

TA HANDBOOK

**DEPARTMENT OF FEMINIST STUDIES
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA**

UPDATED FALL 2024

|

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. TA's Responsibilities to the University of California & Vice Versa

1. Teaching Assistant Workload
2. Required Enrollment of 8-12 Units Each Quarter, including FEMST 501
3. Eligibility Verification and Employment Exceptions
4. Limits on Time as a Teaching Assistant, Teaching Associate, etc.
5. TA Responsibilities in Instruction, Especially Discussion Sections
6. Teaching Associates
7. Procedures for Appointments & Complaints
8. Personal Conduct
9. Non-Discrimination
10. Sexual Harassment

B. Feminist Studies Department's Responsibility to TAs

1. Departmental Staff Resources
2. Departmental Faculty Resources
3. Lead TAs/Feminist Pedagogy Leaders
4. Graduate Division Policies
 - a. Required TA Training
 - b. Procedures for Appointments & Complaints
5. Departmental Policies
 - a. Current Support Policy for Graduate Students Admitted to Feminist Studies
 - b. Importance of TA Assignments
 - c. Assignment of TAs to Particular Courses
 - d. Privacy about Decisions on TA Assignments

C. TA's Responsibilities to the Feminist Studies Department <#to_department>

1. Continuing Training in Teaching & Instructional Development
2. Developing Professional Relations with Office Staff
3. Representing Yourself to Students as a Professional
4. Maintaining Professional Relationships with Other Graduate Students
5. Taking Responsibility for Course Evaluations
6. Consulting with Others about Problems

D. Supervising Instructor's Responsibilities to TAs <#faculty_to_TA>

1. Acknowledge TAs'hip is 50% Time
2. Meet Weekly with All TAs
3. Establish Clear and Uniform Policies
4. Help TAs Prepare for Their Sections
5. Set Grading Standards and Convey These to TAs
6. Establish Policies Regarding Difficult Students and Contested Grades
7. Observe Each TA During the Quarter
8. Provide Written Evaluation of Each TA's Performance
9. Respond to TAs' Concerns

**E. TA's Responsibilities to the Supervising Instructor
<#to_instructor>**

1. Acknowledge the Instructor of Record
2. Treat the Instructor and Other TAs Professionally
3. Support the Instructor and Course in Section
4. Prepare Yourself for Teaching
5. Focus Your Teaching
6. Complete All Related Responsibilities
7. Provide Collegial Feedback to the Instructor

F. TA's Responsibilities to Students <#to_students>

1. Build the class to meet who your students are and what they need
2. Maintain privacy for all parties
3. Do not discriminate according to embodied identities
4. Structure section so that students do not engage in or espouse discrimination in class
5. Be precise and sensitive in your language about sensitive social issues

6. Think of your work as developing *tools* not *attitudes*
7. Come to section meetings on time and show that you are prepared
8. Use section meetings for their specific strengths
9. Learn students' names to monitor activities and create a supportive environment
10. Maintain an environment conducive to learning *tools* and *skills*
11. Provide a section syllabus stating the section requirements and grading system
12. Try to identify students who are experiencing difficulty early in the quarter
13. Follow campus policies with regard to students in UCSB's Disabled Students Program
14. Be available to students (within limits)
15. Use campus deadlines & policies to promote learning
16. Grade quickly, precisely, clearly, completely, and privately according to the agreed course standards
17. Make it hard for cheating to occur and keep students accountable if it does
18. Be prepared for emergencies

G. TA's Responsibilities to Self and Fellow TAs <#to_TAs>

1. Work on keeping academic and research activities and teaching activities in balance
2. Confer regularly with fellow TAs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS <#ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS>

I. INTRODUCTION

This manual is designed to provide guidance to graduate students who undertake teaching responsibilities for UCSB's Department of Feminist Studies. Serving as a Teaching Assistant is a wonderful opportunity for your professional development. This manual provides an overview of the rules and procedures that will facilitate your success as a teaching assistant, teaching associate, and future university instructor. The manual offers a framework for successfully fulfilling one's role as an **instructional, professional, and institutional actor** in the Department of Feminist Studies at UCSB. It provides suggestions for classroom activities and individual conferences with students. It also explains the legal and institutional framework in which instruction occurs. All graduate student instructors employed by the department—Teaching Assistants, Teaching Associates, or Readers—should follow the policies and procedures delineated in this handbook.

First tier universities such as University of California—often called Research I universities—are distinguished by their emphasis on the production of scholarly knowledge and by their creation and support of strong doctoral programs designed to train future scholars. Like many highly ranked universities, the University of California operates under a system of both administrative control and “faculty governance.” Allocation of funds, credit, responsibility, and reward result from negotiations in this structure, as do decisions about funding, courses, majors, numbers and nature of faculty, and so forth. Departments undergo regular reviews that involve close scrutiny by campus committees and administrators as well as outside experts in the field. The outcome of these reviews influences departmental standing, funding, and prestige. If funding is allocated to hire new faculty, the area of specialization and the individual identified as a candidate for hire undergo consideration by people at all levels of this institutional structure. Once hired, faculty are regularly reviewed by departmental faculty, faculty committees, and administrators to determine their rank and salary; at significant points of the faculty career (tenure and advancement to full professor, for example), outside experts evaluate the work and write letters that are read carefully as contributions to personnel decisions. Departmental faculty serve as outside experts to evaluate the scholarship of other faculty for journals, university presses, and other institutions. Research contributions are central to their prestige and authority in that endeavor. However, they are also considered teaching professionals.

Appointment as a Teaching Assistant or Teaching Associate is a change in legal status and institutional responsibilities that positions students in a new role as an *apprentice teaching professional*. It is a campus requirement that before teaching, all graduate students must complete the TA Training offered by UCSB annually during pre-instructional activities week each September. Thinking about oneself as a professional is helpful in making one's decisions about teaching. Even wonderful personal qualities and the most captivating teaching techniques cannot qualify one as a *teaching professional*. Rather, larger social structures allocate recognition according to a person's achievements in completing a specific set of activities that has been institutionally authorized. Specialized training, and the expertise it develops and validates, is central to gaining appointment as a teaching professional. While teaching professionals are permitted a degree of intellectual creativity

and challenge, their autonomy is not unlimited. They are held to a faculty code of conduct and other ethical structures, and they are required to complete their work in accordance with rules and authorization stemming from other campus and system-wide sources. Professionalism as a researcher and teacher emerges from ways of thinking that depend on this matrix of social authority.

The Department of Feminist Studies at UCSB operates on the basis of mutual cooperation and respect between faculty members and TAs. The faculty member provides guidance and support, drawing upon his or her experience and expertise. The TA, often in more direct or daily contact with course students, keeps the faculty member informed of developments in the sections. A feeling of common effort and an environment free of intimidation, gossip, and destructive competition are essential conditions for effective teaching.

Feminist Studies also recognizes that TAs are represented by the UAW. For more information, see [UC/UAW Agreement](#).

Students interested in additional teaching training and resources may wish to complete the Certificate in College and University Teaching (CCUT). See <http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/academic/interdisciplinary-emphases-certificate-programs/ccut>

An overview of TA/Teaching Associateships in the Department of Feminist Studies: Decisions are made by the Feminist Studies Curriculum Committee (Chair, Chair of Grad Committee, Chair of Undergrad Committee with staff assistance of Business Officer and Graduate Advisor). As given in offer letters, Feminist Studies students are guaranteed TAs. For Teaching Associates, the minimum qualifications for appointment to the Associate title shall be possession of a Master's degree, or advancement to candidacy, and at least one year of teaching experience. All incoming students must complete the TA Training offered by UCSB annually during pre-instructional activities week in September. Teaching positions are funded by the College of Letters & Sciences. Students list preferences in their Annual Reports, and ABD students can submit course proposals. Feminist Studies students are assigned first, then a call for TAs is distributed via email and posted on our website, generally in early May. Priority of placements is in this order: Feminist Studies students, doctoral emphasis students, and students advised by affiliated faculty members. Assignments are based on student and faculty preferences, a department decision that all 1st year students will TA the introductory course required of all majors (Femst 20) one time, diversity of teaching experiences, departmental need to cover our curriculum, and budget approved by the College. A call for TAs is circulated on campus to fill positions open after Feminist Studies student assignments, with priority to doctoral emphasis students and students of affiliated faculty members.

