

Date: September 14, 2023

To: Senate Faculty, Department Chairs, Deans, Assistant Deans, Business Officers, AP Staff

From: Dana Mastro, Associate Vice Chancellor
Academic Personnel

Leila Rupp, Interim Dean
Graduate Division

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Teaching and Learning

Re: Faculty Supervision of Graduate Students

As you are aware, Graduate Student Researchers (GSRs) and Academic Student Employees (ASEs) at the University of California negotiated new contracts in December 2022. Although discussions regarding details of the implementation of these contracts continue systemwide, these agreements went into effect immediately and are in place through May 31, 2025. In the context of this expanded unionized environment, we are writing to ensure that our faculty understand their evolving roles and responsibilities in overseeing graduate students.

It is important to recognize that graduate students, when working in teaching (ASE) and research (GSR) capacities, are employees. This is also generally true of graduate students on grants and fellowships for which the funding requires the performance of a service for the University under the direction of a faculty member or Principal Investigator. This means that a faculty member is the supervisor for these employees when they are the TAs for a class taught by the faculty member; when the faculty member is acting as the Instructor of Record for a class for which a TA has significant teaching responsibilities; when the faculty member is acting as the supervisor for graduate teaching associates; and when the faculty member is employing the student as a GSR with funding from a grant or other sources. While this supervisory role is not new, there are new implications for this supervisory position. The most significant among these new and ongoing expectations for faculty supervisors are detailed below:

Timekeeping

In order to support the new paid leave provisions for GSRs and ASEs, as well as the use of pre-approved personal time off for GSRs secured in the new contracts, ***faculty supervisors will be responsible for approving the time and attendance of their GSR and ASE employees (including Teaching Assistants and Associates) beginning this fall, 2023.*** Student employees will be required to record their leaves, and faculty supervisors will be required to verify/approve

these records. Our existing Kronos timekeeping system will be utilized to meet this obligation. Detailed guidance is forthcoming.

Contract Implementation

In addition to other technical and training documents that have been [distributed](#), on August 15, 2023 AP and Graduate Division reached out to all Department Chairs, Business Officers, Faculty Graduate Advisors, and Staff Graduate Advisors (among others) with [guidance](#) on the implementation of the new contracts, including: appointments, wages, workload, leaves, discipline, and other significant considerations. Each department should have received these messages and have access to this guidance on GradPoint. Faculty can work with their Chair, Graduate Advisor, or GPA to obtain this information, as needed.

Although further information on workload can be accessed via the GradPoint site, it is important to emphasize here that workload expectations and goals for GSRs and ASEs must be clearly defined by faculty supervisors, including how these responsibilities will be assessed. ***These workload expectations and evaluation criteria must be documented in writing.*** Sample appointment letters, templates, and other guidelines can be found on the AP website under the [Resources for Department Analysts](#) tab.

For ASEs, required workload should be measured by how many hours the University could reasonably expect a TA or Teaching Associate to take to satisfactorily complete the teaching-related work assigned.

For GSRs, the percent appointment must be consistent with the assigned workload and related to the responsibilities of the position. A GSR's duties can neither be instructional nor can they primarily focus on administrative functions. ***Work performed in the capacity as a GSR must also be delineated from work for which academic credit is being awarded.***

Delineating Compensated Work from Academic Progress/Credit-Bearing Work

As represented employees, GSRs' terms and conditions of employment are governed under the UAW Collective Bargaining Agreement. Activities related to a graduate student's academic progress are expressly excluded from this bargaining agreement. ***Accordingly, work for which the GSR is compensated as an employee must be assessed separately from the student's academic progress.*** When GSRs are enrolled in directed studies courses (such as 596: Directed Research/Reading and 599: Dissertation Research), the work may, at times, seem difficult to distinguish. However, the work of a GSR should emphasize day-to-day tasks and meeting deliverables on a grant or other work under the direct supervision of the PI, whereas the work of a student in a directed studies course should be focused on learning outcomes and professional development in the chosen field and on achieving academic benchmarks and progress towards a degree objective, under the mentorship of a faculty advisor (who may or may not be the same

individual as the PI). The academic goals, learning outcomes, and basis for grading in these directed studies courses must be detailed in a syllabus, as required by WASC regulations.

To assist faculty with this effort, in collaboration with the Office of Teaching and Learning, we will be offering a workshop at the start of the academic term to advise faculty on: developing syllabi for directed studies graduate courses, grading and evaluation of such courses, and framing these expectations and activities separately from those associated with graduate employees' work in their roles as GSRs. Additionally, we will provide sample syllabus templates and assessment templates for these directed studies courses. These materials will also be made available online. This workshop will be held via Zoom on Tuesday, September 26th at 11:30 a.m. Additional details will be sent separately.

For more useful background, see the following: [Update on the UC Joint Senate-Administration Workgroup on the Future of UC Doctoral Programs.](#)

Meetings with Represented Employees

A strong working relationship between faculty supervisors and represented graduate employees benefits all involved by ensuring that employment, research, and teaching expectations are understood, proceeding appropriately, and being achieved and assessed. Integral to this dynamic are ongoing meetings to oversee and guide this employment activity, direct or correct work performance, and provide performance-related management, as needed. Such meetings are expected and can be instrumental to the success of the project or assignment. *However, as outlined above, employment and academic matters should be separated; therefore meetings addressing employment issues or concerns should be conducted independently from meetings addressing academic progress.*

Ongoing Guidance

We will continue to provide updated information and guidance on the implementation of these new contracts as aspects are phased in and as we receive instruction from the Office of the President. Because the mentorship relationship between a faculty member and graduate student remains integral to our values and instructional mission as a University, it is essential that faculty are aware of these new obligations related to their supervisory and advisory roles. Your continued, outstanding mentorship of our emerging scholars is a vital feature of UC Santa Barbara. We appreciate your collaboration as we continue to support, build, and develop models to enhance these relationships.