

Hiring Guidelines for Teaching Associates & Student Assistants

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Hiring Guidelines for Teaching Associates & Student Assistants

Consistent with the mission of the English Department, College, and University, we recognize that teaching is an important component of graduate study and of professionalizing in the field of English Studies. Students will pursue proper teaching training and teach certain courses based on their qualifications and the Department's needs. The Mission Statement of our MA Program states, "Through internships and seminars in pedagogy, our Teaching Associateship Program provides teacher training and helps our students develop their teaching philosophies and hone their professional skills."

The English Department offers a variety of teaching and employment opportunities for students. As required by university policies on student employment, all available positions will be posted through the Student Employment Office, on University job listings, and online.

This document contains information relating to application procedures, job qualifications, and responsibilities for Teaching Associates and Student Assistants, as well as related University policies. It is divided into the following sections:

<u>Section</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Page</u>
1.0	Teaching Associates	3
2.0	Instructional Student Assistants: English 30 Program Workshop Leaders	8
3.0	Other Student Assistants: ESL Resource Center Tutor	10
4.0	Related University Policies	12

1.0 Teaching Associateships

Nature of the Program

The English Department provides supervised teaching opportunities for currently enrolled CSU, Chico, graduate students in its lower-division courses. Typically, positions are available to teach Academic Writing (ENGL 130), Beginning Creative Writing (ENGL 220), Introduction to Literature (ENGL 240), World Literature (ENGL 258), Great Books (ENGL 260), and English as Foreign Language (EFLN 170). Positions in other courses may be considered by the Graduate Committee and the Department Chair if the need arises. The number of available positions varies from semester to semester.

Each Teaching Associateship equals a 10-hour workload. Teaching associates normally teach one course per semester. Teaching appointments will go to as many qualified students as possible. Teaching associates must carry at least **six (6) units** of graduate level course work while they teach.

The Teaching Associateship Program is distinct from the part-time pool. Teaching associates are not classified as part-time faculty and do not receive annual contracts. Teaching associates accrue sick leave based upon their .20 appointment, and they contribute to the PERS fund. During the exit interview, after completing their degree, Teaching Associates may request a refund of their PERS contributions.

Eligibility

1. Acceptance as a graduate student at CSU, Chico.
2. Successful completion of at least one semester of full-time enrollment as a graduate student in English or Teaching International Languages and Culture with grades of B or better in all course work and no outstanding incompletes.
3. Students have fulfilled requirements for Classified Status:
 - a. For Teaching Associateships in Literature or Creative Writing: classified status in the English MA program.
 - b. For Teaching Associateships in Academic Writing: classified status in the English MA program, the TILC program, or other relevant CSUC MA programs.
 - c. For Teaching Associateships in EFL: classified status in the English MA program or Teaching International Languages and Culture program.
4. See the description of individual Associateships, below, for additional eligibility requirements.

Application

Submit a preliminary application form, available in the English Department, to establish eligibility. Preliminary applications are typically due in early November for applicants for spring teaching, and early April for applicants for fall teaching (exact deadlines will vary; check with the English Department main office).

Full applications, which are due shortly after preliminary applications, include:

- a letter of application,
- a detailed syllabus, including a complete course calendar/schedule, and a rationale (i.e, a brief explanation of the scope and focus of the course) for the course you wish to teach, and
- a letter of recommendation from a faculty advisor (typically, your English 689T mentor or instructor for Engl 634).
- For TAs in EFLN: a second letter from an observer of the applicant's EFLN teaching or foreign language tutoring is also required.

Please note that students who have taught in previous semesters are required to submit a preliminary application every time they seek re-appointment as a Teaching Associate. Returning TAs requesting re-assignment to a class they have previously taught do not need to file additional paperwork. However, returning TAs who are applying to teach a “new” class (i.e., one they have not yet taught) are required to submit a full application for that class.

Interview and Selection

Teaching Associates are selected by a Selection and Review Committee consisting, typically, of the English Department's Graduate Coordinator, the applicant's 470, 689T, or 634 mentor/instructor, the Program Coordinator for the desired course, and the English Department Chair. The Graduate Coordinator will review the candidate's standing in the graduate program overall. The Committee then reviews the eligible candidate's performance in English 689T or English 634 and the submitted application materials, and interviews the candidate. Only qualified, eligible graduate students will be invited to interview (see “Eligibility,” above).

During the interview, the student will be asked a range of questions related to his or her preparation for teaching. Here are some common discussion topics and typical questions:

- Discuss the course syllabus and writing assignments, including a rationale for selecting particular themes, texts, and assignments.
- Discuss an assigned text and describe how you plan to teach that text, including relevant class activities.
- Discuss how to respond to and/or evaluate student writing.
- Discuss your strengths or weaknesses as a teacher.
- During your internship, what did you learn about working with students that you will carry forward into your own class?

After each candidate is interviewed, the Interview Committee will rank each candidate and make recommendations to the Department Chair. The Chair has final responsibility for each selection. Criteria for selection include the following:

- Applicant's success and continued progress in the graduate program;
- Applicant's successful internship experience;
- Coherence, creativeness, and applicability of the detailed syllabus and course calendar/schedule;
- Applicant's ability to articulate an approach to teaching and the syllabus' rationale;
- Previous teaching and/or internship experience;
- Budget and availability of sections.

