GUIDELINES FOR I/O GTAs

Overview

Used effectively, GTAs can be a valuable resource to professors and undergraduate students and can help advance doctoral students in their careers. The following guidelines have been established to ensure a common set of expectations among professors and GTAs. The I/O GTA coordinator, currently David Costanza, is responsible for distributing the forms to faculty, gathering the requests, making assignments, monitoring workloads, and resolving issues with faculty and GTAs.

- Professors must request GTA assistance each semester. Faculty should spell out the nature of desired assistance and the extent of time commitment requested. This is important so that the GTA Coordinator can equitably distribute assignments and match GTAs with classes.
- The total number of hours that GTAs are permitted to perform across all courses served is no more than 20 hours per week. The GTA Coordinator will monitor student workloads to ensure that this maximum is not exceeded and may make modifications to assignments if necessary.
- The main GTA duties typically requested by faculty include proctoring exams, grading multiple choice/short answer exams, grading student papers, holding office hours for students, responding to student e-mails, giving a lecture, copying/collating exams and handouts as needed, and/or running a review session. GTAs may be used to conduct library work such as finding requested articles/films or searching for recent articles in specific topic areas so long as such use is in direct support of class topics. Other uses of GTA time may be requested for approval by the GTA coordinator.
- To the extent possible, we encourage faculty to allow GTAs to prepare and deliver a lecture to their class to enable GTAs to gain experience in presentation and class design and hopefully encourage considering academia as a career. Faculty should sit down with GTAs before the beginning of the semester to determine a topic compatible with their knowledge and experience and a mutually agreed upon delivery date. Faculty accepting GTAs should be willing to mentor the GTA in the preparation of a class that will be fulfilling to the students. No GTA should be expected to deliver more than two lectures in any one class, or a combined total of two lectures per semester if they are serving as GTAs for more than one class. Responsibility for course design and content always rests with faculty.
- GTAs should not be asked to perform work that is beyond their level of competency and experience, which may differ from class to class.
- GTAs need and appreciate feedback over the course of the semester. In addition, at the conclusion of the semester, every faculty member with a GTA will be asked to complete an evaluation of their GTA. These evaluations will be used to determine future GTA assignments and may influence funding decisions.
Faculty and GTA Obligations and Expectations

Faculty:
- Inform GTAs of the duties for which they will be responsible over the course of the semester. Included in this information should be whether the GTA needs to attend class and if so, how often and what they will be expected to do in class (nothing, participate, run breakout groups, etc.).
- Discuss with their GTA the best way to stay in touch as well as expected response times.
- Negotiate timelines for completion of grading assignments. There is no set schedule but rather each Professor and GTA should be clear on the expectations for grading turnarounds.
- Schedule regular meetings to review assignments, deadlines, and other responsibilities. Faculty need to be mindful of the GTA’s other responsibilities and GTA’s need to plan out their semester to minimize conflicts.
- Provide guidance and rubrics for grading as necessary.
- If the GTA is interested, work with her/him to prepare and deliver course content (lecture, group presentations, etc.).

GTAs:
- Meet with their graduate advisor and the instructor(s) at the beginning of the semester to discuss expected duties, timelines, workloads, and planning.
- Carry out assigned duties to the best of their abilities and in a professional and timely manner.
- Let the instructor know in advance of any absences, conflicts, or other scheduling issues.
- Be available to proctor and assist with exam grading as necessary.
- Attend class as scheduled/arranged, prepare for class, lectures, and other agreed upon classroom-based activities.
- Alert the instructor if they suspect any violations of academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism, cheating).
- Promptly raise any concerns about assignments, commitments, expectations, or other issues with the faculty member and then with the GTA Coordinator. Any issues should not be allowed to “sit” until the end of the semester or later. They need to be dealt with and resolved in a timely manner.

Overall, the key to an effective Faculty/GTA relationship is communication, coordination, and flexibility. If either a faculty member or a GTA has any questions or concerns about the duties and responsibilities, they should first address them with each other. Any concerns may also be brought to the attention of the GTA coordinator.