



Education Studies Guidebook for Instructional Assistants

[Graduate Student- ASE Titles, Duties and Minimum Qualifications](#)

[Undergraduate Student - ASE Titles, Duties, and Minimum Qualifications](#)

[ASE/UCSD Contract](#)

[Work Attendance](#)

[Principles of Community](#)

[Compensation](#)

[Training and Evaluation](#)

[Compliance with Academic Appointment Guidelines](#)

[Confidentiality](#)

[Non-Discrimination in Employment](#)

[Safety](#)

Introduction

The EDS Guidebook describes the expectations and responsibilities for Instructional Assistants (IA), specifically Teaching Assistants (TA's), Readers, and Tutors. While much of the information in this document covers university-wide policies, the intent of this guidebook is to help students navigate the IA role in the context of the Education Studies Department. This document is not comprehensive, but it is a companion to the resources and policies communicated by other departments and entities on campus, including the Teaching and Learning Commons and the UAW union. This guidebook is “living,” which means it can be adapted based on student needs, changes to university policy, and changes in the department.

The guidebook aims to help graduate students, primarily, understand the different expectations for Teaching Assistants and Readers so that students can make informed decisions about managing their graduate studies with employment as an IA. The role of instructional assistants is fundamentally a paid opportunity to learn, experience, support, and grow. It's not “just a job.” IA's are vital in contributing to the educational excellence, equity, diversity, and inclusion ethos of the department. Students learn about and experience college teaching. Students learn how to support instruction and

learning by assisting the professor. Yes, the TA and Reader positions can be hard work! AND students will grow in ways that can benefit their own future college teaching and marketability on the job search! Graduate students with no prior experience as college TA's, college tutors, or college instructors are strongly encouraged to enroll in workshops on college teaching through [UCSD's Teaching and Learning Commons](#) before applying for TA positions. Take advantage of campus resources for graduate training!

Graduate Student- IA Titles, Duties and Minimum Qualifications

The Department of Education Studies integrates Instructional Assistant (IA) employment opportunities as an important component of both apprenticeship and funding. All students are encouraged to seek an IA position as either a Reader or a Teaching Assistant for at least one quarter during their graduate program. Many students will obtain a combination of a Graduate Student Researcher position and an IA position to provide apprenticeship in both research and higher education teaching.

In the Department of Education Studies, IA employment may be in the form of a Graduate Reader, Graduate TA, Graduate Tutor, or Instructor In LUI. The sections below will explain the different expectations across the different positions.

As a TA or Reader in Education Studies, graduate students play an active role in supporting undergraduate education. The expectations and workload for each position are different, but they are both equally important. There are university workload regulations to help graduate students balance work and school. Those regulations are described below. Students will also receive a **Description of Duties** form at the beginning of each quarter that details the specific responsibilities for a TA or Reader. Graduate students should be proactive in requesting this form if they have not received it before the start of the quarter.

Workloads are established by the agreement covering Academic Student Employees negotiated between the University of California and the UAW Local Union 2865. The particulars of each position are given below. In general, the union agreement stipulates that 50% TAs (the typical TA assignment) shall not work more than 220 hours per quarter. They should not work more than 40 hours in any one week, and the number of hours they work in excess of 20 hours per week may not exceed 50 hours per quarter. The university recognizes that hours might vary each week; some weeks there might be less grading, for example. On average a 50% TA works 20 hours per week, but will not work more than 220 hours per quarter. TA's working at 25% time shall not work more

than 110 hours per quarter, or, on average, 10 hours per week. In practice, few TAs keep such close track of their hours, but it is a good idea to be aware of how much you are working to make sure that you are not working more than you are being paid for.

University policy caps student employment at 50% time (or 20 hours per week). Requests for an exception to the policy will be considered, but not guaranteed. Students must request a letter of exception from the EDS Director of Graduate Studies and endorsed by the student's advisor. A formal letter of exception will then be submitted to the Dean of the Grad Division for review. Students with less than 50% employment will be given priority for all EDS IA positions.

Resolving Workload Complaints

If students feel that they are working above workload expectations for their position, please contact the EDS IA Faculty Advisor, Dr. Makeba Jones, for support in finding a solution. The initial step would be to talk to the instructor of record. If students are not comfortable doing so, please reach out to Dr. Jones. Students are entitled to file a complaint under Article 12 of the [UAW and UC agreement](#).

