



Teaching Assistant (TA) Responsibilities for 2024-25

Requirements

- All graduate students, except those who have earned an undergraduate degree from an institution at which English was the sole language of instruction according to the World Higher Education Database, are required to demonstrate oral English proficiency before they are appointed to Teaching Assistant or Teaching Associate titles. A minimum score of 50 on the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK), or a score of 5 on the TOEP.
- Maintenance of a minimum 3.1 Grade Point Average (GPA)
- Less than 18 quarters of previous TA experience at UCI and less than 12 quarters of TA experience for students who have not advanced to PhD candidacy.
- Enrollment in Physics 269, Seminar in Teaching Physics (Physics 1st year graduate students only)

Job Description

Definition: An academically qualified and registered graduate student in full-time residence chosen for excellent scholarship and for promise as a teacher, who is assigned to assist in the delivery of instruction under the active tutelage and supervision of a faculty member. The majority of graduate students who perform instructional functions are assigned to the Teaching Assistant title.

Responsibilities: Assist the supervising faculty member by conducting discussion, laboratory, or quiz sections that supplement faculty lectures; and by grading assignments or examinations. Teaching Assistants may be asked to provide input into the development of assignments or exams, and hold office hours. Teaching Assistants may be required to hold tutoring center hours. No prior teaching experience is required for appointment. The final responsibility for the content of the course rests with the supervising faculty member. A Teaching Assistant is not independently responsible for the instructional content of a course, selection of assignments, planning examinations, determination of student grades or decisions on grade appeals; and is not assigned full instructional responsibility for an entire course.

Salary

- A full time, 0.5 FTE assumes a 20 hour/week average workload. For the salary rate, please go to <https://ap.uci.edu/compensation/salary-scales/>.
- Half time (0.25 FTE) appointment may be available, with salary based on the 0.5 FTE noted above.

Many of your responsibilities as a TA will depend on coordinating your efforts with those of the instructor and administrative staff. Below are guidelines to help you accomplish this.

Assignments

The Department will inform you of your assignment. Verify that there are no time conflicts between your academic coursework and your assignment within three days of receiving the assignment. Please keep in mind that for some lab courses, there are mandatory lab training sessions. Genesis

Meza (genessim@uci.edu) will authorize you to access rosters at <http://webster.reg.uci.edu/cgi/WebRoster>.

At the department's discretion, a Head TA may be appointed for Physics 3 or Physics 7 lecture courses. The Head TA responsibilities vary from those of the other TAs. The instructor or My Banh will inform the Head TA of their responsibilities.

Contact Information

Introduce yourself to the course instructor and provide e-mail address and best contact phone number before week 1 of the quarter. Please stay in communication with the course instructor throughout the quarter in which you are a TA. TAs are expected to read their email regularly and respond to the instructor's email on the same day, barring unexpected situations.

Course Administration

The instructor will provide you with a course syllabus. This will give you an overview of the course schedule and indicate the dates for midterm and final exams. These dates will allow you to determine when your grading responsibilities are likely to be heaviest.

Grading

- *Lab Courses (3L, 7L, and 52)*

All grading is done by the TAs. Please keep an electronic copy of scores for each of your sections, for example, a backed-up Excel spreadsheet or Canvas, as required by the instructor. For the scores that are not on Canvas, be prepared to forward them to your instructor during the quarter for review, as well as at the end of the quarter. Establish with the instructor a specific scoring scheme for all quizzes, lab reports, and exams. When available, use grading keys provided by the instructor to assure objective and uniform grading. Use red ink while grading, indicating exactly where any deductions have occurred. Any correction to student scores should be initiated and dated by you. Keep a duplicate record of all scores.