Reappointment to Teaching Associateships

Recommendation on whether the Associateship should be continued will be based on course availability, the TA's continued progress toward degree, and supervisor evaluations. Teaching Associateships will be made available every semester (subject to budget and administrative approval). Those students who have reached candidate status can be considered for Teaching Associateships for a third and fourth semester of teaching. This normally means having achieved candidate status by the third semester of teaching. On rare occasions students may be allowed to teach two sections of a course during a third semester. When students are ranked and sections awarded, preference will be given to those students who are making good progress but have not yet completed the oral thesis defense. Also, students applying for a second semester of teaching will be given precedence over those applying for a third or fourth semester. The Department Chair has the final responsibility for reappointment.

Final Project

All Teaching Associates, regardless of area, are encouraged to assemble a teaching portfolio at the end of their TA experience. In addition to a course syllabus, a teaching portfolio typically contains the following:

- A one- to two-page curriculum vitae;
- A one-page statement of teaching philosophy; and
- Detailed descriptions of all major writing assignments.

Please consult with your faculty advisors to discuss other elements you might decide to include (e.g., sample student writing with comments, descriptions of classroom activities, copies of Student Evaluations of Teaching). A teaching portfolio may prove valuable when applying to teach at junior colleges, or when applying to doctoral programs, MFA programs, and so forth.

Supervision

Supervision of T.A.s is handled by the Program Coordinator or designated course supervisor(s) in each area of concentration (literature, language and literacy, and creative writing). Students can expect the Coordinator or designated course supervisor to perform some or all of the following:

1. Conduct periodic meetings to review course plans, discuss teaching practices, and propose improvements in the conduct of the course.
2. Visit class (at least once) to make classroom observation.
3. Provide a written evaluation of the Teaching Associate's teaching performance for the Chair, and Graduate Coordinator, and a copy for the Teaching Associate.

1.1 Teaching Associateships in Literature

Students selected as a Teaching Associate in Literature typically teach English 240 (Introduction to Literature), English 258 (World Literature), or English 260 (Great Books). Interested students should check section 1.0, above, to determine whether they have met all departmental eligibility requirements.

Additional Eligibility Requirement

Satisfactory completion of English 689T in a literature course (the internship in English 251, 252, 253, 254, 260, or 464 is available with the instructor's consent only).

1.2 Teaching Associateships in Academic Writing

Students selected as a Teaching Associate in Academic Writing teach English 130 (Academic Writing). Interested students should check section 1.0, above, to determine whether they have met all departmental eligibility requirements.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

1. Satisfactory completion of an advanced course in Rhetoric (English 335 or equivalent).
2. Successful completion of English 634.
3. Completion of English 431 strongly encouraged.

1.3 Teaching Associateships in Creative Writing

Students selected as a Teaching Associate in Creative Writing teach English 220 (Beginning Creative Writing). Interested students should check section 1.0, above, to determine whether they have met all departmental eligibility requirements.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

1. Creative writing minor or equivalent coursework.

2. Satisfactory completion of English 689T in English 220. (Internships in other creative writing courses will be arranged at the discretion of the creative writing faculty).

1.4 Teaching Associateships in ESL/EFL

Students selected as a Teaching Associate in EFL teach EFLN170 (English as a Foreign Language). Interested students should check section 1.0, above, to determine whether they have met all departmental eligibility requirements.

Additional Eligibility Requirements

1. Satisfactory completion of an English grammar course, English 375 or 372, or demonstrated equivalence.
2. Satisfactory completion of English 470 or 689T or demonstrated equivalence.
3. Satisfactory completion of English 431 or equivalence strongly encouraged.
4. A TESOL certificate strongly encouraged.
5. Students who have completed, or are working toward, the Certificate in Teaching College-Level Writing are strongly encouraged.

Additional Selection Considerations

In addition to the criteria listed above, section 1.0, selection for appointment to teach ELFN170 includes the following:

- Candidate's performance in 431, 470 or 634.
- Evidence of successful tutoring experience in 470, the ESL Resource Center, 689T, or 431.
- Demonstrated success and experience in working with non-native speakers of English abroad or in the U.S.
- All other factors being equal, students seeking an MA in English will be given preference.

2.0 Instructional Student Assistants: English 30 Workshop Leaders

Application Process

Interested undergraduate students can apply to work as English 30 Workshop Leaders. The call for applications will be posted every semester. Applications are collected at the end of each fall and spring semester.

First, interested students must submit an “Instructional Student Assistant Application” to the Student Employment Office of California State University, Chico. Second, students should submit to the Department of English the following:

1. A letter of intent;
2. A current resume;
3. An unofficial copy of your university transcript.

Selection process

The selection process starts immediately after the deadline for application. The program coordinators, committees, and/or instructors of the English 431 class that hire students for various positions will screen all applications and make recommendations to the Department Chair. The Chair has the ultimate authority to approve the hiring of all student employees. During the selection process, careful consideration will be given to the student’s training, experience, and academic standing before the final appointment is made. Any necessary changes or additions of appointment that occur after the semester starts will follow the same selection process.