Summer Sessions TA/Associateships: Pending budget allocation by Summer Sessions, we send a call for Summer TA and Associate applications to all Feminist

Studies students. If there are not enough positions, the department works with students and faculty to find other teaching or RA opportunities for funding. If there are more positions than applicants, a second call goes out to Feminist Studies and Feminist Studies doctoral emphasis students, with priority to Feminist Studies students.

II. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. TA's Responsibilities to the University of California & Vice Versa

1. Teaching Assistant Workload:

A TAship at the University of California is usually a half-time position. The University's contract with the ASE/UAW defines this as meaning a workload of up to 220 hours per quarter. The contract further specifies, "Workload is not measured strictly by actual hours worked. Rather, it is measured by how many hours the university could reasonably expect it to take a TA to satisfactorily complete the work assigned." Actual tasks may vary among courses, depending on whether they are upper- or lower-division and on the pedagogical decisions of the individual supervising faculty, but in no case may the number of hours and the distribution of those hours exceed the limits laid out in the contract, which can be found online at [UC/UAW Agreement](#). It is the TA's responsibility to monitor his or her working hours and see the pattern of hours over the course of the quarter. The supervising faculty member should be kept informed of time use.

2. Required Enrollment of 8-12 Units Each Quarter, including FEMST 501:

TAs and all graduate students must be enrolled in at least 8 units, and 12 units per quarter is considered a normal load. The department's required course for TAs, Feminist Studies 501, Apprentice Teaching in Feminist Studies, counts for four of these units.

3. Eligibility Verification and Employment Exceptions:

In situations where appointments are made by departments/units other than the student's home department, the employing department must verify the student's eligibility for the appointment with the student's home department. It is the student's responsibility to make sure the Eligibility Verification form is signed by his or her

home department in a timely fashion so that the TA appointment can be input into the payroll system and fees can be remitted prior to the start of a quarter.

Graduate Division has delegated to the student's home department the authority to approve certain employment exceptions. Departments are delegated authority to approve or deny a total of 51-75% appointment in Graduate Student Researcher, Teaching Assistant, Tutor, or Reader-monthly stipend. Such cases require students to fill out the Graduate Student Request for Employment Over 50% form. The Director of Graduate Studies may, in consultation with the student's advisor, approve exceptions when the student is in good standing and it is evident that the additional work will not jeopardize the student's timely progress toward the degree. Graduate Students employed as Associates are not allowed to hold any other concurrent appointments; this is a hard rule set by UC Office of the President with no exceptions. Proposals to employ a graduate student at more than 75% time require an Exception to Employment Policy form. These requests must be submitted to the Graduate Division for review at least six weeks prior to the start of the proposed employment. The Department may recommend the exception, but the Dean of the Graduate Division makes the final decision.

4. Limits on Time as Teaching Assistant, Teaching Associate, etc.:

According to Graduate Division, the total length of time a student may hold any one or a combination of the following titles may not exceed four years (12 quarters): Teaching Assistant, Associate In __, Reader, Tutor, and Remedial Tutor. Under special circumstances, an exception may be granted for additional appointments beyond 12 quarters (see the exception process below). System wide regulation does not permit graduate student appointment beyond 18 quarters. Currently the department is responsible for justifying service in the 13-15th quarters. Graduate Division may authorize the exception if the student is registered and enrolled in the required 8-12 units and within good academic standing (GPA of 3.0 or higher, fewer than 12 units of incomplete, and not on probation or progress monitoring). Departments must also assess whether the exceptional employment will affect the student's timely completion of degree.

5. TA Responsibilities in Instruction, Especially Discussion Sections:

TAs enroll in Femst 501, Apprentice Teaching in Feminist Studies. The TA is not responsible for the instructional content of a course, for selection of student assignments or for planning of examinations. Under the supervision of the instructor, the TA determines the preliminary grades for students in the assigned discussion sections. TAs input these grades in egrades, but the instructor must approve them and submit them by the registrar's deadline. All grades are subject to review by the instructor who is responsible for the final grade. A TA should not be assigned responsibility for instructing the entire enrollment of a course or for providing the

entire instruction of a group of students enrolled in a course. The TA is responsible for the conduct of discussion sections under the active direction and supervision of a regular member of the faculty, lecturer, or associate to whom final responsibility for the course's entire instruction, including the performance of TAs, has been assigned. These limited responsibilities acknowledge the role of the TA as an apprentice teacher under the guidance of a faculty member who is the instructor of record for a course.

Duties for TAs assigned to large lecture courses include preparing for and attending all lectures for the course, leading one or more discussion sections per week, doing the required grading, holding weekly office hours, and meeting regularly with the faculty instructor and other TAs. TAs may also be asked to participate in formulating exam and paper topics; give lectures or contribute in other ways to lectures; conduct review sessions; or support the course in other ways.

The principal aim of section meetings is to provide a forum for students to discuss the ideas and themes of the course. Discussion sections allow the student to speak in order to gain knowledge and understanding and to exchange ideas relevant to the course topic. TAs are essential to this process. The TA determines the general course of the discussion, makes sure the most important issues are brought forth, and keeps the discussion from wandering off track, encouraging students talk to each other's points.

The section may be used for other purposes such as quizzes and student questions. The student should feel free to call upon the greater knowledge and experience of the TA to clarify matters of fact or interpretation. The section, however, should not become a lecture session. A good discussion will let the student, and sometimes even the TA, emerge with new insights and understanding. It is not easy to run an effective discussion section, but when it works it makes all the effort worthwhile.

6. Teaching Associates:

Under certain circumstances, advanced graduate students--with at least one year's teaching experience, and who hold master's degrees or have advanced to candidacy for the doctorate--may be appointed as Teaching Associates. These Associates are chosen for appointment by the Chair in consultation with the Graduate Committee and individual faculty members on the basis of high academic standing, teaching maturity, and expertise in the subject matter or method of the course. Under the direction of a Faculty Mentor, a Teaching Associate may be responsible for the entire instruction of students in a course. All Associate appointments require the review and pre-approval of the Graduate Dean and the appropriate College/School. Associates may not evaluate fellow graduate student appointees (e.g., TAs).

7. Procedures for Appointments & Complaints:

Appointments associated with fee remission require students to be registered in a minimum of 8 units. The student must register for classes before fees can be paid. If a student fails to register on time and the department cannot process GSFR (Graduate Student Fee Remission) a late fee may be assessed by BARC. The first day of a quarter is the final day fees can be paid without a late penalty.

Graduate Division indicates that graduate students seeking academic apprentice positions as TAs or GSRs have the right to clearly enunciated guidelines for application, selection, and service. Posting and appointment procedures, as well as complaint resolution procedures, for TAs, Readers, Tutors, and Remedial Tutors are specified in the [UC/UAW Agreement](#).

8. Personal Conduct:

Students registered in the University of California have an obligation to act in a manner compatible with the University's function as an educational institution. Graduate students are responsible for standards for personal conduct and responsibility outlined in the [General Catalog](#) and [Schedule of Classes](#). More information about policies and regulations is available from the Office of Student Life at <http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/regulations>.