If students decide to take formal action, they are entitled to a representative during the complaint procedure. The initial step of the procedure would be to submit a written complaint to the department chair and the instructor of record. This is followed by a meeting called by the department chair with the concerned parties, followed by a written notification of the decision. Please refer to the Grievance Procedures as outlined in the Union Contract Agreement, Article 12. Disputes regarding workload are not subject to Article 12, Grievance and Arbitration of this Agreement. For workload complaint procedure, please see Article 31, Workload.

Reader

A Graduate Reader assists a course instructor by grading homework, papers, or exams and may also hold office hours each week to answer students' questions about their assignments and grades. Readers should not be asked to attend lecture or conduct a discussion section. However, if the Reader does not have extensive knowledge of the material, the Reader can be asked to attend lectures in order to acquire knowledge related to course content. A 50% Reader will not work more than 220 hours per quarter, an average of 20 hours per week. A 25% Reader will not work more than 110 hours per quarter, an average of 10 hours per week. The difference between a 25% and 50% Reader is the amount of grading. Instructors of record are responsible for meeting with Readers about grading workload and guidelines/rubrics.

Tutor

A Graduate Tutor provides tutoring to individual (one-on-one) or small groups (three or more) of undergraduate or graduate students who require additional help to understand course material. In some instances tutoring may focus on improving usage of the English language.

Teaching Assistant

Teaching assistantships provide graduate students with an opportunity to develop a number of skill sets that are directly applicable to jobs in academia as well as industry. A teaching assistant (TA) assists in the instruction of an upper or lower division undergraduate course at the University under the supervision of a faculty member. TA's enhance the learning experience of UCSD students by complementing the activities of the course instructor.

TA + Section Responsibilities

The TA primarily assists the faculty member in charge of the course by conducting discussion or laboratory sections that supplement faculty lectures and by grading assignments and examinations. Mandatory TA responsibilities include attending all lectures, meeting with the course instructor as required, planning/conducting section, and grading papers/exams. A TA may also assist with the development of assignments or exams, hold office hours, conduct exam reviews, proctor examinations, or fulfill other duties as assigned by the course instructor. In the case of basic language, reading and composition, some other skill-building courses, and a few other courses, a teaching assistant may lead class meetings, but as with all other TAs, the general instructional content of the course, as well as the official assignment of student grades and decisions on grade appeals, are the responsibility of the instructor of record. In no instance shall a teaching assistant be assigned responsibility for the entire instruction of a course.

Sectionless TA Responsibilities

In some cases, EDS courses may have a large enough enrollment (at least 50-60 students) to warrant hiring a TA without adding a section. TA responsibilities are the same except that there is no section. TAs may also be asked to give occasional lectures or otherwise substitute if the course instructor is unavailable.

TA Workload

Many EDS courses include a discussion section. A 50% TA can be asked to conduct one or two 50-minute discussion sections per week in addition to attending lectures, grading, and holding office hours. A 25% TA will be asked to conduct one 50-minute

discussion section per week in addition to attending lectures, grading, and holding office hours.

A 50% TA will not work more than 220 hours per quarter, an average of 20 hours per week. A 25% TA will not work more than 110 hours per quarter, an average of 10 hours per week. All TA's should be sure to discuss any academic matters (e.g. curriculum, teaching methods, rubrics) with the instructor.

If you are the sole IA support (TA or Reader) for the course, you should expect to grade up to 80 percent of the assignments/exams, and the instructor should grade at least 20 percent. If there are two TAs or a TA plus a Reader, the instructor should still grade a certain percentage of the assignments/exams, while the rest are divided between the two IA's.

