

**TA GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF GERMANIC, SLAVIC, & SEMITIC STUDIES
2005-2006**

This constitutes a set of instructions, not a contract, pursuant to the terms of employment as set forth in the conditions of the TA appointment letter.

1. General Points:

a. TAs are graduate students at UCSB, usually in the Department of Germanic, Slavic and Semitic Studies, who receive a stipend from the College of Letters and Science to teach under supervision in the Department of Germanic, Slavic, & Semitic Studies while they are, at the same time, pursuing their studies for an advanced degree. Normally, they are assigned to elementary and intermediate language classes. The department will make every effort to allow graduate students in the GSS Dept. in good standing to receive this stipend.

b. TAs will be expected to enroll in TWO regularly-scheduled graduate courses (eight units) in addition to their teacher-training seminar -- German 500. To remain a TA in good standing, they must maintain their GPA at a minimum of 3.30. This does not mean, however, that they are automatically awarded a TAship if they are in good standing. Since TAships are awarded on a competitive basis, a higher GPA than 3.30 may be required. **IN ADDITION, ALL INCOMPLETE GRADES FROM PREVIOUS QUARTERS MUST BE REMOVED BY THE FOLLOWING QUARTER, or the TAship may be revoked by the department.**

c. Teaching assignments are made by a faculty committee, including the Director of the Language Program and Supervisor of TAs. The supervisor will make every effort to place TAs in such teaching situations that best suit their own development as teachers (in most instances this means sequential class assignments) and to take their personal preferences and previous experience into consideration.

d. TAs are directly responsible to their supervisor in all matters regarding their teaching duties. The supervisor is charged by the department with implementation of departmental policies concerning language instruction.

e. This policy is established by the department chair who is advised by a faculty committee and by the supervisor. It is subject to annual review by the department chair and this advisory committee.

f. TAs participate in the shaping of policy through formal input into the advisory committee through their elected representative. If deemed advisable, an annual meeting will be held at the beginning of the spring quarter and TAs will be given

sufficient lead-time to prepare their views on policy decisions.

2. Itemized Regulations:

a. TAs begin the academic year each fall quarter with an introductory TA training seminar, during the week before classes begin, conducted by the supervisor. Attendance at this seminar is obligatory and represents partial fulfillment of the unit requirement for TAs by the University of California. Its format, content, texts and assignments are planned by the supervisor and the department chair who may also make use of the services of the UCSB Office of Instructional Development and involve other faculty members by invitation.

b. The TA seminar consists, for the most part, of discussion of foreign language pedagogy, demonstration workshops, the preparation of tests and quizzes, the use of teaching aids and familiarization with the language laboratory, and with the assistance of Instructional Resources, a videotaping program. Volunteers may be videotaped and the tapes may be discussed by the group.

c. During each quarter, all TAs meet in weekly sessions (one for each level) with their supervisor. During this weekly meeting, questions concerning instructional fundamentals and methods are discussed. Emphasis is on the teaching assignment of the week ahead, including content and approaches. In addition, the supervisor is available for individual consultation by appointment, for at least one additional hour per week.

d. TAs must teach their classes as scheduled and as projected in the weekly meetings. They are asked to be punctual and well prepared for their classes. Classes should not only be met on time but also dismissed promptly at 10 minutes before the hour.

e. In case of illness, a TA should arrange for a substitute and also telephone or e-mail the supervisor. In case communication fails, the department office should be contacted. The supervisor or the department will approve last-minute substitutions. TAs may not cancel their classes for any reason. If no substitute can be found, the administrative assistant may cancel the class. Under no circumstances are students taking a course to be left without communication from the department at the scheduled class time.

f. TAs hold two office hours per week on two different time tracks (MWF/TR). Office hours as well as teaching hours are to be clearly posted on the door of their office. Location of their office and the department office are to be explained to students during the first week of classes.

g. Mid-terms and finals must be given at scheduled times and places. TAs may not arrange for substitutes for proctoring the examination except in consultation

with their supervisor. TAs and their supervisor will discuss and plan all examinations until finalized. Designing and correcting quizzes and examinations is part of the learning experience of TAs and part of their teaching duties in the department.

h. The supervisor is responsible to the UC administration for the assignment of a final grade at the end of the quarter. TAs are responsible for turning over promptly, to the supervisor, the corrected exams at the end of the quarter and enter the suggested grades in the E-Grades system in a timely manner so that the supervisor can officially submit them by the deadline.

i. The supervisor will visit the class of every TA generally once per quarter. The supervisor will tell the TAs approximately when the class will be visited. The supervisor will stay for the entire period and will not intervene in the instruction unless requested by the TA teaching the class. A TA may request more visits. If, because of conflicts, a supervisor cannot visit a TA section, another faculty member may substitute. The supervisor takes notes during the class visit and summarizes them for the TA immediately, or as soon as possible afterward. The TA may ask the supervisor to discuss the class visit at a private meeting or during the weekly meeting.

j. To enhance their TA training, TAs may ask to have their class videotaped. If they choose to do so, the supervisor, together with personnel from Instructional Resources, will view and discuss the videotape in order to provide the TA with helpful comments and advice.

k. TAs are required to observe at least 2 classes taught by other TAs every quarter. If possible, this should be in sections parallel to her/his own.

l. University rules prohibit TAs from signing any petition or document requiring signature of the instructor. Only the signature of the supervisor, in whose name the course is listed, is accepted. If questions arise, the supervisor should be consulted.

m. Book orders and text selections are made by the department chair in conjunction with the advisory committee. Normally, the supervisor will recommend choices of books and texts.

n. TAs are required to assign, collect and correct homework. These assignments should be returned promptly. The same applies to laboratory, computer and Internet assignments as specified by the supervisor.

o. TAs are responsible for encouraging their students to make use of the language and computer labs. It is part of their duties to familiarize themselves with the operations of the learning labs, the contents of the tapes and computer programs and the entire learning program of their class. Information on this is

made available during TA training.

p. TAs are asked to check their mailboxes and their e-mail regularly for any departmental communications. Memos concerning student invitations to lectures, films, study abroad, etc., should be brought to their classes' attention promptly and repeatedly.

q. TAs are asked to organize two extracurricular events: informal get-togethers with interested students (*Kaffeestunden*--at least 3 per quarter) and the German film series.

r. TAs are expected to attend departmental events, such as lectures hosted by the department, the *Kaffeestunden*, the film series, and the annual award ceremony.

s. At the beginning of each academic year, the TAs normally elect a representative who represents them on the advisory committee and who will contact the department chair on all matters pertaining to TA welfare.