Instances of possible misconduct on campus should be reported immediately to the [Office of Student Life](#), 2260 Student Resource Building, (805) 893-4569, and to the [UCSB Campus Police](#) (emergency from on-campus phone: 9-911, off-campus phone 911) particularly if violent or threatening actions are involved. Questions about matters involving personal conduct and responsibility should be discussed with the instructor of record or faculty mentor. It is the department's policy to report incidents of academic misconduct to campus authorities using the form available at: <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/>.

Alleged violations of University regulations are investigated by appropriate officials. Charges of student misconduct are investigated by the Office of Student Life and may result in the convening of a disciplinary hearing by the student-faculty committee responsible for such matters.

9. Non-Discrimination

Regulation 10 – Authority of Instructors states: “Each instructor has the authority to determine whether a student is sufficiently prepared to enter upon or to continue in the study of that instructor’s subject. However, an instructor may not exclude a student from a course on political grounds, or for reasons of race, religion, sex, sexual

orientation, age, ethnic origin, disability, or for other arbitrary or personal reasons. A student who believes that such criteria were used may challenge the instructor's decision by means of the grievance procedures set forth in "University Policies" section of this catalog under "[Student Grievance Procedure](#)." See campus resources on working with people from diverse backgrounds at: <http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/profdev/diverse-backgrounds> (open External Links and scroll to the bottom of the page).

10. Sexual Harassment:

Be aware of the campus policy on sexual harassment and complete mandatory trainings in a timely manner. Recognize that Teaching Associates, TAs, and Readers are in positions of power over their students; given this unequal relationship of institutional power, behavior that might be acceptable in another context, can be coercive. The University of California Sexual Violence and Sexual Harassment Policy is available at: <http://policy.ucop.edu/doc/4000385/SHSV>.

The institutional power inherent in the position of TA or other instructor changes how informal comments are interpreted. Jokes, references to student's personal attributes, passing comments about students' appearance, sexuality, or gender may be interpreted as disrespectful or attempts to create a personal relationship.

Be aware of the potential for harassment between undergraduate students. Because you do not know the backgrounds of the students in your class, you should not assume that all the students in your class wish to share personal information about themselves with others in the class; it is best not to structure class activities that might seem to encourage or pressure them to do so. Allow students to decide what information they will reveal and to whom. **Emails:** The requirement of privacy from harassment is one of the reasons that TAs should make sure that their class email lists do not reveal the email addresses of other students in the class. Students are always free to share information with one another. **Class discussions:** Structure your topics and questions so that students can avoid revealing personal information if they wish. Students often choose to contribute information about personal experiences during relevant class discussions. No student should be required to describe personal experiences. Personal examples are only one of a wide range of things that promote understanding of the course material and should not be a focus of the class.

Be aware of the potential for harassment between peers: other graduate students. The University's Sexual Harassment Policy notes that "behavior of a sexual nature between persons in an equal power relationship can also serve to make the work and learning environment a negative one when one of the two parties involved feels the sexual behavior is unwelcome or when a third party feels that his/her learning or working environment is adversely affected." Graduate students can consult the Ombuds Office (confidential and no reporting required), Title IX Office, Graduate Director or Department Chair if they wish to discuss unwelcome behavior.

Be aware of the potential that undergraduate students may behave toward TAs in ways that may constitute sexual harassment, including unwelcome touching and personal remarks.

Information about the UCSB policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment can be found at <https://oeosh.ucsb.edu/titleix/training/ta.and.graduate.student.sexual.harassment.prevention/>

B. Feminist Studies Department's Responsibility to TAs

Departmental Staff Resources:

The staff will assist graduate students in various ways relevant to their status as students, teaching assistants, and teaching associates. The department as a whole seeks a cordial atmosphere; the staff is eager to help but they have multiple responsibilities. *Don't assume that staff members are unfriendly or disrespectful if there are delays in meeting requests.* The following is a list of the departmental staff and their duties relevant to graduate students and Teaching Assistants/Associates.

Business Officer: (805) 893-8246; the **Business Officer**, the chief administrator for the department, supervising and coordinating all staff in the office. She acts as the Chair's main staff person.

Student Affairs Coordinator: (805) 893-4330; e-mail: the **Graduate Program Advisor (aka Student Affairs Coordinator)** works closely with the Director of Graduate Studies, dealing with currently enrolled graduate students, including fellowships and support, and teaching assistants/associates. See them to get on the payroll for TA/Associate appointments during the academic year, review fellowship information, or file a Request for Employment over 50%. (Summer Sessions staff process all summer teaching appointments and child care reimbursements). The Graduate Advisor handles the application and reapplication process for TAships and in consultation with the Chair and instructors, inputs TA section assignments, after which TAs have eGrades access. The Advisor also works closely with the Director of Graduate Studies to handle TA fee remissions, fee fellowships, and departmental support including fellowships and travel. This position deals with graduate admissions and organizes graduate recruitment activities. Student Affairs Coordinator, is also the **Undergraduate Advisor**. She is responsible for scheduling of rooms, textbooks, undergraduate records, and helping students select courses appropriate for the major. The Undergrad Advisor provides advice to undergraduates about their courses and activities and may have insight into students who are enrolled in TAs sections. If a TA suspects a student is in distress, he or she should refer the student to the Advisor as the critical point of contact and will direct the TA or the student to the appropriate campus resource. Also, the Distressed Students Protocol is a good resource, [here](#). They assign TA cubicles and distributes the keys, she also has extras for those who lock themselves out during normal office hours. If you happen to lock

yourself out after hours, you can call the non-emergency police line at 805-893-3446.

This position is a liaison with the Disabled Students Program (DSP), and can be consulted if there are problems. Instructors and TAs should arrange alternative exam times and spaces for enrolled DSP students following DSP protocols. Instructors and TAs should use the one-time room request form as soon as possible:

<https://registrar.sa.ucsb.edu/RoomRequest.aspx>. The Advisor is also in charge of organizing student evaluations of TAs, which are available to TAs after grades are turned in.

Please check with staff about policies for use of materials and equipment. Sonya, Crystal, and the instructor of record must be informed if a section or office hours have been changed or canceled due to illness or emergency, in addition TAs should inform students via email.

Front Desk Student Peer Advisors: Be sure to introduce yourself to the front desk student staff. Often Feminist Studies majors, they work part time, acting as receptionists. They also help with office activities such as delivering the mail, inventorying supplies, organizing files and preparing student evaluation forms. Graduate students and TAs should not make requests for help directly to the Peer Advisors, but rather should ask staff graduate advisor when assistance is needed.

2. Departmental Faculty Resources:

In addition to the instructor of record who supervises the TAs assigned to her, three other faculty members have particular responsibility for the graduate programs and the experience of TAs. They are particularly interested in helping with teaching problems or problems negotiating campus and departmental policies. Approach these faculty members as the first step for additional information about policies or procedures.

The Chair of the Feminist Studies Department has ultimate authority for departmental policies and procedures, though they work in conjunction with faculty committees to keep the department functioning successfully. If questions arise that cannot be solved by consulting with the supervising faculty member, TAs should first consult the Chair.

The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for graduate recruitment and admissions, as well as for advising graduate students and TAs, working closely with staff graduate advisor. They also act as the Director of Feminist Studies Doctoral Emphasis.

Supervising Faculty Member (Instructor of Record): This faculty member is the instructor of record for the course who has responsibility for selecting readings, developing assignments, delivering instruction, and establishing evaluation criteria; s/he also trains the TAs, supervises to manage the challenges of the course, and evaluates TA success.

3. Lead TAs/Feminist Pedagogy Leaders

Due both to funding cuts and new College of Letters & Sciences mandates, the department is discontinuing this series. Feminist pedagogy will be addressed in Femst 501, Femst 595, and in other courses.