Chancellor's Associates Scholarship Program (CASP)

Graduate students who are hired as TA's for CASP courses offered through Education Studies (EDS 50, EDS 150) will have slightly different expectations. CASP courses are usually 1 or 2 units instead of the typical 4 unit undergraduate course and they do not include the traditional 3 hours of mandatory lecture attendance. A 50% TA for CASP will not have to attend a lecture or proctor examinations. CASP TA's will also meet with the instructor as needed over the summer before the course begins and during the quarter, and meet with the CASP Office once over the summer before the course begins, and once or twice during the quarter. CASP TA's may still hold office hours, grade papers, and run up to four discussion sections per week that require minimal preparation compared to "typical" sections. The increase in the number of sections is offset by not having to attend lecture, less preparation for section and grading demands. The overall workload guidelines still apply. A 50% TA for a CASP course should expect to work no more than 220 hours over the quarter. A 25% TA for a CASP course should expect to work no more than 110 hours over the quarter.

Associate (teaching a course)

Graduate students who have advanced to candidacy have the opportunity to teach an existing undergraduate course or create a new one based on departmental needs. An Associate (teaching a course) may conduct the entire instruction of a lower division course or upper division course with approval granted by the Dean of Graduate Studies. The Associate is assigned a faculty mentor who will provide guidance and training as needed.

Graduate students must have demonstrated a talent for college teaching and advanced training in the course subject matter. Eligible PhD students are those who successfully advanced to candidacy and are in the final stages of dissertation writing (or the equivalent through other accomplishments e.g., publications, extensive experience as a teacher, etc.). The appointment is also dependent upon positive academic and administrative review and approval by students' dissertation advisors and the department chair before moving onto the Dean of Graduate Studies and the Divisional Dean for final approval. Please see [EDS Instructor In Lieu of TA Application process](#).

Graduate Student - IA Minimum Qualifications

Note: Any employment outside of the student's academic (home) department must have prior approval from the home department.

1. For academic year employment at 25-50% time, a student must be registered full-time (12 units or more). A student enrolled in less than 12 units, with departmental approval, is eligible for a maximum of 25% time employment.
2. A graduate student must be in good academic standing, i.e.,
 1. Meet departmental standards including a satisfactory annual spring academic progress evaluation;
 2. Maintain a GPA of 3.0 in upper-division and graduate course work;
 3. Must not have more than a total of eight units of F and/or U grades overall.
3. A graduate student must be within the departmental time limits.
4. **Ph.D. Degree Aim:** Each department has established Pre-candidacy and Support Time Limits. A doctoral student must advance to candidacy by the Pre-candidacy Time Limit (PCTL) and also be within the Support Time Limit (SUTL) to remain eligible for campus employment or to receive other University funds. In addition, no one may be employed as a teaching assistant and/or associate (teaching a course) for more than 18 quarters.
5. **M.A./M.Ed Degree Aim:** Eligible for up to 7 quarters of employment or other University funding.

6. An international graduate student whose undergraduate degree is not from an English-speaking college or university, or who has serious pronunciation problems, may not serve as a TA until s/he has been certified to have the [requisite English language skills](#). This English language policy does not apply to a student who serves as a TA which is conducted in his/her native language. For further information, contact the International Teaching Assistant Language Program, (858) 534-3981.

Exception to Minimum Qualification

An exception to the minimum qualifications listed above may be granted at the discretion of the University.

Undergraduate Students - IA Titles, Duties, Minimum Qualifications

Reader

A Reader assists a course instructor by grading homework, papers, or exams and may also hold office hours each week to answer students' questions about their assignments and grades. Readers should not be asked to attend lecture or conduct a discussion section. However, if the Reader does not have extensive knowledge of the material, the Reader can be asked to attend lectures in order to acquire knowledge related to course content. A 50% Reader will not work more than 220 hours per quarter, an average of 20 hours per week. A 25% Reader will not work more than 110 hours per quarter, an average of 10 hours per week. The difference between a 25% and 50% Reader is the amount of grading. Instructors of record are responsible for meeting with Readers about grading workload and guidelines/rubrics. Minimum qualifications are a 3.0 grade-point average and have taken and received at least a "B" grade in the course or equivalent in which s/he is serving.

Tutor

A Tutor provides tutoring to individual (one-on-one) or small groups (three or more) of undergraduate students who require additional help to understand a course or topical material. In some instances tutoring may focus on improved use of the English language. Minimum qualification is a 3.0 grade-point average.

