

GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS GUIDE
Department of East Asian Languages and Literatures
University of Hawai'i at M-noa

OVERVIEW

A Graduate Assistantship in the Department of EALL normally involves teaching lower-level language courses, for which the student receives a tuition exemption, stipend, and medical benefits. Consonant with the name of the Department, it is our policy to distribute GA positions equitably between the disciplines (language and literature) so as to foster both.

See the University's *Graduate Assistant Handbook* (available on line at <http://www.hawaii.edu/graduate/download/manuals/gahandbk.pdf>) for general information and University requirements and expectations.

PURPOSE

The Department sees Graduate Assistantships as serving two main purposes, in order of importance:

1. As a form of financial aid based on academic merit.
2. As an opportunity to train students and give them teaching experience to make them more competitive on the job market.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

- a. Vacancy announcements for Graduate Assistantships are made on our ealldeptgrad-1@lists.hawaii.edu, and may also be announced on line at the WorkatUH website (<http://workatuh.hawaii.edu/other.php>).
- b. The application form and recommendation forms may be downloaded from the Department's website at <http://www.hawaii.edu/eall/rsc/GAAppI.pdf> . They are also available from the Department Office, Moore 382.
- c. Submit the application form and three letters of recommendation to the Department Office. Additionally, applicants for positions in Chinese must submit a recording on CD/DVD that contains (1) a self-introduction in Mandarin Chinese; (2) a conversation in Mandarin Chinese with *a*/another native speaker of it, preferably a person of the opposite gender (if it is with a person of the same gender, identify yourself in the dialogue so that we know which of the two is you); and (3) a self-introduction in English. (Maximum recording time: 15 minutes)

Applicants in the Japanese Section must submit proof of high level proficiency in Japanese, e.g. OPI rating. [April 2013]

- d. All materials, including the CD/DVD recording for Chinese positions, must reach the Department Office by the announced deadline.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

- a. Matriculated graduate student for an advanced degree in the target language program of the Department or a related field.

- b. Sufficient fluency in both the target language and English to be able to teach effectively. In line with University admissions policy, a non-native English speaker who has received his/her BA or MA from an American university may be exempted, with approval of the Graduate Division, from the TOEFL requirement of 600 or above that the University requires of Graduate Assistants.

- b. Some positions may require previous college-level teaching experience or training. See the position announcement for details.

SELECTION

The Departmental Graduate Faculty in each section will rank qualified applicants based on the following criteria, in order of descending priority, with items 3 and 4 being used as “tie-breakers”

1. Academic performance (as indicated, not necessarily in order of importance, by current GPA, letters of recommendation, publications/conference papers, and TOEFL score [for non-native speakers of English])
2. Academic potential (as indicated by past GPA [for in-coming students], GRE scores, and letters of recommendation)
3. College-level teaching experience, preferably in the target language (to be demonstrated by the *Curriculum Vitae*, and letters of recommendation)
4. Course work/training in language teaching, preferably in the target language.

Other qualifications being more or less equal, preference will be given to Ph.D. candidates in the awarding of GA positions.

In special cases (e.g., when a GA position becomes open on short notice), the Department may use the most recent previous ranking list to fill an opening. Such a position will usually have only a single-semester tenure.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Department’s immediate concern is to train inexperienced teaching assistants before and during their first semester of teaching, without taking excessive time and energy away from their graduate studies. Direct supervision and observation will be heaviest in the first semester of teaching and gradually reduced as the GA acquires more experience.

A. Preparation

New graduate assistants should report to the Department at least two weeks before the first day of instruction so that they will be available for course coordination meetings, consultation with their faculty co-teacher, and the **MANDATORY** three-day CTE Teaching Assistants’ training program conducted by the Center for Teaching Excellence. Those arriving from out of state are advised to find housing and settle in before the coordination meetings begin. All new international graduate assistants should apply for their Social Security Numbers as soon as possible.