4. Graduate Division Policies:

Review Graduate Division Policies (Section III, A, 1-7) [HERE](#)

a. Required TA Training:

Graduate Division assigns to the department responsibility for developing and providing on-going training for teaching. Our program of TA training, in conjunction with the required TA orientation put on by Instructional Development prior to the start of fall quarter, is designed to meet that responsibility.

b. Procedures for Appointments & Complaints:

TAs have right to clearly enunciated guidelines for application, selection, and service. Posting and appointment procedures, as well as complaint resolution procedures, for TAs, Readers, Tutors, and Remedial Tutors are specified in the [UC/UAW Agreement](#). Departments should also have written procedures for handling and resolving complaints involving GSRs. Information for GSRs on how to express a concern or file a complaint are included in the department's Graduate Student Handbook.

5. Departmental Policies

a. Current Support Policy for Graduate Students Admitted to Feminist Studies:

Our present policy is to attempt to provide support for all graduate students admitted to the Feminist Studies Department, either through fellowships or TAs. This support is always contingent on funding availability and graduate students meeting the Graduate Division's standards of good academic standing and adequate progress toward the degree (regularly enrolled for a minimum of 8-12 units, 3.0 or higher GPA, no more than eight units of incomplete). Departmental TA support also is contingent on completing one's research and teaching activities successfully. Students whose research is not progressing risk losing support.

The department will provide additional training and counseling to improve the skills of TAs in difficulty. If problems continue, we will provide more formal counseling according to the university's policies and union agreements, which generally includes a probationary period of counseling and support. While this is seldom necessary, it is

nonetheless important to remember that support and appointments to teach are privileges not rights.

b. Importance of TA Assignments:

According to university rules, the selection, supervision, and training of all TAs are important responsibilities of the department, and in particular the department chair. All candidates for appointment and reappointment are subjected to careful review and recommendation. Decisions about particular appointments are made with attention to high academic standing, maturity as an instructor, expertise in specific subject matter, and the need for breadth in training.

c. Assignment of TAs to Particular Courses:

TA assignments are made according to the following priorities: first to students in the Feminist Studies Department MA/Ph.D. program, second to students in the Feminist Studies Doctoral Emphasis, third to students of affiliated faculty members, and fourth to other interested and qualified students. The department would love to assign TAs to teach only courses they request. However, this is not possible. We ask graduate students to indicate preferences, but there are many other factors that we must consider: the proportion of experienced TAs to new TAs, the proportion of TAs familiar with the course to TAs assigned to it for the first time, the schedules of students, the specific skills required by a particular course, etc. New graduates on the job market often find that institutions expect them to teach a broad range of courses, not merely their specializations.

d. Privacy About Decisions on TA Assignments:

Appointing TAs and assigning them to specific courses are personnel actions. In the university, personnel actions—for faculty and for TAs—are not public. These decisions are not transparent because they involve a confluence of personnel decisions about a number of different people. If you wish to inquire further about TA assignments, please speak to the Chair.

C. TA's Responsibilities to the Feminist Studies Department

1. Continuing Training in Teaching & Instructional Development:

Ongoing training activities are required for all Feminist Studies TAs. In the early fall, new TAs must attend the campus New TA Orientation Meeting provided by Instructional Development. Instructional Development (<http://www.id.ucsb.edu/>) is located in 2130 Kerr Hall. This department coordinates the activities of the campus TA training program.

The department requires all TAs to regularly engage in activities to develop their skills as instructors. All TAs employed by Feminist Studies should enroll in Feminist Studies 501: Apprentice Teaching in Feminist Studies **every quarter they are employed**. This course is taken pass/no pass and counts as 4 of one's required minimum of 8-12 units. The activities of the course encompass the course training provided by the instructor of record whom the TA assists, who will work with you to decide specific activities that may be useful.

Classroom observation is an important part of TA Training; you may be observed by the instructor you assist, fellow TAs, as well as Instructional Development staff. Instructional Development offers a videotaping service, which gives you the opportunity to evaluate the teaching methods you currently use, discuss what you would like to change, and explore new teaching techniques. The Feminist Studies Department encourages that all TAs with three quarters of experience or less be videotaped in a classroom during their first year. Please do this during the first quarter you are employed; consider doing this once each year. You may arrange for a videotaping of your section on your own, at any time. You will then view and discuss your tape with an instructional consultant. The consultant's evaluation of your tape will not become a part of your Feminist Studies department file. Instructional Development will report to the department that you have fulfilled your obligation. Although you may feel self-conscious about being videotaped, observing the video of one's own teaching is extremely interesting. It reveals mannerisms you may not have been aware of, ways that you didn't notice part of what was happening in class, etc. For more information about TA Video and Consultation, visit <https://id.ucsb.edu/video-services>. This office also has resources that address specific teaching problems.

2. Developing Professional Relations with Office Staff:

The office staff is the hub of the department. It is always a good idea to walk through the office and check in with Sonya or Crystal when you come to your office and leave. As soon as possible provide your office hours to the front desk student staff, Sonya, Crystal, and the instructor you are assisting. If you change your office hours during the quarter you must inform these people and your students. In case of an emergency it is helpful for staff to know when you are in office hours.

Part of your success as a TA and ultimately a professor depends on establishing a good working relationship with the office staff. Practice courtesy and consideration in dealing with them. Know your responsibilities as a TA and be informed of office regulations. Be sure to complete any paperwork promptly and double-check that you are meeting the formal requirements of a TA. Be aware of the staff's responsibilities, and try to direct questions and problems to the appropriate person. Except in extraordinary circumstances, the office staff cannot complete any of your administrative/paperwork obligations, especially in completing section transfers, reporting individual grades, etc. For example, it is imperative that you make sure that every student attending your section is on your eGrades sheet, not someone else's.

3. Representing Yourself to Students as a Professional:

Think of yourself as a professional with a public presence, not as simply a student. Always announce your first and last name, not merely your first name. Write your full name on the board for several sessions, because students often forget it (they then try to describe you when talking to staff, often leading to confusion). Think of your email address as an important aspect of your professional identity, and ALWAYS use your email account for any university-related email. (In case of inappropriate emails from students—whether in your classes or not—the university has a different kind of access to mail that goes through its own servers.) There is no dress code in the department for TAs or faculty members. Your behavior in lecture as well as in your own sections is observed by students.

4. Maintaining Professional Relationships with Other Graduate Students:

Again, think of yourself as a professional with a public presence, not simply a student. You will be assigned an office or cubicle that will be shared with one or more graduate students. Keys can be obtained from Crystal. Courtesy towards your office mates is a must in the limited space. Be sure to arrange your office hours so that they don't overlap, since there is not enough space to hold two or three office hours at once. Ideally, your office mates should not be in the office during your office hours, and vice versa, but this is something for all TAs in the office to discuss and agree upon. Be aware that your private conversations with office mates can often be overheard by students waiting in the halls to see other instructors. Do not talk about office mates, classmates, experiences in class, or students in your classrooms on Facebook, other social networking spaces, or GauchoSpace. Be aware that these are not adequately confidential.

Talking about teaching is one of the most interesting ways to gain experience. Other TAs can serve as an important resource. Experienced TAs can offer suggestions on planning sections, dealing with problem students, grading, adding and dropping students from sections, and almost any other question that arises when you are TAing. And if they don't know something, they can usually tell you who might. Visiting another TA's section is an excellent way to see your own classes in a new perspective; be sure to secure advance permission to visit. Since there is no "perfect" way to teach, talk to several TAs to see how they would approach the problem you are facing.

