



MEMORANDUM
August 26, 2010

TO: Chairs and Directors

FROM: Chula King, Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs *Chula King*

Richard Podemski, Dean, Graduate School *RP*

Jane Halonen, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences *JH*

Ed Ranelli, Dean, College of Business *ER*

Pam Northrup, Dean, College of Professional Studies *PN*

SUBJECT: GTAs as Instructors of Record

Please find attached a statement regarding the use of Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) as Instructors of Record. Given the growth of many graduate programs and the increased use of GTAs, it is important to clarify issues related to the use of GTAs in the classroom. This statement reflects agreement among the Provost, the Dean of the Graduate School, and the Academic Deans concerning best practices related to GTAs in the classroom.

Attachment

Graduate Teaching Assistants as Instructors of Record

Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) play an important role as instructors of record in several academic departments. The following guidelines are intended to aid department chairs in determining when it is appropriate to assign GTAs as instructors of record. In all cases where questions arise concerning GTA qualifications, the chair should consult with the dean's office.

While this statement addresses GTAs assigned as instructors of record, departments must provide appropriate training, supervision, and evaluation of all GTAs whether they are instructors of record, lab monitors, or faculty assistants.

The statement below is an excerpt from the Faculty Handbook:

The following policy statement identifies the minimum academic preparation requirements and required documentation for personnel who teach University of West Florida credit courses and noncredit degree program components. The policy statement was endorsed by the Faculty Senate in June 2003 and pertains to all instructional personnel including, but not limited to, regular line full- and part-time faculty, visiting faculty, adjuncts, and nonacademic staff assigned to occasional teaching. *The policy also identifies the minimum academic preparation for graduate teaching assistants.*

***Graduate Teaching Assistants:* Graduate teaching assistants must hold a bachelor's degree and have successfully completed at least 18 graduate semester hour credits in the teaching field. Graduate teaching assistants may not teach graduate courses unless they hold the terminal or a highly-related degree in the teaching field.**

In order to answer questions arising with the increased use of GTAs, the Provost, Academic Deans, and Dean of the Graduate School offer these clarifications regarding the use of GTAs.

- Prior to being designated an instructor of record, a GTA must have successfully completed at least 18 graduate semester hour credits in the teaching field.
- In the case of lecture courses, GTAs who do not hold a master's degree will be assigned as instructors of record to lower-level, and in most cases, to freshman-level courses.
- In the case of laboratory sections, GTAs who do not hold a master's degree will be assigned as instructors of record for lower-level, and in most cases, to freshman-level courses. In cases where conditions dictate the need to assign a GTA who does not hold a master's degree to an upper-level laboratory course, the following stipulations apply:
 - the college dean or designee must be informed prior to the assignment
 - the laboratory section must be associated with a lecture course that is taught by a faculty member who meets the University's faculty credentials requirements
 - the faculty member must provide direct supervision of the GTA
 - the syllabus for the laboratory section must include information about the related lecture course and include contact information for the faculty member teaching the lecture course.
- In the case of supervision of undergraduate practica and internships, which tend to be junior- and senior-level courses, it is expected that the GTA hold the master's degree in the field related to the practicum or internship, or hold a master's degree with at least 18 graduate semester hour credits in the teaching field related to the practicum or internship, and meet any other qualifications for supervision of practica and internships specified by the profession.