Departmental preparation for new GAs will cover such topics as the administrative structure of the Department, rules and regulations that GAs must observe in performance of their teaching duties, organization of courses in the undergraduate program, placement of students, the Language Learning Center, use of audio-visual and on-line materials, and descriptions of courses

to which the GA will be assigned. Prior to the start of instruction, a GA should consult with his/her supervisor or co-teacher in detail concerning the textbooks to be used, other instructional materials, coverage in the semester, teaching methods and procedures, and day-to-day classroom activities.

During their first semester, new GAs with no prior language-teaching experience will receive training in the Department. This varies by section. At present, whenever offered, GAs in Japanese must take the Practicum course (JPN 620), while those in Chinese and Korean will receive in-service training by co-teaching with an experienced teacher.

B. Responsibilities with regard to teaching

1. GAs must regularly attend section or coordination meetings of the course they teach.
2. When co-teaching, GAs will assist in the preparation and grading of homework, quizzes, and examinations, but responsibility for the issuance of final course grades will ultimately rest with the faculty member with whom the GA is assigned to teach. They are expected to attend every class with the teacher, and to observe another section of the same course for at least 20 hours during the semester.
3. When a GA is the teacher-of-record of a class, he/she is responsible for the preparation and presentation of materials, as well as for the grading of homework, quizzes, and examinations. The GA will, however, consult with his/her supervisor or course coordinator in the issuance of final course grades.
4. GAs must maintain regular office hours of at least two hours a week, preferably during two different class periods, and should make themselves as accessible as possible to the students they teach.
5. GAs must administer student evaluations in all the courses that they teach.
6. While the normal (0.50 FTE) teaching load for GAs is 8-9 credit hours per academic year, GAs are expected to spend a minimum of 20 hours per week (including classroom time) in their teaching and related responsibilities as described above.

C. Other duties and responsibilities

1. GAs must attend Departmental meetings and keep informed of new Departmental policies and regulations. They must be careful not to give outdated information regarding courses and curricula to their students.
2. GAs are expected to expand their knowledge of language teaching methods, as well as their knowledge of the target language. To this end, they should, among other things, participate in local professional organizations and attend seminars, colloquia, and workshops in their respective language programs.

TERM OF ASSISTANTSHIP / RENEWAL:

- A. A Graduate Assistantship is normally granted on a yearly basis. The student must be enrolled in at least 6 credits of degree-related courses throughout the term of the GAship, unless registered

for EALL 700F (thesis) or EALL 800 (dissertation). It may be renewable for a total of four semesters (for M.A. students) or six semesters (for Ph.D. students, with GA service while in the M.A. program counted against those six semesters). Your GAship appointment letter will specify whether or not your position is renewable. If it is renewable, the graduate faculty will conduct an annual review of your performance, and decide whether or not to renew your appointment. The decision will be made on the following criteria, which will be considered of essentially equal importance:

- ▶ Your performance as a teacher in the classroom. This will be evaluated on the basis of classroom observation by two Graduate Faculty members, your student evaluations (either the standard Departmental forms, or an evaluation administered by the Center for Instructional Support), and a portfolio compiled by you containing a statement of your teaching philosophy and a sample of your teaching materials (which may include worksheets, quizzes, classroom activities, etc.)
- ▶ Your performance as a student in your degree program. This will be determined by two academic progress assessment reports from EALL graduate faculty members, one of which must be from your committee chair, if you have selected one, or your academic adviser, and one from a professor of a most recent class. The graduate faculty recognizes that doing a good job teaching in the classroom may slow you down a bit in your own studies, but **continued reasonable progress toward your degree, as defined by your adviser, is required.**

If your performance in either of these two areas is unsatisfactory, you will be placed on probation and given one semester to correct the deficiency, or lose your GA position.

B. [April 2013] A Ph.D. Graduate Assistantship in the Japanese Linguistics section is also renewable up to three years. This GAship may be extended beyond the third year up to four years if the following conditions are met:

- ▶ GPA of 3.75 or higher
- ▶ No Incomplete ("I") grades
- ▶ No deficiency in Qualifying Exam
- ▶ Academic advisor's recommendation

C. Any GA who is not an EALL student must submit a new application for consideration for a second or third year.