Policies and Procedures for 
First- and Second-Year Language Graduate Teaching Assistants 
Department of World Languages and Literatures 
FALL 2016 
(12/6/2016)

1. GTA application process and materials

1.1. Applicants to the MA program may concurrently apply for a graduate teaching position in the department.

1.2. All applicants for a graduate teaching position are required to complete the departmental application form. It is available on the PSU WLL website: http://www.pdx.edu/wll/graduate-program-applications.

1.3. Applications for the GTAships will be reviewed and GTAships determined by the language coordinator in conjunction with the section. The granting of a GTAship to qualified students is based on the following:

- Language proficiency
- Cultural competence
- Letters of recommendation, included in applicant’s file to the Master’s degree
- Previous teaching or related experience
- Department need

2. Training

2.1. GTAs are required to participate in orientation and ongoing training activities. Such activities include but are not limited to:

- Workshops held between Sept 16th and the start of classes (Fall term).
- Weekly meetings during the term (Practicum).
- Enrollment in WLL 598 during their first year. This is only offered during the winter term at this time.

2.2. Because the GTA position is a training / apprenticeship opportunity, the department will make a conscientious effort to help GTAs improve their teaching effectiveness and performance.

2.3. The GTA must enroll for 8 graduate credits, for a grade other than P/NP, plus the Practicum course (509) each term in order to teach. A maximum 4 of the 9 required credits can be undergraduate credits if the undergraduate course is needed as prerequisite or is important for the graduate student’s program of study. In the final two terms before graduation, the GTA may register for as few as 5 credits provided that no additional credits are needed to meet the GTA’s degree requirements.

3. Appointment

3.1. GTAs in all language sections will teach 4 or 5 credits (the equivalent of 1 section) of a lower-division language class in their first term of teaching. Subsequent course assignments will vary between 1 or 2 sections (5 to 10 credits for Japanese students) and will depend on class availability, the academic success of the GTA, and budget constraints.

3.2. The usual initial appointment during the first fall quarter/term shall be for 1 section (French, German, Japanese, Spanish) of lower-division language courses depending on class availability and budget constraints. No more than 4 courses (or 16 credits) will be assigned during the academic year for both new and returning GTAs.

3.3. Schedule and courses will be determined by the language coordinators in conjunction with the section.

3.4. Appointments are guided by the following criteria:

- PSU WLL graduate students in their first and second year of their MA program.
- Candidates who have been regularly admitted to the MA program and who maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0. Grades of P are not acceptable.
- Candidates with native or near native fluency and extensive knowledge of the target language. Language proficiency suggested is Advanced High according to ACTFL standards for admittance to the MA programs.
Candidates from other PSU department with demonstrated good teaching skills, the potential for good teaching, and language proficiency.

3.5. Employment for GTAs is not guaranteed; it is subject to budgetary needs.

3.6. Summer teaching assignments are not guaranteed. They are determined by availability and the assignments are made by the language coordinators in conjunction with the section pursuant to the following criteria:
- Fulfillment of the criteria listed in 3.4
- GTAs with demonstrated good teaching skills (based on coordinator observations and student evaluations)
- GTAs 1: GTAs in their first year of training
- GTAs 2: GTAs in their second year of training
- GTAs 2: GTAs who have not taught a summer course before
- GTAs from other PSU departments

3.7. Reappointment after the 6th term
- A letter of intent should be submitted to the language coordinator.
- Reappointment for continuing GTAs is based on a comprehensive evaluation of teaching effectiveness and performance, according to the following criteria: classroom observations by the language coordinator, student evaluations, attendance at required training workshops, meetings, response to request of specified materials, such as copies of grades, as well as other instructional materials used in their classroom and, under special circumstances, daily lesson plans.
- Active involvement in their language program.
- GPA and progress toward graduation will be considered in the reappointment process. All candidates for reappointment must meet academic standards as specified by university policy.

4. Priorities

4.1. The GTA’s first priority is successful completion of his or her MA.

4.2. The second priority is teaching one or two classes at PSU, as doing so provides a tuition remission and valuable instructional and teaching experience.

4.3. External jobs are highly discouraged. Additional jobs at PSU may violate PSU graduate assistant hiring policy. Please contact the WLL Department Manager before accepting other work assignments at PSU.

4.4. Language coordinators will make every effort to accommodate the GTA’s needs; however, we will not schedule around other jobs.

5. Termination of Appointment

5.1. In order to maintain their appointment, GTAs will demonstrate satisfactory academic progress as graduate students (maintaining a 3.0 GPA), perform assigned duties satisfactorily, and work well with their language coordinators and their colleagues.