- *Lecture Courses (3, 7, and 51)*

Ask the instructor to specify your grading responsibilities for quizzes, homework, and exams. TAs and possibly graders score the midterm and final exam. TAs and graders may also help create quizzes and tutorial problems, proofread quizzes and tutorial problems, and photocopy quiz and tutorial assignment problems, and maintain Gradebook. The exact duties of the graders and TAs are to be determined by the instructor in keeping with the number of hours allowed by the FTE assignments. For all grading, establish with the instructor a specific scoring scheme (better to ask questions BEFORE you begin rather than after all the hard work of grading!). When available, use grading keys provided by the instructor to assure objective and uniform grading. Use red ink while grading, indicating exactly where any deductions have occurred. Any correction to student scores should be initialed and dated by you. If your course instructor requests you, rather than the grader, to compile and submit scores, please ask them to direct you on how to enter scores in an electronic database. Keep a duplicate record of all scores.

- *Tutorial Based Courses (Physics 2)*

TAs will help create quizzes and tutorial problems, proofread quizzes and tutorial problems, and photocopy quiz and tutorial assignment problems. TAs will grade the tutorial work during class for their own sections. They will also grade the weekly quizzes. Please keep an electronic copy

of scores for each of your sections, for example, a backed-up Excel spreadsheet or Canvas, as required by the instructor. For the scores that are not on Canvas, be prepared to forward them to your instructor during the quarter for review, as well as at the end of the quarter. Establish with the instructor a specific scoring scheme for all tutorial work. When available, use grading keys provided by the instructor to assure objective and uniform grading. Use red ink while grading, indicating exactly where any deductions have occurred. Any correction to student scores should be initialed and dated by you. Keep a duplicate record of all scores. Homework is scored electronically. TAs score the final exams. The exact duties of the graders and TAs are to be determined by the instructor in keeping with the maximum number of hours allowed by the FTE assignments. Ask the instructor to specify your full responsibilities.

Proctoring

Confirm with your course instructor whether you will be expected to proctor the midterm and final exams. If the proctoring conflicts with the scheduled examinations for your own course work, it is your responsibility to arrange with another teaching assistant to be your substitute. E-mail your instructor and My Banh to inform them who will substitute for you. If you are unable to find a substitute, contact My Banh as soon as possible. Based on your expected workload and the broader demand for proctoring for Physics 3 and Physics 7 courses, you may also be assigned proctoring duties for courses other than those included in your TA assignment. My Banh will inform you of any such assignments.

Pick -Up and Delivery of Materials

Lockable drop boxes outside of FRH 4129 are to be used as an easily accessible and secure storage site. Keys for these boxes are available through the main office in FRH 4129. Normally, the lecture TAs will deliver collected quizzes or homework to these boxes for pick-up by the graders, and the graders will return the scored materials here as well. The TAs will then collect the scored materials and return them to students in the discussion section.

Office Hours/Tutoring

Verify with the course instructor the number of office/tutoring hours expected of you. Normally, instructors combine your office hours with your tutoring so that both take place during your Tutoring Center assignment. However, they may elect to require you to conduct office hours in addition to tutoring center hours if workload limits permit. Your assignment information provided by My Banh will include the number of hours you are expected to be in the Tutoring Center in MSTB 110 (subject to change). The Tutoring Center is open Monday-Thursday 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm and 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm, starting Week #2 through Week #11 (Finals Week). The Tutoring Center schedule is subject to change. Your scheduled attendance will be posted on the Web at <https://www.physics.uci.edu/tutoring-schedule>. E-mail your office hour schedule to the course instructor, and Genessis Meza (genessim@uci.edu), and your students. Physics 3L and 52 TAs should schedule their office hours in their assigned lab rooms for the half hour preceding their lab class meeting.

Absences

Please refer to the TA leave policy.

Holidays

Monday, Thursday, and Friday lab sections may fall on a holiday. In this case, you will need to teach a make up section on another day in the same week. The annual schedule for all observed holidays in Physics 3LB-C, 7LD, and 52A-B-C are posted on the doors to the MSTB classroom in which these courses are conducted.

Finals Week

Be prepared to perform your TA duties, including proctoring and review sessions, during Finals Week (Week 11) and possibly the following week. If your course instructor has not informed you of obligations during Finals Week, and the following week, contact him/her in advance to verify his/her expectations.