Undergraduate Tutor (serving as a Teaching/Instructional Apprentice):

A tutor (serving as a teaching/instructional apprentice) serves as an assistant in an undergraduate course under the supervision of a faculty member. The faculty instructor is responsible for the course content and for maintaining the overall quality of instruction, including supervision of the undergraduate instructional apprentice. The purpose of the apprenticeship is to learn the methodology of teaching through actual practice in a regularly scheduled course. Minimum Qualifications: 3.0 grade-point average and upper division standing. A student may not assist in a course in which s/he is enrolled nor may a student be a teaching/instructional apprentice in more than one course in a quarter.

The Committee on Educational Policy and Courses (CEP) requires that an Application for Undergraduate Instructional Assistant form be completed for each undergraduate student used to assist in each course.

Exception to Minimum Qualifications:

An exception to the minimum qualifications listed above may be granted at the discretion of the University.

ASE/UCSD Contract

The University of California employs about 12,046 Academic Student Employees (ASE). These academic student employees, who are primarily graduate students, provide vital services as teaching assistants, readers and tutors in support of faculty and lecturers. They play an important role in helping to fulfill the university's instructional mission.

The academic student employees unit includes academic student employees at all campuses except UCSF, and is represented by the United Auto Workers (UAW).

- [Learn more about the unit, its membership and dues/agency fee](#)
- [See the current contract](#)

ASE employees need to apply and electronically sign their appointment letters before they begin their employment.

Applications and Appointment Letters are all online at <https://academicaffairs.ucsd.edu/Modules/ASES/>.

Work Attendance

Course responsibilities begin at the start of preparation for the academic quarter and continue until the final grades have been turned in - usually the Tuesday after the end of finals week.

ASE employees are responsible for contacting the instructor of their course prior to the first day of instruction and discussing their responsibilities for the quarter, including the end date for their employment.

TAs in particular, are expected to be present during scheduled office hours or sections. If a TA must cancel office hours or sections due to illness or another conflict, they should contact the course instructor about the possibility of having someone substitute to cover duties. The TA should notify their students as soon as possible if there will be a cancellation or rescheduling of discussion section or office hours.

Principles of Community

<http://ucsd.edu/explore/about/principles.html>

The University of California, San Diego is dedicated to learning, teaching, and serving society through education, research, and public service. Our international reputation for excellence is due in large part to the cooperative and entrepreneurial nature of the UC San Diego community. UC San Diego faculty, staff, and students are encouraged to be creative and are rewarded for individual as well as collaborative achievements.

Compensation

See links below for compensation amounts.

<https://grad.ucsd.edu/financial/employment/student-pay-rates.html>

Refer to this [link](#) for Reader and Tutor hourly pay rates.

In addition to the salary, graduate students are entitled to a **fee and health insurance subsidy** which reduces fees owed by the student. Those classified by UCSD as non-residents must also pay non-resident supplemental tuition.

A 50% appointment is on average 20 hours/week.

A 25% appointment is on average 10 hours/week.

Payroll Calendars: <http://blink.ucsd.edu/finance/payroll/calendars.html>

TA's are paid once a month. Tutors/Reader are paid bi-weekly.

ASE Childcare Reimbursement Program and other support for student parents:
<https://grad.ucsd.edu/financial/employment/benefits/support-for-student-parents.html>

Training and Evaluation

Graduate student training for college teaching

In order to assist students in developing teaching skills, UCSD's Teaching and Learning Commons offers graduate student workshops on a range of issues related to college teaching. Graduate students with no prior experience as college TA's or college instructors are strongly encouraged to enroll in workshops offered through the [Teaching and Learning Commons](#) before applying for TA positions. The Commons also offers optional individual consultation, workshops in topics related to TA development, newsletters, and a sourcebook of teaching ideas. Staff provide ongoing guidance and assistance in teaching skills, course and class management support, and any other support needed by TAs, Tutors and Readers. Students who have used their services have commented on their helpfulness in developing and refining their teaching skills!

At the end of every course, TAs, Readers, and Tutors are evaluated by the course instructor and students enrolled in the course. TAs will have access to the evaluations after the close of the course.

Compliance with Academic Appointment Guidelines

TA's have academic appointments and must comply with all the regulations relating to such a position. These include regulations prohibiting Sexual Harassment, misuse of University property, substance abuse, and any violations of the law. The definitive source about such regulations is the UCSD Policies and Procedures Manual.

