Graduate Teaching Assistant: A graduate student who is minimally qualified (as defined below) and is assigned responsibility for teaching duties that are related to his/her academic program under the direct supervision of a faculty member who is credentialed in the relevant teaching discipline. GTAs may be the instructor of record for the course but teach under the supervision of a faculty member credentialed in the field.

Office of Compliance and Enterprise Risk Management Use Only

Policy No.: 686

Policy Sponsor: Type the title of the Executive Leader of the department.

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Last Review: 12/13/2016

Graduate Assistant: A graduate student whose primary responsibilities are to assist the assigned faculty member with certain support functions of a class when under the direct supervision of a faculty member. (GAs do not have primary responsibility for teaching but may serve as graders, proctors, lab supervisors, recitation/discussion leaders). See *Appendix A*

To be eligible for appointment as a GTA a student must minimally:

- be a degree-seeking graduate student enrolled full time in one of the university's doctoral graduate programs
- maintain good academic standing making satisfactory progress toward their graduate degree
- have the permission and support of a PhD mentor (articulated in a formal letter of support)
- have earned either a master's degree in the teaching discipline or completed eighteen graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline

Certification of General Teaching Competence

Each semester in accordance with guidelines of the SACSCOC and the standards outlined in this policy, the academic dean of each college is required to certify in writing to the Dean of The Graduate School that any student who will serve as a GRA/GTA is in good academic standing, is making satisfactory progress towards degree and meets the minimum standards required to teach and be appointed as a GTA. For international students, this includes certification (by the student's research mentor, program chair or Dean) that the student has sufficient linguistic skills to teach in spoken English. The Dean of The Graduate School will then forward a summary of these certifications to Vice President for Academic and Faculty Affairs. [*The SACSCOC statement on GTAs can be found at the end of this policy*]

General

Subject to approval by The Graduate School, the administrative responsibility for GTA teaching assignments rests within the department in which the student is employed as a GTA. Each academic program or college is responsible for providing orientation, training, supervision and evaluation of its GTAs. While the content and length of the above elements may vary, each program employing GTAs must provide The Graduate School with a written plan outlining how it will meet this requirement before any GTA is appointed or allowed to begin teaching. It is also recommended that each program have a discipline-specific teaching manual as a supplemental resource for GTAs.

Augusta University faculty members will oversee GTA teaching duties and performance. Each college or academic program will assign a faculty member to serve as a mentor to work closely with the individual graduate student to:

- Assist the GTA in planning and carrying out all assigned teaching responsibilities
- Facilitate professional development

- Evaluate the performance of the GTA each semester they are assigned instructional responsibilities.

A summary of the instructional planning and written performance evaluations produced as a part of the above GTA supervision should be forwarded to The Graduate School at midterm and the end of each academic semester.

Minimum Requirements for Different Levels of Instruction (*provided face-to-face or online for Graduate Teaching Assistants (providing primary instruction in the course.)*)

- GTA must attend the approved GTA orientation offered by the academic program or college
- GTA must complete on-line training on Sexual Harassment, Academic Honor Policy, and the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- GTA must be directly supervised by a faculty member in the teaching discipline
- GTA must be in good academic standing
- GTA must participate in periodic evaluations and planning sessions

In addition:

- 1. GTAs Teaching Lower-level Undergraduate course must have completed:**
 - Eighteen hours of graduate work in teaching discipline
- 2. GTAs Teaching Upper-level Undergraduate non-health science courses must have completed:**
 - Master's degree or equivalent in the field
- 3. GTAs Teaching Upper-level Undergraduate health science course(s) must have completed:**
 - Master's degree or equivalent, and be
 - Enrolled in doctoral level coursework and strongly encouraged to have completed two semesters of doctoral level coursework
- 4. GTAs Teaching Graduate-level course(s) must:**
 - possess a terminal degree in the academic discipline of the assigned course(s), and be
 - Enrolled in doctoral level coursework and strongly encouraged to have completed two semesters of doctoral level coursework
- 5. Exceptions for GTAs teaching at a level not addressed in 1-4 above:** All exceptions will be considered by the Dean of The Graduate School on a case-by-case basis.

Equivalent Previous Experience and Special Exceptions

With the exception of the eighteen-hours-in-the-discipline rule for primary instruction and in accordance with guidelines provided by the SACSCOC, the following options will be available to deal with special circumstances:

- A student who through previous preparation or teaching experience and has demonstrated knowledge and strong teaching skills can be exempt from some of the

training requirements as appropriate, by certification of the Dean of The Graduate School. All GTAs should receive some training each semester.

- In rare and extenuating circumstances, academic programs may appoint a graduate teaching assistant who has not met all the University-wide requirements, so long as they meet the minimum educational requirements. Academic programs must provide assurance that the student will meet the requirements by the end of the term in which the student is teaching.

SACSCOC Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 – Faculty:

Graduate Teaching Assistants: GTAs must have a master's degree or eighteen graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, be directly supervised by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, participate in regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations. [Reference: Commission on Colleges, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACSCOC); Commission guidelines "Faculty Credentials" (Adopted Dec. 2006)].

REFERENCES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Appendix A

Graduate Assistant (GA) with teaching responsibilities (*note: a GA may have non-teaching responsibilities*):

- A degree-seeking graduate student who is fully admitted to one of the university's graduate programs
- A student who assists in the teaching functions of a class under the direct supervision of a graduate faculty member, but who does not have primary responsibility for teaching,
 - **Examples:**
 - **Graders,**
 - **Proctors,**
 - **Lab Supervisors,**
 - **Recitation/discussion Leaders,**

Minimum Requirements for Different Levels of Instruction (provided face-to-face or online)

1) Grader

- Working under the direct supervision of a credentialed faculty member in the field
- Student is in good academic standing
- Completed training certification for the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

2) Proctor (Exams and Labs)

- Graduate majoring in the discipline
- Specific instruction on proctoring exams and laboratories
- Completed training certification for Sexual Harassment, and the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Supervision by the faculty member teaching the course
- Student is in good academic standing

3) Lab Supervisor

- Graduate majoring in the discipline
- Specific instruction in laboratory demonstration
- Completed on-line training certification for Sexual Harassment, and the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Direct supervision by senior lab assistant/or faculty member in the teaching discipline
- Student is in good academic standing
- Student participates in periodic evaluations and planning sessions

4) Recitation/discussion Leader

- Graduate majoring in discipline or related field
- Some graduate work completed in the field or currently enrolled in the field
- Student has attend an orientation offered by the academic program or college
- Completed on-line training on Sexual Harassment, Academic Honor Policy, and the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Direct supervision by a faculty member in the teaching discipline
- Student is in good academic standing
- Student participates in periodic evaluations and planning sessions

RELATED POLICIES

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APPROVED BY:

President, Augusta University and CEO, AU Health System Date: 12/13/2016