5.2. GTAs may be denied reappointment if they do not comply with GTA dispositions as well as the employment terms and conditions in a satisfactory manner or if they become subject to academic or other disciplinary action.

5.3. Classes may be canceled for budgetary reasons or due to insufficient enrollment.

5.4. Language coordinators may recommend termination to the Section Head and the Chair. The student shall be given appropriate notification.

5.5. GTAs who do not perform their instructional duties satisfactorily may be relieved of their duties.
GTA DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

The job duties designated below are required of the employee. Please check the appropriate items and describe, as applicable.

- Attend mandatory departmental activities (such as orientation and practicum)
- Be prepared for teaching
- Hold ___ office hours per week
- Read and evaluate students’ papers
- Maintain and submit students’ grades to the University and the Coordinator
- Proctor examinations
- Evaluate students’ assignments
- Provide collaborative assistance to language coordinator and peers
- Perform other tasks as assigned, including (list here):
- Modify instructional methods based on evidence, experience, research, reflection, and supervisor feedback
- Respond to feedback from language coordinator
- Maintain a constructive and collaborative attitude with language coordinator
- Observe other instructors (peers) as assigned

A GTA base-appointment shall be 1-2 classes per term.

Reminder: GTAs must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0

Please refer to the GTA Dispositions Assessment Form (attached) for more details about GTA duties and evaluation.
### GTA Dispositions & Teaching Skills Assessment

**Department of World Languages & Literatures**  
**Portland State University**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instructor name:</th>
<th>Date/time observed:</th>
<th>Term:</th>
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<tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>Observer:</th>
<th>Language Coordinator:</th>
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#### Rating scale for dispositions

1. **No basis** for evaluation.
2. **Insufficient**: demonstrates disposition rarely; may occasionally demonstrate behavior in conflict with the disposition.
3. **Emerging**: demonstrates disposition occasionally; awareness of disposition in practice may be incomplete.
4. **Proficient**: demonstrates disposition consistently; behavior reflects awareness of disposition and intention to demonstrate, though implementation may be awkward.
5. **Exemplary**: demonstrates disposition consistently, completely, in difficult or informal situations; behavior reflects thorough understanding of and commitment to disposition.

#### 1. Professionalism and collegiality:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. The instructor … is <strong>punctual</strong> and regular in attendance.</th>
<th>1 (a) 0 1 2 3 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. … demonstrates professionalism in demeanor and appearance.</td>
<td>1 (b) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. … demonstrates initiative, motivation and a commitment to becoming an effective classroom teacher.</td>
<td>1 (c) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. … completes work and develops materials (exercises, assessments, etc.) as assigned and in a timely manner.</td>
<td>1 (d) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. … demonstrates a cooperative attitude, collaborates with colleagues, and is respectful of others’ ideas.</td>
<td>1 (e) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. … demonstrates a reflective attitude and a critical sense with respect to pedagogy, her/his own and that of colleagues.</td>
<td>1 (f) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
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#### Classroom dynamics and pedagogical technique

#### 2. Fairness and respect:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a. The instructor … demonstrates a commitment to fairness and a respect for diversity.</th>
<th>2 (a) 0 1 2 3 4</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>b. … creates an atmosphere that encourages student participation and communication (with instructor and with other students).</td>
<td>2 (b) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. … demonstrates patience and respect for students, a tolerance for ambiguity and a willingness to understand students.</td>
<td>2 (c) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. … demonstrates an awareness of varied learning styles and designs activities to accommodate them.</td>
<td>2 (d) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. … responds positively and effectively to requests for explanation or clarification.</td>
<td>2 (e) 0 1 2 3 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### 3. Classroom technique:

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<tr>
<td>a. <strong>The instructor</strong> … is organized and prepared for class.</td>
<td>3 (a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>b. … has a well-developed lesson plan.</td>
<td>3 (b)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>c. … is engaged and energizes students.</td>
<td>3 (c)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>d. … corrects errors selectively and judiciously, in a non-threatening manner.</td>
<td>3 (d)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>e. … presents content in ways that are pedagogically sound, are innovative where appropriate, and which engage students in meaningful language use.</td>
<td>3 (e)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>f. … provides opportunities for meaningful interaction among students using the target structures of the language.</td>
<td>3 (f)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>g. … presents content in the target language in a comprehensible manner appropriate to the course level.</td>
<td>3 (g)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>h. … provides clear directions for classroom activities and guides students effectively.</td>
<td>3 (h)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>i. … has effective teaching skills.</td>
<td>3 (i)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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### 4. Reflection:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. <strong>The instructor</strong> … modifies instructional methods based on evidence, experience, research and reflection.</td>
<td>4 (a)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. … is responsive to feedback from language coordinator.</td>
<td>4 (b)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
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**Comments:**

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