All Graduate Students
School of Social Sciences

The following enrollment policy, effective Fall 2016, applies to all Social Sciences Teaching Assistants, including non-social sciences TAs appointed to Social Sciences courses.

As noted in the current edition of the UCI Graduate Student handbook, experience as a Teaching Assistant is considered an important component of the graduate educational experience. Serving as a TA has an important academic training component in which students learn to effectively communicate ideas to others, becoming better lecturers, and gain training as future faculty and lecturers. In recognition of this, in the School of Social Sciences, Soc Sci 399 University Teaching is a requirement for all TAs during every appointment quarter.

In addition to the experiential elements of teaching, there are two other significant advantages of enrollment in 399, both of which this policy addresses:

1) evaluation: TAs will be evaluated by the course instructor to whom they are assigned, based on interpersonal and pedagogical performance standards, expectations set out in the TA job description, and adherence to University policies and procedures, and federal and state law pertaining to student-teacher interaction. Evaluation, and the assignment of an evaluation grade requires enrollment in University Teaching.

2) tracking: TAs will be able to use their transcript, on which the University Teaching enrollment will appear, to monitor the number of TA quarters completed. In this way, TA experience will be reflected as an integral part of the doctoral student’s academic program, in progression towards the PhD.

Each TA’s performance evaluation will be a letter grade: either A, B or C, based on the recommendation of the course instructor to whose course the TA is assigned. The assigned grade each quarter will reflect the TA’s performance over the course of the 11-week term. The grade will take into account all aspects of the TA’s work including the extent to which expectations held by the course instructor, and the elements of the job description prepared for the course are met. Included in the evaluation grade are the TA’s interpersonal skills relative to other TAs assigned to the same course, the course instructor and the undergraduate students enrolled in the course.

University Teaching grades will be used in evaluating the TA’s academic standing in the School at the end of each quarter and year. An A grade will indicate good, solid performance in all aspects of the assignment that quarter. A B grade will indicate acceptable performance, but with area(s) of concern. A C grade will indicate unsatisfactory performance, with deficiencies that need to be rectified before the TA can return to the classroom. When a B or C grade is assigned, the TA will receive a written description of the issues observed that contributed to the grade that quarter. Unsatisfactory teaching performance, as measured by a C grade, will mean that 1) the student is ineligible for TA support in the following quarter, and 2) the student’s forward financial support from the School is in jeopardy, and subject to immediate termination.

Social Sciences TAs are strongly encouraged to participate in on-campus instructional development activities (TA workshops), as is long-standing tradition in the School. However, this policy does not require that additional work be completed beyond that required by the course instructor and set out in the TA job description each quarter.

Enrollment in Soc Sci 399 may be used to meet the minimum 12-unit requirement for full-time PhD status; or, may be in addition to 12 or more units of enrollment in course work or research.

Office of the Dean
School of Social Sciences