

# How to Request an Exception to Policy for Graduate Student Appointments

Requests for appointments in exception to policy must be submitted in writing prior to making an appointment offer to a student. This provides time for Graduate Division review and resolution of potential problems and prevents inappropriate appointments if the request for exception is denied.

It is the responsibility of the hiring unit to prepare and submit requests for exception. The Head Graduate Adviser in the student's academic department must always approve the request for exception regardless of whether the hiring unit is or is not the student's academic department. All materials must be addressed to Associate Dean Duggan and sent to the Appointments Office, 318 Sproul Hall MC5900. Please follow the procedures for each type of exception as described below:

1. **Appointee's GPA is below minimum for appointment type.** Please refer to the [“What You Need to Know About Being a GSI, GSR, Reader, or Tutor”](#) (PDF) document for minimum appointment requirements and submit the [Request for Exception Form](#) (PDF).
2. **If the appointee has more than two incomplete grades in upper division or graduate courses.** Please refer to the [“What You Need to Know About Being a GSI, GSR, Reader, or Tutor”](#) (PDF) document for minimum appointment requirements and submit the [Request for Exception Form](#) (PDF).
3. **If the appointment or combination of appointments will cause the student to work 51% - 75%.** Please refer to the [“What You Need to Know About Being a GSI, GSR, Reader, or Tutor”](#) (PDF) document for minimum appointment requirements and submit the [Request for Exception Form](#) (PDF). International students holding F-1 and J-1 visas are ineligible to hold appointments over 50%.
4. **When a GSI appointment exceeds the eight semester teaching limit.** Please refer to the [“What You Need to Know About Being a GSI, GSR, Reader, or Tutor”](#) (PDF) document for appointment restrictions and submit the [Request for Exception Form](#) (PDF).
5. **If a GSI/Reader/Tutor will assist in graduate-level course (200, 300, 600).** Graduate students normally may not be appointed to assist in any course in which graduate students are enrolled, or for any graduate level (e.g., 200 series) course. Under highly unusual circumstances, the Associate Dean for Appointments may consider exceptions to this policy.

A proposed appointment to assist in a graduate level course requires that the student be advanced to candidacy in a doctoral program and be in a different degree track from that of the students taking in the course. In addition, the Head Graduate Adviser must certify that there is no conflict of interest relating to financial and academic competition with students enrolled in the course, and that the student will not assign grades for the course. The name of the Instructor of

Record must also be provided. The [Request for Exception Form](#) (PDF) may be used to request this type of exception.

6. **For early advancement to Step II or Step III in the GSI series.**

**A. Based on relevant post-baccalaureate teaching experience at another university or college.** Teaching at other universities may be proposed for consideration in determining the appropriate step at which to appoint a GSI. The teaching experience must have occurred after the student was awarded a bachelor's degree. In order for the experience to be counted fully, the courses should be in the same field as the GSI's proposed appointment, and the teaching must have occurred at an institution comparable to UCB. A department may wish to make a case for counting experience in another field if the teaching skills acquired are transferable.

Teaching during the summer, either at UCB or another institution, will not be counted in early advancement cases. Teaching at University Extension will not be counted.

Experience gained as a Reader may be cited in requests for advancement in the GSI series if the department considers them relevant to the proposed appointment. Reader experience is generally not given the same weight as teaching experience.

When credit is granted for teaching experience at an institution that operates on the quarter system, it is counted as follows: two quarters of experience is equivalent to one semester of teaching and three quarters of teaching is equal to two semesters of teaching.

When seeking an exception for early advancement to Step II or Step III, departments must always assign duties appropriate at the step for which students are qualified based only on UCB teaching experience, excluding summer or University Extension teaching, which cannot be counted. If Graduate Division approves the request for exception to appoint at a higher step, notification will be sent to the department, at which point the department may make the necessary changes in HRMS and responsibility level.