Graduate students who accept an offer of a teaching assistantship have a professional obligation to teach during that period. Students who are not able to fulfill their commitment to teach should notify the department as early as possible in order that a

qualified replacement may be found. Only students with equal to or greater than a 25% teaching appointment are eligible for a partial fee remission; students who elect not to teach, or who reduce their workload to less than a 25% appointment must obtain tuition support from another source.

Confidentiality

All completed assignments, exams, grades, correspondence, and other information about individual students in the class shall be kept confidential except where the student has given written consent. In particular:

No student in the class should ever be allowed access to a TA computer account or to TA files. Grade files on the computer should be kept protected.

Grades should never be posted by name, nor by any identifying number such as a student ID or social security number.

Graded assignments should not be left in a public place.

Answer keys or exam materials should be kept secure in a locked drawer.

These provisions are consistent with Federal and State privacy laws.

Use of Authority

Decisions made by TAs have a significant effect on their students' grades. TAs should carry out their responsibilities professionally, and be especially careful not to abuse their authority. TAs should evaluate student work objectively and fairly. In particular:

TAs may not agree to be paid as tutors for students in their class. These students would by definition receive preferential access to the TA.

TAs should not become romantically involved with students in their class. Such involvement makes objective evaluation difficult and also raises questions of sexual harassment.

If a TA has a friend or partner who is a student in the class, then they should not grade that student's papers.

Non-Discrimination in Employment

General Provisions

Within the limits imposed by law or University regulations, the University shall not discriminate against or harass any ASE on the basis of race, color, religion, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, medical condition, HIV status, status as a covered veteran, age, citizenship, political affiliation and Union activity. For the purposes of this Article only, medical condition means any health impairment related to or associated with a diagnosis of cancer, or health impairments related to genetic characteristics.

If the Union appeals a grievance to arbitration which contains allegations of a violation of this article which are not made in conjunction with the provision of another article that is arbitrable, the Union's notice must include an Acknowledgement and Waiver Form signed by the affected ASE. The Acknowledgement and Waiver Form will reflect that the ASE has elected to pursue arbitration as the exclusive dispute mechanism for such claim and that ASE understands the procedural and substantive differences between arbitration and the other remedial forum or forums in which the dispute might have been resolved, including the differences in the scope of remedies available in arbitration as compared to other forums. The timeline to appeal to Arbitration set forth in Article 11, Grievance and Arbitration, will be extended by 30 days for said grievances to enable the ASE to make an informed choice.

Sexual Harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment, or participation in other University activity;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for evaluation in making personnel decisions affecting an individual; or
3. Such conduct could reasonably be assumed to have the purpose or effect of interfering with an individual's performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual Harassment Complaint Resolution Procedure

With regard to grievances alleging sexual harassment, an employee who has timely filed a grievance may elect to substitute the campus [Sexual Harassment Complaint Resolution procedure](#) for Step 2 of the Grievance Procedure. Use of the Sexual Harassment Compliant Resolution procedure shall toll the time limits for the Grievance Procedure only if a grievance has been timely filed, pursuant to Article 11, Section C.2 (time limits for filing the written grievance). At any time, an employee may elect to resume the regular grievance procedure in place of the campus Sexual Harassment Complaint Resolution procedure by written notice to the University. The University's Step 2 Grievance response will be issued within fifteen (15) calendar days after such notice to return to Step 2 of the Grievance Procedure is received by the designated campus official.

Safety

- Emergency Numbers: Campus police: 9-1-1 from campus phone or 858-534-4357 (Help) from cell phone
- Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 858-543-3755
- Most classrooms and labs have signage about where to evacuate if there is an emergency

TA's and Tutors may find they are in a position where there is concern about the well-being or safety of one or more individuals, including the TA him or herself. This could include a highly distressed or upset student, a threat made by a student to harm him or herself or others, or harassment of others (including the TA). It could take place in person, on the phone, via email or other electronic formats. These problems should be taken seriously. The TA or Tutor must immediately report the incident to the instructor. **If you ever feel there is an imminent danger (student harming themselves or others-including you), dial 9-1-1 or numbers above.**