Bear in mind that there is a kind of structural intensity in many graduate programs—particularly small ones—that can lead to irritation with other graduate students (and professors), formation of cliques, constant critical gossip, etc. Personal animosities and establishing of boundaries through patterns of inclusion and exclusion can destroy graduate programs and can reduce graduate students' academic productivity. In general this is not a good state of affairs. Unfortunately, many of the same structural intensities are found in academic departments also. Learning to avoid such

structuring of academic social life is a significant accomplishment in preparing for your future life as a contributing member of an academic department.

5. **Taking Responsibility for Course Evaluations:**

Arrange for course evaluations to be completed in such a way that students understand you will be unable to see them until after you have turned in your grades for the quarter. Ask a student to hand out and collect the forms while you leave the room; stand in the hall nearby and have a student come and get you when the class has finished and the forms collected and put in an envelope so you cannot see them. Have a trustworthy student convey them in a sealed envelope to the department's front desk. A computer-generated quantitative summary of these evaluations becomes a permanent part of your file in the department. After grades are submitted, you and your instructor can review the results of your evaluations. Think of the comments not as directions for change, but as clues about student reactions. It is useful to talk to instructors and other TAs about what you might do to address certain kinds of comments. Sometimes the evaluations of a troublesome section can give you good insight into avoiding problems in the future.

Be circumspect at all times about discussing the evaluations with students: do not indicate that you want or need good evaluations. Just before you distribute the evaluations, indicate that you are not permitted to see the forms or statistics until the grades have been turned in. Explain that they are used to evaluate your teaching and give you ideas for improvement, so you would appreciate specific suggestions about things that are under your control. If you would like them to comment on your handouts or other items specifically, write a question on the board for them to answer in the comment section. You may also wish to explain that the evaluations themselves or the summary of scores may be provided to other campus departments when you apply for fellowships and awards, or to other institutions as part of a hiring process.

The department will provide one free copy of evaluations to graduate students upon request. Evaluations can also be made available electronically free of charge via the course evaluations website [here](#). It is highly recommended that graduate students keep these evaluations in a portfolio. In the event that a graduate student needs additional copies, a nominal fee of \$2.50 per course will be charged. Cash or check made payable to UC Regents is acceptable.

The written commentaries, along with the quantitative summary, are available several weeks after the end of the quarter. Please log into [the course evaluations website](#).

6. **Consulting with Others about Problems:**

The most effective way to improve one's teaching (and research) is to talk with others about problems and situations that occur. Discuss details, potential solutions, and ways of precluding such problems in the future.

D. Supervising Instructor's Responsibilities to TAs

1. Acknowledge TAs' Time is 50% Time:

When developing course requirements, structure them so as to account for the TA's job being half-time. Fill out and review the Academic Student Employee Responsibilities and Supplemental Documentation form. Estimate expected times for the TA's various responsibilities (lectures, sections, office hours, grading of papers, quizzes, and exams). Provide this estimate to the TAs so they can monitor their hours. Be sure to ask them about their time use several times in the quarter and provide advice to those who seem to be spending more time than appropriate on different tasks.

2. Meet Weekly with All TAs:

Use meetings to provide supervision, support and instruction. (This activity is part of the TA's work as a student enrolled in Feminist Studies 501.)

3. Establish Clear and Uniform Policies:

Clarify policies for attendance, plagiarism, make-ups, incompletes, late papers, and add/drops. Provide sample section syllabi that explain these policies and/or review the TAs' syllabi for their sections.

4. Help TAs Prepare for Their Sections:

Communicate lecture goals and themes. Suggest discussion questions and themes to be elicited from the readings. Indicate when certain material needs emphasis in sections because it will not be covered fully in lecture. Give suggestions for dealing with difficult topics.

5. Set Grading Standards and Convey These to TAs:

Make sure that the TAs understand these standards; work together to develop a uniform standard of grading among the TAs. Consider holding a meeting after each examination to discuss grading standards. Engage in extensive reviewing (or spot-checking) of TA-graded papers and exams. Encourage TAs to shift their grading to meet the group standard. Monitor each TA's grade curve for fairness and consistency.

6. Establish Policies Regarding Difficult Students and Contested Grades:

Cooperate and consult with the TA involved when handling a difficult or disruptive student or a contested grade. Ask TAs to inform you of any problems. Consider asking students to write a paragraph explaining their objection to the grade before talking to the TA about it, then the instructor. Consider a policy that removes the incentive to regularly contest grades by indicating that review of a contested grade can lead to lowering as well as raising the grade.

7. Observe Each TA During the Quarter:

The UCSB Policy and Procedures on Academic Personnel (The Red Binder) requires departments to ascertain the quality of the teaching assistant's work through regular review and to make improvements when necessary regular review is necessary. It states that the faculty member with responsibility for the course should periodically visit the sections of the course to gain a basis for appropriate review, preferably by prearrangement, and with care to avoid undermining the TA's credibility or jeopardizing rapport with the students. In a private consultation with the TA soon after the observation, ask the TA for his or her own evaluation of the session; provide feedback in the form of concrete suggestions for improvement. (This observation can be supplemented with observation by the Office of Instructional Development.)

8. Provide Written Evaluation of Each TA's Performance:

The UCSB Policy and Procedures on Academic Personnel (The Red Binder) also requires departments to ensure that the instructor of record "evaluate each TA's performance at the end of the quarter on the standard departmental form. TAs can—and should—ask to see these evaluations at the end of the term. The evaluation should be based in part on the instructor's observation of teaching. A faculty member may also want to review a TA's course evaluations or a TA's videotaped section (only with the TA's permission) and discuss these with the TA." These evaluations form part of the material used to evaluate the graduate student's development each year; they are also useful for those asked to write letters of recommendation.

9. Respond to TAs' Concerns:

TAs may have concerns about their interactions with you, aspects of your teaching, policies, standards, or relations with other TAs. Ask TAs to meet with you privately to discuss concerns. If you or the TA feels there are issues that are not resolved, one or both of you may consult with the Director of Graduate Studies or the Department

Chair.

E. TA's Responsibilities to the Supervising Instructor

1. Acknowledge The Instructor of Record:

TAs are apprentices in teaching. They are expected to learn from the activities of teaching as well as the advice and leadership of the instructors they assist. This learning involves observing how instructors with different teaching styles accomplish their tasks. TAs may consequently need to shape themselves to an unfamiliar style for a particular quarter. This is a salutary counter to TAs' tendency to think that the right way to do things is according to their own preferred style. In fact, after some experience, TAs may notice the effectiveness of strategies they previously rejected. In any case, there are many factors that lead an instructor to adopt certain strategies; it is useful to ask why rather than criticize.

2. Treat the Instructor and Other TAs Professionally:

If at any point you wish to discuss concerns with your supervising faculty member or instructor, do so in private. Avoid social traps that can emerge when working in small groups: don't establish inclusionary or exclusionary boundaries in the group; don't subject the instructor to sustained group criticism and gossip. Applying restraint in this regard may be easier if you consider the effects of yourself being subjected to this type of criticism.

3. Support the Instructor and Course in Section:

Be supportive of the faculty member/instructor of record and course activities in section. Avoid negative undercutting of texts or the instructor. Acknowledge students' complaints, but don't devote class time to them (tell students you will talk with them after class). Don't indicate that you agree or poll the class to see if others agree. A section that engages the TA in open discussion of the perceived inadequacies of the class creates a specific kind of event that is very seductive: TAs and section "bond" at the expense of the instructor and course material. This is a major interference in learning. If students express resentment about requirements, acknowledge what they say, then explain why the requirements exist and what benefits they are designed to provide. If students complain about the amount of work or express confusion about concepts, acknowledge what they say and give them some suggestions about time management and reading strategies. Your role is to explain and clarify the course material as presented. It is also to demonstrate that learning requires work and that you expect the students in the section to do that work.