The names of undergraduate student employees will be submitted to Chico State’s Student Employment Office, which will check and verify their status on campus. Student employees must be enrolled and maintain a good standing throughout the semester. Failure to do so will result in the termination of their appointment. Usually, no appointment will be granted to any student who has reached his/her fifth year in the program.

2.1 English 30 Program Workshop Leaders

Duties: Workshop leaders facilitate English 30 writing workshops. In addition to meeting their workshop groups twice a week, they are required to participate in training and supervision activities: a pre-semester training workshop, weekly staff meetings, and monthly workshops. Workshop leaders are to keep accurate attendance records and to notify the English 30 Coordinator of any problems they are having with their students.

Hours/Pay: Workshop leaders are classified as “Instructional Student Assistants” and are paid at that rate.

Required Qualifications: Workshop Leaders need to be enrolled in at least six units of coursework, and must have completed English 431 with a “B” or better. Their English 431 instructor must also recommend them for employment. Workshop leaders can be graduate or undergraduate students and can be hired for one or two workshops.

Selection: In hiring, we try to balance experienced and inexperienced applicants. Generally, priority is given to graduate students first, then new English 431 students, then applicants who have had previous success facilitating English 30 workshops. All decisions depend upon the availability of English 30 workshops and success of the workshop leader as determined by class visitation reports.

Notification of Appointment: Applications are collected at the end of fall and spring semester. Appointment is announced in August for the fall and December for the spring.

3.0 Other Student Assistants: ESL Resource Center Tutor

Application Process

Undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in working as an ESL Resource Center Tutor should submit a preliminary application form, available in the Department of English, to establish eligibility. Preliminary applications are typically due in early November for applicants for spring teaching, and early April for applicants for fall teaching (exact deadlines will vary; check with the English Department main office). Full applications, which are due shortly after preliminary applications, include:

1. A letter of intent, a current resume, and a note of support from a faculty member.
2. An unofficial copy of your university transcript.
3. Proof of current enrollment in Chico State's courses.
4. Proof of course work or experience related to the position you are applying for.
5. Graduate students should consult the Graduate Coordinator about their eligibility before submitting their application.

Selection process

The selection process starts immediately after the deadline for application. The program coordinators, committees, and/or instructors of the English 431 class that hire students for this position will screen all applications and make recommendations to the Department Chair. The Chair has the ultimate authority to approve the hiring of all student employees. During the selection process, careful consideration will be given to the student's training, experience, and academic standing before the final appointment is made. Any necessary changes or additions of appointment that occur after the semester starts will follow the same selection process.

The names of undergraduate and graduate student employees will be submitted to Chico State's Student Employment Office, which will check and verify their status on campus. Student employees must be enrolled and maintain a good standing throughout the semester. Failure to do so will result in the termination of their appointment. In addition, graduate students must be in compliance with the Department standards for Graduate Students. Usually, no appointment will be granted to any student who has reached his/her fifth year in the program.

3.1 ESL Resource Center Tutor

Duties: Both graduate and undergraduate students are eligible to apply. The primary duty is tutoring non-native English-speaking students in their spoken and written English. Tutors will also recommend and check out materials to students seeking to improve their English, and assist with record-keeping for the Center.

Required qualifications: Graduate students must have a GPA of at least 3.0; undergraduates 2.67. Graduate students must be enrolled in at least 3 hours of coursework; undergraduates must be enrolled in at least 6 hours of coursework.

Preferred qualifications:

- Completion of English 372, 375, 431, and 470, or the equivalents.
- Experience in teaching and tutoring English as a Second language.
- Students enrolled in the TESOL Certificate Program in the English Department degree program or the Teaching International Languages and Cultures MA program.
- Students who have completed, or are working toward, the Certificate in Teaching Writing in College.

4.0 Related University policies

4.1 Weekly Working Hours

Students may take a combination of appointments in a semester, but the total number of hours of their weekly working schedule cannot exceed the 20-hour limit imposed by the University. Students who seek more than 20 hours need to petition the Student Employment Office in writing before their request can be considered. For further details, contact the Chico State Student Employment Office.

4.2 Unit Load Requirements (Student Assistant)

Undergraduate students must be enrolled in 6 units minimum per semester at the University. Graduate students must be enrolled in 3 graduate units (approved 400/500/600-level course work) minimum per semester at the University. Graduate students who are working on their thesis and are in compliance with the Continuous Enrollment policy may be eligible for Student Assistant employment for one semester beyond their last period of enrollment.

4.3 Unit Load Requirements (Work-Study)

Undergraduates must be enrolled in 12 units minimum per semester (unless other arrangements have been made between the student and the Financial Aid Office). Graduates must be enrolled in an approved program of graduate study (Master's Program or Credential Program) and 8 graduate level units of approved 400/500/600-level course work. Graduates may be eligible for work-study as less than full-time students if other arrangements are made with the Financial Aid Office.