

## **Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) Hiring and Faculty Mentorship of GTAs**

(Approved by UPACC, June 18, 2013)

(Approved at Department Meeting on June 20, 2013)

The EDST Teacher Education Course Coordinator/Faculty Mentor (hereafter, "the faculty mentor"), with support and advice from the Undergraduate Program Advisor and members of UPACC, will provide mentorship to GTAs assisting with EDST 401, EDST 402, EDST 403, and EDST 404. The faculty mentor/s will have general knowledge of the courses and will key their mentorship off the "master" course outlines and approved reading lists developed from the previous academic year. The course coordinator/faculty mentor, in her or his role as faculty mentor of the GTAs, will do the following:

- Contact teacher candidates by email or in person, before or within the first week of classes, to explain the faculty mentor's role as the faculty member ultimately responsible for all GTA- associated sections of the course and to invite them to raise issues or answer questions that cannot be resolved with the GTA
- Inform GTAs of the support offered to those new to teaching in the Teacher Education Program that is provided by the Teacher Education Office
- Orient them to the extensive online and regularly updated resources; each course has a site with activities and lesson plans, examples of instructor syllabuses, helpful hints, videos of professional development workshops, further readings, discussion boards, etc.
- Arrange periodic meetings, either as a group or one-on-one as needed, including:
  - Orientation (e.g., helpful hints, content, assignments, readings, activities)
  - Professional development, as needs arise
  - End of term review (e.g., to discuss what went well, what might be improved, etc.)
- Review and approve the course syllabus tailored to each section (which will be based on the master syllabus provided)
- Ensure the proper selection of course materials
- Support the GTAs with issues arising (e.g., attend classes on request; be the first line of contact in grade or attendance disputes and cases of suspected plagiarism; help with conflict resolution; co-write interim reports)
- Serve as liaison with the Teacher Education Office, as required
- Consult on issues related to assignments, assessment, and marking; review the work of, and feedback provided to, any teacher candidate in danger of failing the course (such students should have received an interim report, filed with the TEO)
- Approve and oversee submission of final marks.

GTAs, as part of their responsibilities, will be required to attend all meetings and professional development workshops arranged by the faculty mentor. Such face-to-face meetings will focus on enhancing the GTAs' content knowledge as well as brainstorming with them ideas of how to teach the course most effectively.

While those serving as course coordinators/faculty mentors undertake a formal mentorship role and are ultimately responsible for the courses, this policy is not meant to take away from the understanding that all tenure-track faculty members are expected to engage in mentorship of their graduate students, including mentorship of teaching. For example, the *Faculty Framework for Workload Negotiations and Decisions* (revised January 2007) states: "As university teaching experience is often a necessary attribute sought by most future academic employers and it is desirable for our graduates to have well-developed pedagogical skills[,] tenure track and tenured faculty will, at times, be expected to serve as mentors to Teaching Assistants in this regard" (p. 4).<sup>1</sup>

### **Hiring Sequence for GTAs in the Revised Teacher Education Program (2012-present):**

In cases where three or more sections of either EDST 403 (1 credit) or EDST 404 (1 credit) are pooled into a large lecture format, the Associate Dean of Teacher Education may authorize the hiring of a GTA (1 credit or 64 hours) to assist the instructor. Full-time Ph.D. candidates who are making satisfactory progress toward degree completion would be eligible to apply. Preference will be given to those with qualifications relevant to the position available, including academic background and K-12 teaching experience.

Prior to the start of term, the Instructor and GTA would meet to discuss the work and both sign the *TA-Instructor Agreement on Duties and Time Allocation* document.

A performance evaluation will be prepared. In accordance with the collective agreement between UBC and CUPE 2278 (teaching assistants component), Article 22.02(a), this evaluation "shall be dated and a copy provided to the employee within five (5) working days. A copy will be placed on the employee's file." If the GTA's performance is satisfactory, then s/he will be eligible to apply for the 3-credit GTA positions (see next paragraph). If the first performance evaluation is unsatisfactory, the GTA will be eligible for re-appointment for the 1-credit GTA position.

GTAs with a satisfactory written performance evaluation assisting with a particular EDST 403 or EDST 404 course will then be eligible to apply for a three-credit course; typically, this will be the linked combination of EDST 402 (2 credits) and EDST 401 (1 credit). GTAs assisting with three-credit courses are not instructors in their own right; they are working with support from the course coordinator/faculty mentor and, indeed, the informal mentorship of their research supervisor (see description of this mentorship model above).

After a period of formal mentorship, it is possible for doctoral candidates to teach courses independently. To do this, they must apply as Sessional Lecturers and will need to compete with other Sessional Lecturers for these positions.

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[http://educ.ubc.ca/sites/educ.ubc.ca/files/FoE\\_Workload%20Negotiations%20%26%20Decisions.pdf](http://educ.ubc.ca/sites/educ.ubc.ca/files/FoE_Workload%20Negotiations%20%26%20Decisions.pdf)