4. Prepare Yourself to Teach:

Participate in TA training--campus, departmental, and specific to the class. Attend all lectures, be attentive and take notes; your behavior during lecture models for students what they should be doing and demonstrates whether or not you find scholarly work valuable. Read all assigned readings and plan how to use them in section.

5. Focus Your Teaching:

Make sure students understand the readings and lecture content and the concepts that the instructor emphasizes for assignments and exams. Many TAs find it very useful to hand out weekly study questions to help the students identify important ideas in their reading assignments. This requires reading a week ahead in the textbook or course reader.

6. Complete All Related Responsibilities:

Be available for meetings with the supervising faculty member and other TAs, perhaps even during finals week. Provide all materials requested by the faculty supervisor. Provide copies of your section syllabus and all handouts you design for your students. Be ready to provide samples (or perhaps all) of your graded materials for the faculty member's inspection. This is one of the best methods faculty members have of working to ensure uniformity of grading over sections. Meetings with other TAs to discuss grading are extremely interesting and helpful in leading you to see features of exams and papers and your tendency to value some over others. Attend and actively proctor exams when requested. Make sure that you complete all the required paperwork for enrolling students in the correct sections, grading, etc. Enter grades into eGrades by the professor's deadline; professors are the only ones who can submit grades. Make sure the faculty member knows your section hours and office hours; inform her (as well as the office staff) if you are ill or must cancel a section.

7. Provide Collegial Feedback to the Instructor:

Talking about teaching is very interesting. Part of being a good teacher is learning to see what complaints and concerns of students are generic, constant, perhaps inevitable (too much reading, too many quizzes, etc.), and what can be addressed by the instructor without abrogating responsibility to the course. It is useful to tell the instructor about students' comments, without assuming that their opinions at any stage of the quarter as paramount. Student opinions are one of the factors to consider

in teaching a course. In the same sense, it is useful for you to talk with the instructor about your reactions to the course material, bearing in mind that such reactions, too, are one of the factors to consider in teaching a course.

F. TA's Responsibilities to Students

1. Build the class to meet who your students are and what they need.

Perhaps the most crucial of teaching skills is paying close attention to the students enrolled in class in order to see what and how they think, what preconceptions they have, and what tools they need to understand the arguments they must undertake. There is not a kind of “good teaching” on the abstract, because it is always connected to the particular students enrolled in courses. Students vary by campus, college, year in school, and major. They respond to certain kinds of tasks in patterned ways. Understanding one’s students enables an instructor to shape readings, assignments, and class activities to meet *these specific students* and move their learning forward. TAs should not use their own experiences as a template for teaching or assume that students want or need what they did. TAs should also not assume that the ideas and arguments that excite them in graduate work are necessarily accessible or appropriate for their undergraduates.

2. Maintain privacy for all parties.

Becoming a TA involves changed relations of authority. Be sure that you are careful about what you reveal about yourself and what you ask students to reveal about themselves. Do not share information about grades and assignments. When in more informal settings (such as in small groups after class), do not assume that students wish to share personal information with the group.

3. Do not discriminate according to embodied identities.

Do not accept or reject students in sections, call on students, ask them questions, make yourself available to them, or grade them in any way that could be seen as a result of their embodied identities. Do not authorize students with specific embodied identities to assume specific roles in class. To do so is a violation of federal and state law as well as the university’s policy to prohibit discrimination based on sex, race, age, national origin, or religion. To provide benefits to some students according to their embodied identities violates law and policy; to deny any students benefits according to their embodied identities also violates law and policy. For campus and other resources, see <http://www.graddiv.ucsb.edu/profdev/diverse-backgrounds> (open External Resources at the bottom of the page).

4. Structure section so that students do not engage in or espouse discrimination in class.

This complicated problem is best prevented by anchoring the class in the arguments and evidence of the lectures and texts. This is the material to be understood, explained, interpreted, and manipulated. This material may seem clear or even pedestrian to TAs, but it is not to students. It provides tools for many students in our classes to address widespread public arguments that encourage discrimination against them; it allows them to master alternative arguments that counter public discourses that disadvantage them. They can discuss various arguments as they learn to articulate the response that can be provided by the course materials. There is a distance provided: one is not asking any students “opinion” or “position” on these arguments, but instead asking what options and arguments the materials present. To articulate and explain the material of the course adequately is much harder for most students than TAs anticipate.

Most students need to develop the skills of reading and talking about serious arguments. The problem of students expressing discriminatory arguments is exacerbated when the section is conceived as a social arena for conducting “therapy” or sharing “opinions.” Sections framed in this way set aside the tools that students can learn in the course to replace them with opportunities to “echo” public discourses that float free of the framework of the course. They permit students to mount arguments based on material not available to all in the class and focus on “beliefs” rather than “arguments.” Students can debate many things outside of section: the activities of the section should focus their attention on the ways that *the course material* will empower them in future debates.

5. Be precise and sensitive in your language about sensitive social issues.

Do not assume that the class shares major values and opinions. Be sensitive to all students' feelings, especially concerning issues of race, sex, class, age, national origin, and religion. Use appropriate gender and racial terms and be specific in your use of language. Emphasize grounding comments in evidence from texts, lectures, or other sources.

6. Think of your work as developing tools not attitudes.

Learning and social life are very complex. It is not the TA's job to change students' attitudes during the limited time frame of the class; rather, it is to expose students to significant arguments and help them develop ways of reading and thinking about those arguments in order to prepare for a future making decisions about complex social problems.

7. Come to section meetings on time and show that you are prepared.

Come to class with a plan in mind, having worked out a line of questioning that will enable working with students to cover the main points and themes of the week's readings. Have a list of activities to do under possible circumstances (if no one has done the reading, if they are confused by the lecture topic, etc.).

8. Use section meetings for their specific strengths.

Do what is not easily done in lecture hall. Section meetings are the arena where students can ask questions and clear up any areas of confusion. Section meetings are particularly useful for helping students to practice aloud how to explain the main arguments of the course. In effect, the section is a crucible to bring together the readings, the lectures, the goals of the course, and the students' current knowledge of those. Rather than The One Who Knows and Explains, the TA might be seen as The One Who Makes Students Articulate and Explain It. Students may feel it is efficient not to do the readings because the TA will explain them in section. Their attentiveness and our own desire to become The One Who Knows and Explains (one of the reasons one becomes a professor) makes this seductive for many TAs. A better strategy is to require different kinds of quizzes and assessments that require students to demonstrate they have attended lecture and done the readings. It is also useful to have panoply of activities that lead students to the text *during* the section meeting, even if they have not done the reading prior to class. Small groups can read and discuss a particular paragraph in order to articulate the answer to a question about it, etc.

9. Learn students' names to monitor activities and create a supportive environment.

Consider using name cards for each student and yourself. This also allows students to learn each other's names and makes good class discussion feasible.

10. Maintain an environment conducive to learning *tools* and *skills*.

It is important to define the arena of thinking that is set by the goals and material of course, so that critical thinking and intellectual dissent take place within those boundaries. Actively supervise the discussion, but avoid dominating it and be alert to ways to maximize the students' participation. Students often do not read carefully enough to understand an author's point or argument; they may state that the author claims the *opposite* of what he or she actually claims. There are ways texts are constructed known to the TA but not to the student that lead to such mistakes, and the TA can cheerfully demonstrate how the student's faulty conclusion stems from a mistaken assumption about the construction of the text. For example, many articles

start with the position that the author intends to counter. Students are often unaware of this and object to a particular argument as if the author supports it. Such an occasion can be a wonderful moment for learning how to read arguments; as the whole section can turn to read the text and discover how easily such a mistake could be made and what textual features signal that it is the wrong interpretation.