**B. Based on merit or a combination of experience and merit.** Hiring units may cite extraordinary accomplishments of the student, such as the publication of research or the presentation of papers at meetings of learned societies, in making cases for accelerated advancement. Cases may also be made for early advancement based on a combination of relevant teaching experience and merit. The hiring unit should prepare a memo that outlines in detail the supporting arguments for such a request. The Head Graduate Adviser in the student's academic department must approve the request.

7. **GSI Appointment at Step IV.** Appointment at this step always requires advance approval of Associate Dean Duggan. The minimum requirements are advancement to candidacy for the doctorate, completion of at least eight semesters of teaching at UCB, demonstrated exceptional promise as a teacher and scholar,

- and additional responsibilities beyond those typically assigned to a GSI at the lower steps. Requests are greatly strengthened if the student has succeeded in publishing research or has made presentations at meetings of learned societies. The hiring unit should submit a memo that supports the request for appointment at Step IV. The Head Graduate Adviser in the student's academic department must approve the request. A current copy of the student's curriculum vitae must be attached to the memo. Because students appointed at this step normally have completed the permissible four years of teaching, approval of an exception to teach beyond the four-year limit is also required.
8. **An appointment or combination of appointments over 75% time.** A memo from the hiring unit must demonstrate that the additional appointment time will not adversely affect the student's academic progress and must justify why the student needs to work above this percentage. The Head Graduate Adviser in the student's academic department must approve the request. Exceptions for appointments for 100% during a regular semester are not considered.
  9. **Full Responsibility for an Upper Division Course.** Subject to prior approval by Graduate Division and the [Academic Senate's Committee on Courses of Instruction \(COCI\)](#), a UCB graduate student may be appointed to assume full responsibility for an upper division course only (i.e., courses numbered 100 - 199). Requests for lower division or graduate courses will not be considered. This is usually referred to as a variance request and, if approved, is usually limited to one semester. The Acting Instructor-Graduate Student (AI-GS) title (title code 2550) is used for students who have been approved to have full responsibility for a course although under some faculty supervision. A student who is approved to hold an AI-GS appointment is designated as the Instructor of Record for the course.

For information on duties, qualification, restrictions, and placement in the AI-GS step series, please see ["What You Need to Know About Being a GSI, GSR, Reader, or Tutor"](#) (PDF) .

Information on circumstances under which departments may request approval for use of the AI-GS title can be found in the [COCI Handbook](#) (PDF - Academic Senate Website).

Requests for Full Responsibility must be submitted to Graduate Division Appointments well in advance of the beginning of the semester of the request. This is necessary to allow time for review and approval by both Graduate Division and COCI, which can take up to eight weeks. COCI may not meet regularly during the summer or winter breaks. Please note that requests received in Graduate Division after the start of classes are likely to be denied unless they are occasioned by a sudden faculty illness or emergency leave.

It is highly recommended that departments contact the Graduate Division Appointments staff to discuss the particulars of each case and to verify required items before submitting this type of request. Appointments staff advise

departments on the preparation and organization of supporting materials to present the strongest case for the student to be appointed appropriately.

All requests for full responsibility must include the following:

- A memo or letter from the chair of the hiring unit, addressed to both the COCI and Associate Dean Duggan, explaining the circumstances surrounding the need for a student to assume full responsibility for the course. The memo must also provide information about the student's qualifications to hold the appointment if it is approved, state the date on which the student was advanced to candidacy for the doctorate, and state that the course syllabus has been approved by a member of the faculty. The name of faculty member who approved the syllabus must be provided in the memo. Additional supporting memos may be included in the packet, but are not required.
- Two copies of the student's curriculum vitae or Academic Biography.
- Photocopies of student evaluations for all courses to which the GSI has previously been assigned. Written evaluations should be included, rather than just tabulated results, so that the Associate Dean and COCI can review individual student comments. Performance evaluations by faculty are also beneficial.

Once Appointments staff has conducted an initial review and assessment, the Associate Dean reviews each request for full responsibility. The Dean may deny a request, ask for additional information, or send the request to the COCI with a recommendation to approve it. COCI has final authority to approve these cases. If COCI denies a variance request, departments will need to follow up directly with COCI regarding their options.