

Teaching Assistant Positions

Teaching Assistant (TA) positions may be available to serve the educational needs of the Electrical and Computer Engineering (ECE) Department, its faculty and students. No TA positions are guaranteed. TA positions are always dependent upon the course enrollments and the funding available. Course enrollments can change up to the Drop Date established by the University (see <https://catalog.uic.edu/ucatalog/academic-calendar/>).

Requirements

TAs must be enrolled in a UIC graduate program. Priority will be given as follows, from highest to lowest: ECE Ph.D. students, ECE M.S. students, Engineering graduate students, other graduate students. Note that the College of Engineering policy requires TA positions to be assigned only to Ph.D. students. Therefore, M.S. students may be considered only under exceptional and limited circumstances, (e.g., if the number of Ph.D. students were insufficient to fill all the TA positions available).

TAs must meet minimum academic requirements and have a G.P.A. of at least 3.5/4.0.

If the TA has previous job performance as a TA in the ECE Department, the TA reviews from the instructor(s) and students will be considered.

All TAs must attend the TA Orientation Meeting at the beginning of the semester of their appointment.

Duties

When a TA receives a tentative appointment, the TA must meet (in-person or remotely) with the instructor of the course they are assigned to understand responsibilities and expectations, which include but are not limited to what is listed in the following.

The time cumulatively spent by the TA on the activities listed below may not exceed *on average* the percentage of the appointment (see <https://uic-geo.net/mainsite/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/GEO-Contract-2018-2021.pdf>). TAs may be asked to log their working hours to a timesheet in increments of 15 minutes.

Instructional Laboratories

- TAs must know the theory that supports the laboratory activities.
- TAs are required to master the use of any software or hardware employed in the laboratory *before* the beginning of classes. The instructor provides the necessary details.
- TAs must be familiar with the Learning Management System (LMS) in use at the University. If not, the TA must become familiar with the LMS and its tools *before* the beginning of classes. The instructor provides the necessary details and points to resources such as <https://acc.uic.edu>.
- TAs are expected to practice the activities of *each* laboratory session *before* the session is offered to the students.
- Unless the University deems that work on campus is not allowed or the TA has an accommodation (<https://oae.uic.edu/>), TAs must report to work on campus. Special accommodations not covered by <https://oae.uic.edu/> will be at the discretion of the instructor.
- Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, TAs must be present during on campus laboratory sessions or be available synchronously on-line if the session is held remotely online.

- TAs must setup the required equipment *before* each laboratory session. If necessary, TAs must request supplies with input from the instructor.
- Due to the current Covid-19 situation, TAs shall sanitize the laboratory equipment *before* the beginning of the laboratory session.
- TAs may be asked to prepare instructional material to be made available to students *ahead* of the laboratory session. Examples include, but are not limited to, pre-record videos explaining and/or performing the laboratory session and prepare on-line pre-lab quizzes.
- TAs may be asked to update laboratory manuals, with input from the instructor.
- TAs may be asked to assign and grade laboratory reports. Grades are uploaded on the LMS.
- TAs may be assigned to multiple laboratory sessions depending on the number of students enrolled in the sessions.

Lectures

- TAs may be requested to assist in the creation of material for lectures, with input from the instructor.
- TAs may be asked to deliver a lecture only if mutually agreed upon by the instructor and TA. In such circumstances, the instructor must provide the lecture material.
- TAs may be asked to hold recitation sessions, either on campus or online.
- TAs may be asked to moderate discussion boards or other Q&A platforms within the LMS.

Homework Assignments

- TAs are expected to timely grade homework assignments and upload the grades to the LMS.
- TAs may be asked to generate homework content with input from the instructor.

Exams

- TAs may be asked to proctor exams, either on campus or online.
- TAs may be asked to grade exams. In such a case, the instructor must make a grading rubric available.

Attendance of lectures

- TAs may be expected to attend and support lectures in courses with significant in-class activities. Lectures can be on campus or online.

Office Hours

- TAs are expected to hold office hours, either on campus or online.
- TAs must schedule a minimum number of office hours each week in agreement with the Instructor.
- In the event a TA should miss or have a conflict with the regularly scheduled office hours, the TA is responsible to timely inform the instructor and the students and to reschedule the missed hours.

Answering Student Emails

- TAs are expected to answer student emails in a timely manner, but if the emails become excessive in number or time, the TA should discuss this problem with the instructor. It is considered good online etiquette to reply timely to emails within 1 business day.

ABET

- TAs may be required to collect and submit samples of students' work, if the course is selected for ABET's student learning outcome evaluation.

Other considerations

- TAs must act fairly and not engage in any acts of dishonesty (e.g., no discrimination, cannot accept bribes, no preferential treatment, no retaliations, no threats).
- TAs are responsible to report cheating, dishonesty or plagiarism, (for example, in labs, quizzes, examinations and homework), to the instructor immediately.
- TAs must comply with UIC's nondiscrimination policy available at <https://oae.uic.edu/discriminationharassment/>.
- Unsatisfactory performance will jeopardize consideration for future TA opportunities.

Types of Appointments

The types of TA appointments available depend on the hours of work required for each course. The three types of appointment available are: (1) 50% appointments that correspond to 20 hours of work per week; (2) 25% appointments that correspond to 10 hours of work per week; and (3) 12.5% appointments that correspond to 5 hours of work per week.

Application procedure

Graduate students interested in applying for a TA position should respond to the survey sent by the ECE department during the prior semester.

Factors Which May Enhance Eligibility for Appointment or Specific Course Assignments

In addition to what mentioned above, the following factors are taken into account when assigning TAs to a specific course:

- Applicant's preferences;
- Specific needs of the course and instructor;
- Previous grades in course and its prerequisites, if any;
- Prior TA reviews from instructors and students, if available;
- Letters of recommendation from faculty of prior TA appointments, if any;
- Previous teaching experience for a specific course;
- Communication skills and capability to positively engage students; and
- Progress toward the degree.

Assignments

The DGS of the ECE Department slots prospective TAs to courses based on enrollment and the funding available.

Once a prospective TA is slotted to a course, the TA and the course instructor must meet to discuss course requirements and expectations. After the meeting, the TA can either accept the appointment (having acknowledged all requirements and expectations) or request the DGS to be reassigned to a different course.

Upon the TA's request to be reassigned, the DGS will reassign the TA to another course, if there are still available courses that require a TA based on enrollment and the available funding. If so, the same process as described above is completed.

If course enrollment drops below that which requires a TA on or before the Drop Date, the DGS may reassign the TA to a different available course.

If course enrollment increases above that which requires a TA on or before the Drop Date, the DGS will assign more TA resources to the course by following the process described above.