

Appendix IX. Policy on Teaching Assistantships

Graduate students in EES often spend one or more semesters as a Teaching Assistant (hereafter, TA). To remain in good standing as a TA, the faculty have set forth the following expectations:

1. The TA must do their best to help students achieve the learning outcomes of the course, as articulated in the syllabus. TAs are an extension of the faculty, and there is an expectation of professionalism and good conduct in the role. TAs should expect to work with course instructors to help deliver the curriculum.
2. TAs must be sensitive to the differences in student needs and learning styles. TAs are expected to adhere to the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion set forth by the university.
3. TAs must complete the mandatory training and orientation sessions arranged by both the Graduate School and the Department. These are announced by email.
4. TAs must utilize and regularly check their @uky.edu email accounts. Faculty will use this means of communication most often, and they rely upon students for prompt (same day) responses.
5. TAs must be present/accountable on a weekly basis during the course meeting times, to include dead week and finals week.
6. Each TA will dedicate a maximum of 20 hours per week towards duties.
 - a. If the TA is tasked with excessive work such that 20 hours per week is exceeded, the first line of reporting is to the course instructor.
 - b. If the issue is not corrected, the second point of contact is the DGS.
7. TA duties may (and often do) vary widely from course to course, given that EES provides both UKCore and lab courses for geological sciences majors. This should be expected. Typical TA duties may include, but are not limited to: (a) holding office hours to address student questions/concerns; (b) grading homework, labs, quizzes or exams; (c) providing proctoring during exams and/or classroom control during lectures; (d) leading labs or recitation sections; (e) responding to student questions via email, (f) serving as a substitute lecturer in the event of a faculty absence or emergency, (g) providing updates to the course website or Canvas page, and (h) participating in course field trips/excursions.
8. TAs must attend the two mentoring sessions led by the head TA each semester.

TAs will be evaluated each semester through several mechanisms, including teacher course evaluations (TCEs), in-class observations by the DGS and/or head TA, supervisor evaluations (e.g., the instructor of record), and self-reflections (e.g., end of semester surveys). Negative evaluations require consultation with the DGS and may result in loss of funding (i.e., loss of TA). In rare instances where this occurs, students will be notified by March 1. TAs will receive feedback from evaluations by email at least once per semester.

Appendix X. Policy on Research Assistantships

In some cases, EES faculty advisors may win awards that provide funding for student support (e.g., from NSF, USGS, NASA, ACS, etc). Student support extended through research grant/contract awards are known as research assistantships (RAs). These are increasingly rare, and as such should be considered a privilege. It is important note that in some instances, RA assignments will overlap with student thesis or dissertation objectives, but this is not always the case and therefore it should not be an expectation. RA opportunities will be articulated in the offer letter. Expectations for RAs include:

1. 20 hours/week spent on research tasks and assignments directed by the faculty sponsor. These tasks are likely to be very diverse, and could include literature review, computation, data analysis, fieldwork, fieldwork logistics, report writing, figure making, manuscript development, public presentations, networking, mentoring/training of undergraduates, travel, laboratory or other analytical work, etc.
 - a. If the RA is tasked with excessive work such that 20 hours/week is exceeded, the first line of reporting is to the faculty sponsor.
 - b. If the issue is not corrected following consultation with the faculty sponsor, the second point of contact is the DGS.
2. RAs must utilize and regularly check their @uky.edu email accounts. Faculty sponsors will use this means of communication most often, and they rely upon students for prompt (same day) responses.
3. RAs must be present/accountable on a weekly basis, to include dead week and finals week, unless their work can be accomplished remotely. Location of work will be determined by the faculty sponsor and discussed at the start of the semester (and can be modified during the semester, in consultation with the faculty sponsor).
4. RAs are required to attend mandatory department orientations, training, and mentoring. These will be announced by email. Similarly, all RAs must complete UK-level training as required, including the responsible conduct of research online modules.

RAs will be evaluated each semester through several mechanisms, including faculty sponsor evaluations, observations by the DGS and/or department chair, and self-reflections (e.g., end of semester surveys). Negative evaluations require consultation with the DGS and may result in loss of funding. In rare instances where this occurs, students will be notified by March 15. RAs will be provided feedback in writing of their performance at least once per semester.

Appendix XI. Policy on Sufficient Progress and “Good Standing”

EES faculty have set forth and agreed upon the standards listed below, which all graduate students in the program should attempt to *meet in good faith*. Meeting the list of

expectations below shall be considered evidence of “Good Standing”. As a general rule, the faculty are sympathetic to major life events (*force majeure*) that could cause setbacks or delays in sufficient scholarly progress. Such events might include a death in the family, documented major illness/injury, documented traumas, issues with child or elder care, natural disasters, etc. Graduate students will be evaluated annually at the graduate committee meeting (first Wednesday of December), and the written outcomes of those meetings will be shared with individual students as a formal accounting of progress from the DGS by email early in the spring semester.

- Promote a strong community of civility and respect within EES at all times.
- Attend to all required coursework, with a minimum grade point average of 3.0/4.0.
- Engage in all duties associated with the role of TA or RA, when on departmental support.
- Attend Rast-Holbrook seminar series (1 unexcused absence/semester allowed).
- Participate in all orientation sessions, mentor meetings, and training set forth by the DGS, graduate committee, and/or major advisor. Timely responses (1-3 business days) to surveys and requests for information are expected.
- Schedule and attend annual committee meeting prior to the Thanksgiving Break each fall semester.
- Make sufficient progress on thesis or dissertation research, in evidence by written annual progress documentation, jointly signed by student and committee. If enrolled in 748 (MS) or 767 (PhD), students will provide a written report to document progress (see below).
- Maintain your assigned workspace in Slone Building in good order, as judged by your faculty supervisor.

Grades of “S” for thesis or dissertation work completed for EES 767 or 748 will be awarded if tangible evidence (manuscript text, figures, data tables, computer codes, etc.) of research progress can be produced, in the judgement of the major faculty advisor.

- Any student registered for 767 or 748 will produce a **one paragraph summary** and bullet list of work accomplished towards the dissertation/thesis to the primary advisor and the DGS by email before the conclusion of finals week. This must be done for each semester when registered for 767 or 748.
 - Any disputes related to evidence of progress will be brought to the graduate committee.
- Two consecutive semesters of unsatisfactory progress in 767 or 748 will result in loss of funding and dismissal from the EES graduate program.

Certain privileges notionally available to students (travel funding, research funding, block funding) in good standing can be withheld or denied at the discretion of the graduate committee if evidence of insufficient progress exists; these are neither entitlements nor

benefits. Similarly, while TA/RA funding is guaranteed for plan A M.S. students for four semesters and Ph.D. students for eight semesters, **funding decisions are made on the condition of satisfactory progress as determined by the graduate committee, and are subject to annual review.** This language is clearly articulated in offer letters, which constitute a contractual obligation between the department and the student. If good standing is not achieved, the student will be placed on probation and given an opportunity to improve (1 semester). Continued evidence of insufficient progress will result in dismissal from the program.