11. Provide a section syllabus if appropriate stating the section requirements and re-articulating the grading system.

The instructor of record prepares the syllabus for the course. The instructor may delegate some aspects of the syllabus to TAs for their own sections. Teaching Associates may be responsible for their syllabi under the guidance of the Faculty Mentor. Ask the instructor of record to check the syllabus in advance and provide a copy to her or him. The syllabus should clearly explain what the section grade is based on. The success of a syllabus depends on being absolutely explicit about administrative matters such as late papers, attendance, tardiness, plagiarism and other cheating, make-up exams, add/drop petitions, and so forth. It is useful to check with other TAs about their experiences to anticipate the various kinds of claims students may make about misunderstandings and the need for special treatment. This information provides a backdrop for making the policies of your syllabus precise. It is useful to think of the syllabus as a legal document that explains explicitly under what exact circumstances you will fail a student on tardiness, lack of attendance, late assignments, no assignments, etc. For example, students often “cherry-pick” which assignments they will do, assuming that an F on a low-point assignment will not damage their grade too much. If you think that all of the assignments are important, that cherry-picking reduces the effectiveness of teaching, that it presents a bad learning example to the rest of the students in a section, that it will lead to less effective class discussions, then your syllabus should indicate that students cannot *pass* the course unless they complete every assignment to your specifications. Such a syllabus clarifies that even a small assignment worth 1 point must be done satisfactorily or the student will receive an F—no matter how high the other grades. Some instructors do not worry about student lateness and attendance. While TAs may ultimately come to this position, it may be better initially to specify how many late arrivals will count as an absence and how many absences will be allowed before the TA, consulting with the instructor, may ask the student to drop the class and/or explains that an F is inevitable because a student has exceeded an absence maximum. It is useful to remember that you have responsibility for teaching students and their evaluations ask how well you have met this responsibility. Students who have not been in class learn little and often say so in their evaluations, without explaining that they were often absent from section. Your syllabus is a way of setting the stage to make it maximally possible for you to teach and students to learn.

12. Try to identify students who are experiencing difficulty early in the quarter.

Keep a watch for signs such as inadequate writing skills, poor study habits, poor preparation, and repeated absences. If appropriate, offer personal assistance, or recommend campus resources.

It is not always possible to provide students with the help they need, either because of time constraints or your own lack of training in dealing with particularly difficult educational problems. You can refer students with serious skills problems to Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS) <<http://www.clas.ucsb.edu/>>. This program offers general study skills workshops, applied workshops tailored to particular class requirements, and individualized writing instruction. The general workshops cover skills such as exam preparation, time management, note-taking, memory and concentration, textbook reading, problem-solving strategies, textbook underlining, effective speaking, rapid reading, and critical reading. The writing lab offers assistance at all stages of composition, from planning to revision. CLAS services are free and available to all registered UCSB undergraduate students. Each quarter CLAS publishes a schedule for the workshops. Students need to sign up for appointments at the writing lab and the general workshops in advance.

Students should be reminded that if a student receives advice about a writing assignment from other students, a CLAS tutor, or another TA, that student should double-check with you about the advice, since you grade the assignment.

13. Follow campus policies with regard to students in UCSB's Disabled Students Program

UCSB's Disabled Students Program (<http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>) states: "Providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities is a shared responsibility of the campus. Students with disabilities are responsible for ensuring that the Disabled Students Program (DSP) is aware of their disabilities and for providing DSP with appropriate documentation." The program creates an official notification available to instructors through an email website link. Instructors are informed that the program has determined that there is a disability and that certain alternative strategies should be made available to the student. Questions must never be asked about the student's need for accommodations. Students enrolled in DSP may require alternative modes of examination or assignments. It is the student's responsibility to inform DSP of their needs at least 10 days BEFORE a scheduled examination. Once officially notified, instructors are required to honor DSP accommodations. Students may need to take exams orally, or be provided with additional time to complete an exam, or have another person act as a scribe for them during exams.

14. Be available to students (within limits).

University policy requires that an instructor or TA maintain two office hours per week and schedule additional office hours by appointment as necessary. Consider student needs when scheduling office hours. Office hours should be conducted without interruption. Be sure to arrange your office hours in coordination with your office mates. Consider holding extended office hours during exam and paper periods. It is not necessary to be constantly and immediately available to students by email; decide your policy for the quarter and put it on your syllabus.

15. Use campus deadlines & policies to promote learning.

Be aware of campus deadlines and policies for adding courses, dropping, changing grade options, incomplete petitions, etc. This will help you advise students more effectively. A list of quarterly deadlines are available on the Registrar's website (<http://registrar.sa.ucsb.edu/calinfo.aspx>).

Adding: Discuss the issue of section crashers with the instructor of record and other TAs in order to decide on a uniform policy. If the instructor has agreed to let TA's add and drop students, you should drop students who have not attended by no later than the end of the first week. Crystal can drop students if you email her the following: name, perm number, and the enrollment number of the section that the student is currently listed in. Add codes will either be placed in your box or given to you by the instructor. You can then distribute add codes after the first week according to guidelines from your instructor, wait lists, and space in your sections. Keep informed of deadlines for adding/dropping courses by visiting the Registrar's [website](#).

Normal Drop Deadline: The deadline for dropping is in the third week of the quarter. It is useful to have short assignments or quizzes completed and graded by this early date in order to see if students are keeping up with the work and maintaining good attendance. Early in the week of the drop deadline is a useful time to clarify that you are fully prepared to fail a student who continues to be tardy or absent, turn in assignments late, do work that is not up to par, or in other ways fail to meet the requirements delineated on the syllabus. Consult with the instructor about any students who should be advised to drop the course at this time. Procedures for dropping later in the quarter require instructors to sign indicating that the student has been in good standing, which is not the case for such a student.

Withdrawal from a Course after the Deadline: The catalogue stipulates that dropping a course after the established deadline for the quarter requires students to petition for and obtain the approval of the dean of their college (Late Drop/Retroactive Drop form can be found online: <http://www.duels.ucsb.edu/advising/petitions>). Late withdrawals are only granted under exceptional circumstances, so students should continue attending class and should face the possibility that the petition may not be granted. If the petition is granted, the dean may direct the Office of the Registrar to enter a grade of W, F, NP (not passed), or U (unsatisfactory) on the student's record, or may cancel the student's enrollment in the course. The dean may also stipulate that future enrollment in the same

course be subject to approval.

Incompletes: Students are often not aware that the grade of Incomplete requires that the work to that point be *of passing quality*, though incomplete. This generally means that a student wishing to petition for an incomplete has turned in the majority of the work for the class to that point and such work must be of passing quality. It is not appropriate for someone who still has not completed adequately the majority of the work for the class. A student who simply disappears late in the course receives an F, NP, or U, not an Incomplete. An Incomplete requires the student to fill out a petition, have it signed by the instructor indicating that the work to that point is of passing quality, the reason for the request, and a date upon which the student must complete the remaining work. Students may obtain the petition at the Office of the Registrar and file it there with a fee (\$5) by the last working day of the quarter. Petitions can also be obtained [online](#).

