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Graduate Student Assistantships

A. Definitions

1. *Graduate student assistants* are graduate students enrolled full-time who hold an appointment requiring the performance of such duties as classroom instruction, academic advising, reading papers and examinations, supervision, research, or other administrative responsibilities. There are five graduate student appointment categories. Graduate assistant encompasses the positions of teaching fellow, teaching assistant, instructional assistant, research assistant and graduate assistant.
 - a. *Teaching fellows* (TF) have direct student contact in a formal instructional setting and are charged with the primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit under the direct supervision of a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, with regular in-service training and planned and periodic evaluations. Teaching fellows are listed as the instructor of record. Appointments at this level normally imply advanced academic status and substantial prior college or university experience. For SACS compliance, TFs should possess at least a master's degree in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, **direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations**. Graduate students employed as TFs are not allowed to be instructors of record for courses that carry graduate credit. Examples of duties may include, but are not limited to: classroom/laboratory teaching; recitations, lectures, developing syllabi and lesson plans; holding office hours; consulting on group projects, counseling students; tutoring; and leading student tours and field trips.
 - b. *Teaching assistants* (TA) are graduate students who have student contact in a formal instructional setting but who do not have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit; they perform under the instructor's direct supervision and provide general assistance to the instructional process. Teaching assistants may not be listed as instructor of record though they may lecture. Examples of duties may include, but are not limited to: lecturing; assisting with practice; conducting demonstrations; consulting in a classroom setting; holding review sessions; proctoring exams; consulting on group projects; tutoring; helping students build study skills; advising; acting as liaison between students and instructor of record; and grading exams.
 - c. *Instructional assistants* (IA) are graduate students who may or may not have direct student contact in an instructional setting and may assist faculty, lecturers, or teaching fellows with academic courses, programs, projects, or other activities in direct support of the instructional process. They are under the instructor's direct supervision. Instructional assistants may not be listed as instructor of record and will not lecture. Examples of duties may include, but are not limited to: proctors, practicum and laboratory assistants, discussion leaders, grading papers and tests, creative writing assignments, providing computer printouts; calculating final grades; assisting faculty

with instructional technology; creating slides and other visual aids; evaluating and selecting texts; and compiling statistical data.

(The support of teaching represented by Teaching Fellows, Teaching Assistants, and Instructional Assistants is intended to assist faculty instruction. The primary teaching responsibility of the university is vested in the faculty. Students are not allowed to enroll in courses for which they are assigned assistantship responsibilities)

- d Research assistants** are graduate students who are engaged in research activities under the direction and supervision of a principal investigator and do not have student contact in an instructional setting. Examples of duties may include: assist in the completion of contracted research and creative activities; preparation of required reports or proposals; and supervision and training of other research personnel. Please note that students employed in this category are considered staff employees under the university personnel system and are thus not eligible for the same benefits as students employed in the TA, TF, and IA categories.
- e. Graduate Assistants (GA)** are graduate students whose primary responsibilities do not directly support instructional or research activities. Examples of duties may include: assisting in clinics; setting up and maintaining computer systems; set-up, models, and general administrative assistance. Please note that students employed in this category



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FACULTY CREDENTIALS

- Guidelines -

Comprehensive Standard 3.7.1 of the *Principles of Accreditation* reads as follows:

The institution employs competent faculty members qualified to accomplish the mission and goals of the institution. When determining acceptable qualifications of its faculty, an institution gives primary consideration to the highest earned degree in the discipline. The institution also considers competence, effectiveness, and capacity, including, as appropriate, undergraduate and graduate degrees, related work experiences in the field, professional licensure and certifications, honors and awards, continuous documented excellence in teaching, or other demonstrated competencies and achievements that contribute to effective teaching and student learning outcomes. For all cases, the institution is responsible for justifying and documenting the qualifications of its faculty.

When an institution defines faculty qualifications using faculty credentials, institutions should use the following as credential guidelines:

- a. Faculty teaching general education courses at the undergraduate level: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- b. Faculty teaching associate degree courses designed for transfer to a baccalaureate degree: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (a minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- c. Faculty teaching associate degree courses not designed for transfer to the baccalaureate degree: bachelor's degree in the teaching discipline, or associate's degree and demonstrated competencies in the teaching discipline.
- d. Faculty teaching baccalaureate courses: doctorate or master's degree in the teaching discipline or master's degree with a concentration in the teaching discipline (minimum of 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline).
- e. Faculty teaching graduate and post-baccalaureate course work: earned doctorate/terminal degree in the teaching discipline or a related discipline.
- f. Graduate teaching assistants: master's in the teaching discipline or 18 graduate semester hours in the teaching discipline, direct supervision by a faculty member experienced in the teaching discipline, regular in-service training, and planned and periodic evaluations.

Approved: College Delegate Assembly, December 2006