Evaluation of Teaching Performance

Your students and the course instructor will evaluate your teaching performance toward the end of the quarter. The summary of results and individual comments (if available) will be made available to you the following quarter.

Unacceptable Conduct of Teaching Assistants

The Department of Physics and Astronomy holds its Teaching Assistants to the same standards of instructional conduct as those defined for faculty in [Academic Personnel Manual APM-015, Faculty Code of Conduct](#). Additionally students must respect the department code of conduct: <https://www.physics.uci.edu/inclusion/conduct>. Types of misconduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Failure to meet the responsibilities of instruction, including:
 - a. arbitrary denial of access to instruction;
 - b. significant intrusion of material unrelated to the course;
 - c. significant failure to adhere, without legitimate reason, to the rules of the faculty in the conduct of courses, to meet class, to keep office hours, or to hold examinations as scheduled;
 - d. evaluation of student work by criteria not directly reflective of course performance;
 - e. undue and unexcused delay in evaluating student work.
2. Discrimination, including harassment, against a student on political grounds, or for reasons of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender expression, gender identity, ethnic origin, national origin, ancestry, marital status, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, medical condition (cancer-related or genetic characteristics), genetic information (including family medical history), or service in the uniformed services as defined by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994 (USERRA), as well as state military and naval service, or, within the limits imposed by law or University regulations, because of age or citizenship or for other arbitrary or personal reasons.
3. Sexual violence and sexual harassment, as defined by University policy, of a student.
4. Violation of the University policy, including the pertinent guidelines, applying to nondiscrimination against students on the basis of disability.
5. Use of the position or powers of a teaching assistant to coerce the judgment or conscience of a

- student or to cause harm to a student for arbitrary or personal reasons.
6. Participating in or deliberately abetting disruption, interference, or intimidation in the classroom.

Teaching Assistant-Student Conflicts of Interest

Romantic or sexual relationships between Teaching Assistants and their students are inappropriate. The following excerpt from the [Academic Personnel Manual APM-015, Faculty Code of Conduct](#) applies to the relationship between Teaching Assistants and their students, as well as to faculty-student relationship:

The integrity of the faculty-student relationship is the foundation of the University's educational mission. This relationship vests considerable trust in the faculty member, who, in turn, bears authority and accountability as mentor, educator, and evaluator. The unequal institutional power inherent in this relationship heightens the vulnerability of the student and the potential for coercion. The pedagogical relationship between faculty member and student must be protected from influences or activities that can interfere with learning consistent with the goals and ideals of the University. Whenever a faculty member is responsible for academic supervision of a student, a personal relationship between them of a romantic or sexual nature, even if consensual, is inappropriate. Any such relationship jeopardizes the integrity of the educational process.

Definition of consensual relationship and policies concerning its treatment can be found at www.policies.uci.edu. Teaching Assistants should advise any student with whom they have a consensual relationship to enroll in a discussion or laboratory sections other than that conducted by that Teaching Assistant. Should a consensual relationship develop during the quarter, the Teaching Assistant should immediately inform the course instructor of the circumstance, and the course instructor should coordinate an enrollment change on the student's behalf. Should a consensual relationship exist between a Teaching Assistant and a student who is not enrolled in a discussion or lab section of the Teaching Assistant, but whose work is to be graded by the Teaching Assistant, the course instructor should be informed and arrangements made to avoid this circumstance.

Activities and Workloads

A full time TA (= 0.5 Full Time Equivalent or FTE) workload is based on a weekly average of 20 hours. A Teaching Assistant with a 50% appointment shall be assigned a workload of 220 hours per quarter (eleven week period including finals week) or 20 hours per week. The number of hours worked in excess of 20 hours in a given week may not total more than 50 hours per quarter. This standard shall apply proportionately to other percent appointments. In addition, a Teaching Assistant with an appointment of 50% or less shall not be assigned a workload of more than 8 hours in any one day. If there are any concerns regarding TA workload, please contact the graduate advisor, Professor Ilya Krivorotov (ikrivoro@uci.edu).