

Appointment and Reappointment Guidelines for Graduate Employees

Appointment and reappointment procedures for all graduate student employees within the Department of Economics will be guided by Article 23 of the Agreement Between the Graduate Employee Organization (Local 2322/UAW) and the University of Massachusetts at Amherst in force from July 1, 2001 until June 30, 2004. Revisions of these guidelines will be made as needed to remain in conformity with contractual agreements.

1. Teaching Assistants (TAs)

The following is intended to cover graduate student teaching assistantships within the Department of Economics. With its adoption, the Department reaffirms its commitment to the goals of fostering the teaching competence of graduate students who aspire to higher education careers, and to enhancing the equality of its undergraduate teaching program.

At least two weeks in advance, the allocation committee of the Economics Graduate Student Organization (EGSO) will send notice to all graduate students in the program announcing the day, time, and location of the TA allocation meeting for the coming semester.

All eligible graduate students desiring TA funding must attend the TA allocation meeting or send a proxy representative. At the beginning of the meeting, graduate students desiring TA funding (or their proxies) will draw lots in order to rank the students (numbers drawn in the Fall will be used again at the Spring allocation meeting, however the ranking order will be reversed). All TA positions will be displayed on the blackboard. Job descriptions and qualifications will be solicited from faculty members and read before the allocation process begins. The student with the best number will select from the posted TA positions for which he or she is qualified. This process will continue until all TA jobs have been allocated.

2. Teaching Associates (TOs)

The following is intended to cover graduate student instructor selection for all undergraduate courses, including Department and Continuing Education courses. With its adoption, the Department reaffirms its commitment to the goals of fostering the teaching competence of graduate students who aspire to higher education teaching careers, and to enhancing the quality of its undergraduate teaching program.

1. A committee will be established to make instructor appointment recommendations to the Chair for those courses made available by the Department for graduate students to teach. It is assumed that committee recommendations will be acted upon by the Chair. The committee will consist of two faculty members chosen by the Chair, normally the Graduate Program Director and one other faculty member (normally a member of the

Graduate Committee), and two EGSO appointees subject to Chair approval. The committee will advise appointments to the chair, who will make the final hiring decision.

2. The committee will choose instructors according to the criteria listed in (3) below. Those students interested in teaching courses in a coming term will apply directly to the committee. Applicants will submit a brief, standard form supplying the committee with the information relevant to the criteria listed below; the committee may solicit other information, as well. However, the committee will be responsible for conveying to any student not chosen, upon request, the reasons behind its decision.

3. To be eligible to teach, students must have passed the comprehensive examinations—not necessarily in the subject area to be taught. Candidates must exhibit the level of maturity required to be an undergraduate instructor. Candidates and the department reaffirm their commitment to follow Article 16, “Language Testing”, of the GEO contract. Coursework requirements include passing successfully with a grade of B or better: one graduate Macro course for teaching 104, 204 (or other relevant courses below the 300 level); one graduate Micro course for teaching 103, 203 (or other relevant courses below the 300 level); one graduate Political Economy course for teaching 105 (or other relevant courses below the 300 level); and the relevant graduate course or comparable work (subject to the approval of a senior faculty member in that field) for teaching 300-level courses. On the presumption that teaching experience is something to which interested students should have access, eligible applicants will be ranked and chosen according to the following criteria:

1. Reverse seniority with respect to previous teaching opportunities (i.e. priority ranking in reverse order of the number of previous TO-ships).

In the event that two or more applicants have the same rank based on criteria #1:

2. Seniority with respect to number of years in the program.

In the event that two or more applicants have the same rank based on criteria #1 and criteria #2, the committee may consider special circumstances, if any, or make their decision by drawing lots.

In the event that there are still TO positions available after the above procedure, the courses will be offered in a second round open to all eligible graduate students. The second round will also follow 3.1 and 3.2 above. If and only if the graduate student applicant pool is exhausted after a second round will the TO position be offered outside the graduate student pool.

4. To enrich the training aspect of the teaching experience, student instructors must continue to select faculty sponsors. Sponsor responsibilities include review and approval of the course outline, materials and exams far enough in advance so that course mechanics can be worked out after the consultation. In addition, the sponsor will be

available to discuss with the student instructor any questions which arise during the term, including any feedback about his or her teaching.

5. Items 1. through 4. above apply to all undergraduate courses. Should a graduate student wish to propose a new course, not typically offered, he or she may do so upon consultation with and approval from the Chair. If the Chair approves the course, the instructor and the course are exempt from the above procedures.

3. Research and Project Assistants (RAs and Pas)

On the presumption that research experience is something to which interested students should have access, the Department and its graduate students agree to the following RA and PA hiring procedure:

- 1) An EGSO liaison will be appointed to help the Chair facilitate this process.
- 2) At least 14 days before the TA allocation meeting, faculty will inform the Chair of their intent to hire a Research Assistant (RA) or Project Assistant (PA), providing the relevant information about the job. Both the procedure and the relevant information will be in accordance with Articles 1, 2 and 23 of the contract between the University and the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO).
- 3) If necessary, the Chair will request any missing information from the faculty member. As soon as the job announcement is consistent with the GEO contract language (and any additional agreed upon faculty/EGSO language) and within 48 hours of receipt, the Chair will post the job on EGSO-L and on the bulletin board in the 8th floor lounge. Graduate students will have seven (7) days to apply.
- 4) Within 24 hours of the end of the seven-day application period, the Chair will forward all applications to the relevant faculty member, who will then make the hiring decision before the TA allocation meeting.
- 5) Exceptions:
 - i. Continuing positions, defined as an RA or PA position with the same faculty member and working on the same project, need not be re-posted until and unless it will continue for a fifth term, inclusive of summer and winter terms. However, in accordance with the GEO contract, the existence of the job, description of the job and the name of the RA or PA hired shall be posted in the 8th floor lounge.

Late RA and PA postings should be avoided, but will happen. If this results in over-funding (in the Fall semester) of a graduate student already committed to a TA or TO, and the graduate student enters the TA poll in the spring semester, he/she may be limited to less than full funding (depending on the availability of TA funding).