Teaching Assistants Evaluation Policy

This document states departmental policy for uses of TA evaluations, mechanisms for evaluating TA performance, and the process of dealing with problems arising in the TAing situation. See the Guidelines for Managing Teaching Assistantships document for general information about TA and instructor responsibilities.

1 Uses of Evaluations

Formal TA evaluations are used to:

- help select nominations for TA performance awards
- help identify excellent TAs as mentors and coaches for new TAs
- help identify TAs whose performance needs to improve and what kinds of remedial actions may be appropriate
- provide written documentation to support the evaluation of unsatisfactory performance

2 Sources of Evaluation

The quality of a TA’s performance is judged based on the TA’s ability to fulfill the duties defined in Guidelines for Managing Teaching Assistantships.

TAs will be formally evaluated by:

- Student Evaluations: Students are requested to complete a TA evaluation form for each of their TAs near the end of each term.
- Instructor Evaluations: Instructors will submit a performance report for each of his or her TAs at the end of each term.
- Problem Reports: Instructors and the TA will jointly fill out TA/Instructor Problem Reports as needed throughout the term. If problems arise that require the attention of the Associate Head – Graduate Affairs, these forms must be submitted to the Associate Head – Graduate Affairs. An instructor uses this form to identify an issue with a TA and conversely a TA can identify as issue with an instructor.

Informal evaluations will be sought as necessary. This may include any combination of:

- soliciting detailed comments from instructors and/or TAs
- asking the TA’s students for comments on performance
- assigning a selected evaluator to observe the TA and report on performance

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1 In all cases of reference to “Associate Chair – Graduate Affairs” this role may be delegated to another depending upon the Department’s organizational structure. Currently this is delegated to the Assistant Graduate Chair – Existing Students.
3  Dealing with Unsatisfactory Performance

In the event that an instructor feels a TA is not performing his or her duties (see *Guidelines for Managing Teaching Assistantships*) the instructor must first discuss the issue with the TA and they should together fill out a *TA/Instructor Problem Report*. If the issue remains unresolved, the instructor may request the intervention of the Associate Chair – Graduate Affairs by providing the problem report(s) documenting the issue and attempted resolutions.

4  Consequences of Unsatisfactory Performance

The Associate Head – Graduate Affairs will deal with unsatisfactory TA performance either due to poor summary evaluations or due to issues raised through Problem Reports and elevated by the Associate Head – Graduate Affairs during the term. The Associate Head – Graduate Affairs will discuss the issue with the TA and record the issue in the TA’s record. In addition, the Associate Head – Graduate Affairs may deal with the problem in one or more of the following ways:

- Replacing TA duties with a requirement to successfully complete specified training chosen to improve teaching and communication skills. For example:
  - taking English courses
  - taking teaching courses or seminars
  - apprenticing as a TA
  - working with a mentor
- Reassignment of the TA to another course
- Reassignment of the TA to other duties
- Suspension of TAs duties and termination of remuneration

The TA will normally be given a second chance at a further term of TA duties, but in the event the TA’s performance is again unsatisfactory, TA duties and TA remuneration will be revoked.