16. Grade quickly, precisely, clearly, completely, and privately according to the agreed course standards.

Consistency: Work with the supervising instructor and fellow TAs to ensure consistency in grading. Find out early in the quarter what your professor expects for a grade distribution. Bear in mind that your appointment is 50% time. Try not to correct students' grammatical errors but rather indicate what kinds of errors they are making and send them to CLAS to get further help. **Timely Reading:** Read and grade exams and papers in a timely fashion and supply ample feedback through written comments. In usual circumstances, written work should be returned within one week. **Writing Intensive Courses:** If the course you are assisting meets a General Education "Writing Requirement," devote extra effort to help your students improve their writing skills. **Keep Grade Lists Private:** TAs should ensure that students who wish to keep their grades private can do so. Papers should be folded so that grades are not visible. Lists of grades should not be visible during office hours or on the TA's desk. **Check Class List in Mid-Quarter to Prepare for Grade Submission:** You are responsible for reporting final course grades for *every* student on your class list. Make sure that every student in your section appears on your egrades section list, and that you can account for every student on your list. **End of the Quarter:** At the end of the quarter, follow the department's and instructor's instructions on submitting grades to egrades and meet the required deadlines. **Reporting Interim and Final Grades:** *Do not assume that email is secure and private. Final grades must NOT be posted in any fashion nor given out over the phone or by email.* For final grades, students may obtain their grade online soon after grades are posted by referring to GOLD. The Registrar also officially notifies students. Students will sometimes give you a stamped envelope so you can send their blue books or papers back to them at the end of the quarter, which is acceptable.

17. Make it hard for cheating to occur and keep students accountable if it does.

Instructors of record and TAs work together to prevent cheating. The department and the campus are quite serious about enforcement of the policies regarding cheating and plagiarism. The penalties range from failure in the course to suspension from the university to expulsion. Given an opportunity, many students feel that cheating or plagiarizing is a perfectly efficient way of obtaining a satisfactory grade without the effort otherwise required. It is estimated that 10% or more of papers are copied from other students or on-line sources, so it is wise to structure assignments to avoid students' inclination to copy. The best policy is to prevent cheating from occurring. Warn students about the harsh penalties in your TA syllabus if you have one—and follow through.

TAs observing cheating on exams or quizzes or finding suspected plagiarism in papers should notify the Instructor of Record, who is responsible for deciding the specific penalty for any incident of cheating. Our departmental policy is that reporting to Judicial Affairs is required, while the penalty is decided by the instructor with the input of the TA on a case by case basis. Because students who cheat or plagiarize in one course frequently do so in other courses, university policy is to have the faculty member report the case to the Dean of Students so that the student's name will be on file for future reference. Instructors should report cases to Crystal Carlos so that the department is also aware.

18. Be prepared for distressed students and medical emergencies.

Know about emergency procedures for ambulance or police and identify the fire exits for your classroom. Consider making a short cut on your phone for campus emergency response. Students may faint, become ill, threaten others in the class, or be threatened by others outside the class. Be ready to take leadership under emergency situations.

A guide and protocols for dealing with distressed students is found at <https://studentsindistress.sa.ucsb.edu/distressed-students-response-protocol>. TAs, instructors, and Crystal Carlos can refer students with mental health concerns to one of the various services on campus. UCSB provides after-hours phone counseling at (893-4411) for anyone concerned about a distressed student during weekends, evenings or holidays.

Campus Police can be reached at 9-911 from campus phones. The Police Non-emergency number is 893-3446. The Emergency number for the Police is 911. Be prepared to identify where you are. Call 911 in case of fire or medical emergency.

In a January 2017 message from Interim Co-Deans of Undergraduate Education, College of Letters and Science:

Through academic advising in the three colleges (L&S, Engineering, and CCS), the Transfer Student Center, the ONDAS Success Center, and the Undergraduate Mentoring Program,

those involved with Undergraduate Education have seen thousands of undergraduate students this fall quarter.

These students have provided insights into strategies that help them feel more encouraged, supported, and challenged. These activities are always important -- and perhaps more so right now.

Based on advice from students, we wanted to pass along a few strategies to help students to feel more welcome. If you don't yet incorporate some or all of these strategies in your class, we hope you'll consider adapting or adopting some or all of these practices. Although they may appear small, students say that they lay the groundwork for personal, meaningful interactions with faculty - something we know is important for students' success.

- **Make a welcoming first impression**

Students appreciate learning about your journey to academia, about your background and training, how you became an expert in your area of study, and/or about your most recent research interests. Students shared that these introductions help faculty seem more human and approachable.

- **Clearly describe what “office hours” are and encourage students to visit you and/or T.As. Also include this information in your syllabus.**

Just announcing that office hours exist isn't enough, since some students (especially first year and international students) haven't experienced them before. Mention a few items that would warrant a visit to office hours/TA, including

- General advice on what you believe it will take for them to do well in the class (study tips, advice on time management, etc.)
- Learning about undergraduate research opportunities
- Strategies for discussing class challenges (ways they might ask questions about how to read the textbook, unpack exam mistakes, approach writing challenges, etc.)

- **Get to know your students, even in large classes**

Diane Ebert-May, Professor of Plant Biology, Michigan State University, has a great and easy strategy that can work in very large (i.e., up to 400 or so) students

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NoZdQv0629w>

- **Make it comfortable for students to ask questions**

Even in a large class, it's possible for you to create conditions for students to ask questions, and even for you to call on them by name. Here are a few videos with ideas:

Minute Writes

<http://serc.carleton.edu/introgeo/interactive/oneminwrite.html>

- **Think-Pair-Share**

<https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/news/small-group-activities>

- **Identify student services in your syllabus and point to them in your review of the syllabus.**

Please consider including some or all of the following contacts below – and add any departmental or university resources you feel may help students in your course and their quarter. Please remind students that these services are there for them - and that all involved are invested in students' success.

- Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS) <http://clas.sa.ucsb.edu>
- Campus Advocacy Resource and Education (CARE): <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/care/home>
- Counseling & Psychological Services <http://caps.sa.ucsb.edu>
- Disabled Students Program <http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) <http://eop.sa.ucsb.edu>
- Health and Wellness <http://wellness.sa.ucsb.edu>
- MultiCultural Center <http://mcc.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Non-Traditional Student Resource Center <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/nontrad/>
- Office of International Students and Scholars <http://oiss.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Office of the Ombuds <https://ombuds.ucsb.edu/>
- Office of Student Life (OSL) <http://osl.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Opening New Doors to Accelerating Success (ONDAS) Center
<http://www.ondas.ucsb.edu/home>
- Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Diversity: <https://rcsgd.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Transfer Student Center (TSC) <http://transfercenter.ucsb.edu>
- UCSB Alcohol and Drug Program: <https://alcohol.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- UCSB Social Work Services: <http://studenthealth.sa.ucsb.edu/behavioral-health/social-work>
- UCSB Student Health Services: <http://studenthealth.sa.ucsb.edu/>
- Undergraduate Mentorship Program
<https://www.alumni.ucsb.edu/connections/professional-connections/mentee#reister> for the program
- Undocumented Student Services <http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/dreamscholars/home>
- Veterans' Resource Center: <http://www.sa.ucsb.edu/veterans/home>
Women's Center <http://wgse.sa.ucsb.edu/WomensCenter/home>

G. TA's Responsibilities to Self and Fellow TAs

1. Work on keeping academic and research activities and teaching activities in balance.

While appointment as a TA is usually half-time, there is something compelling about the presence and needs of students in sections that may become absorbing and threaten to eclipse one's own graduate studies. This is especially true in the first quarters of teaching. If you feel that you are spending too much time, go to the instructor of record or the Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, or Director of the

Doctoral Emphasis and discuss priorities and ways of completing work efficiently. Developing successful ways to balance research and teaching is an ongoing task for professors.

2. Confer regularly with fellow TA's.

Talking about teaching and observing others teach are important ways to learn. While being observed may initially make one self-conscious, the benefits of discussing with other TAs what went on in the classroom is immeasurable. You are highly encouraged to arrange to visit each other's sections, to get ideas and to see how the same material might be handled differently.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS <#ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS>

Thanks to the UCSB Department of History for allowing us to build on the base of their terrific Handbook of 2006-07.

© 2017 The Regents of the University of California, All Rights Reserved.

• UCSB Homepage <<http://www.ucsb.edu/>> • Sitemap </sitemap.php>