UCI SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
TEACHING ASSISTANT & READER ASSIGNMENTS
INTERNAL PROCEDURES AND PROTOCOL

I. Course Eligibility

Funding for TAs and Readers in the SOE is limited. Requests for support are therefore prioritized by need as determined by one or more of the following factors:

- Course enrollment
- Discussion sections
- Instructional support needs to deepen student engagement and understanding (e.g. lecture only vs regular individual and/or group activities that need facilitating)
- Workload demands (e.g. significant course prep and/or content requiring intensive feedback, fieldwork management)
- Senate Faculty status
- Senate Faculty workload

The Associate Dean, the Senate Faculty Director of UG Programs, and the Director of UG Programs will use these factors to determine which courses are eligible for TA and/or Reader support.

In general, priority allocation for TAs goes to courses with large enrollments, discussion sections AND those in which a TA will be utilized regularly for course development as well as regular facilitation of instruction, group discussions and/or activities.

If support is needed only in grading and/or other administrative tasks, then a 10 or 20 hour/week Reader will be assigned.

II. Student Assignments

Doctoral students who are interested in obtaining a TA/ Reader assignment will submit a TA/ Reader interest form via a solicitation from the Ph.D. Program Coordinator. The request is accompanied by a list of the available TA/ Reader course assignments.

Faculty whose courses are eligible for a TA/ Reader will be asked by the Ph.D. Program Coordinator to submit their ranking from a list of eligible doctoral students who are interested in obtaining a TA or Readership. The Ph.D. Program Coordinator will attempt a first match, based on those preferences.

The Ph.D. Program Coordinator, in consultation with the Associate Dean and/or Director of the Ph.D. Program, will finalize the TA/ Reader assignments each quarter, based on matching of faculty and student preferences, student area of expertise, background and experience, and SoE needs.

The Ph.D. Program Coordinator will distribute the assignments to the students and they will have an opportunity to voice any concerns such as course conflicts or other commitments. When all concerns are addressed and the match is finalized, the Ph.D. Coordinator will distribute the assignments to the faculty supervisors. Every effort will be made to complete assignments at least one month prior to the beginning of the next quarter so that faculty and TA/ Readers can meet to initiate course preparation.

III. Contractual Responsibilities and Timesheet

The Ph.D. Program Coordinator will email each TA/ Reader their contract, which will include a supplemental portion that details their duties, responsibilities and course assignment. The TA/ Reader should contact the faculty supervisor to discuss their duties and expectations for the course. At that meeting, the faculty supervisor must sign the supplemental portion of the contract and the TA/ Reader must return the signed contract to the Ph.D. Program Coordinator by Friday of week 2 of the quarter they are assigned to work. In addition, the Ph.D. Program Coordinator will remind the TA/ Readers to enroll in EDUC 399 and follow up to make sure that each TA/ Reader is enrolled in 399 prior to the fee payment deadline.

Note: Once the student agrees to take on a TA/ Reader position, they will not be able to retract from this responsibility. The TA/ Reader is agreeing to attend courses regularly, so he/she needs to ensure that courses do not conflict with the assignment.

It is suggested that each individual faculty supervisor provide expectations to the TA/ Reader, based on the syllabus, keeping in mind that a full TA entails a maximum of 220 hours. Readers may be assigned 110 or 220 hours for the quarter, depending on the faculty supervisor course needs.

Faculty supervisors will have to approve hours for Readers in the form of a bi-weekly timesheet. Faculty supervisors should pay special attention to the hours being submitted by their Reader to make sure they are not exceeding the hours they were contracted to work.

IV. Evaluation of TA Performance

Having a TA serves two purposes. One is to provide an instructor support in facilitating student learning. The second is to provide a mentoring experience for our doctoral students.

It is therefore recommended that the faculty and TA meet mid-quarter to review the TA Duties and Expectations in the areas of instructional support, professionalism and communication.

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Faculty should take this opportunity to review any concerns with the TA, and also to get feedback from the TA as to what is going well and in which areas they would like more support or experience. This feedback will give the TA an opportunity to improve in any areas before the end-of-quarter survey is sent to the instructor to complete, and it also gives the instructor the opportunity to provide more targeted support.

During week 4, the Graduate Counselor will send a mid-quarter evaluation form to faculty supervisors. The mid-quarter evaluation is an opportunity for faculty supervisors to check in with their TA/ Reader, provide feedback, and review expectations. In addition, the Graduate Counselor will send a mid-quarter evaluation form to all TAs/ Readers to provide feedback on their experience and identify areas where they would like additional mentorship. The evaluation results will be compiled and shared with faculty supervisors. TA/ Readers and faculty supervisors should meet to discuss the feedback and discuss ways they can be better supported in completing their tasks and identify ways they can be mentored in the work of teaching.

During Week 8, the Graduate Counselor will send an end-of-quarter evaluation to faculty supervisors to provide feedback on the performance of their TA/ Reader in the areas of instructional support, professionalism and communication. The TA/ Reader end-of-quarter evaluation informs the Ph.D. Program Director, the EDUC 399 instructor of record, what grade to submit for the TA/ Reader. Therefore, the TA/ Reader end-of-quarter evaluation must be submitted at least one week before the grade submission deadline. In addition, the TA/ Reader end-of-quarter evaluation is uploaded to the TA/Reader's ARSP folder for that academic year, so it is available to the student and faculty advisor for review.

The TA/ Reader will also complete a parallel self-assessment in the areas of instructional support, professionalism and communication which will also allow them to indicate in which areas they would like more support in the work of teaching. The results will be aggregated and used by faculty to identify areas for further training and mentoring for TAs/ Readers.