

Teaching Assistant Hiring Process

The Faculty of Arts has updated its TA hiring guidelines with the ratification of the [CUPE 3912 Collective Agreement](#). Any duties that support instruction fall under this collective agreement, including exam invigilation. To ensure the process of TA hiring remains smooth for both faculty and students, please read the following guidelines and processes carefully.

Qualifying for a TA

All courses with enrolment of 40 students or more may apply for a 36- or 48-hour TA position. Every additional 40 students enrolled creates eligibility for another 36- or 48- hour TA or a single 96-hour TA application.

If a course is enrolled with fewer than 40 students and the instructor believes there to be additional circumstances that contribute to the eligibility for a TA position, the department chair may submit in writing to the Associate Dean a rationale supporting their application for consideration.

TAs may support more than one qualifying course code, provided that they will report to a single supervisor. For example, if Instructor A is teaching two subject similar courses with 40 or more students but their required TA support for each course is less than the minimum assignment, they may opt to combine the hours into a single assignment for both courses.

Applying for a TA

Instructors submit an application for a TA position via the **TA Request Form**, which is available on the Faculty of Arts [TA Positions webpage](#).

When completing the form, select the department and enter the full course number, including section (e.g., PHIL1200.2A). These forms will be sent to the department chair or program coordinator for approval in principle. Any changes to the submissions should be made within the spreadsheet generated in the Teams channel.

The department chair or program coordinator will submit the complete list of applications to the Associate Dean for the final approval process. This is done by informing the Faculty of Arts supervisor of administrative services that the file is complete and ready for processing. Applications will be considered based on their enrolment numbers and any additional supporting letters received at the time of submission.

Hiring with CUPE

The Associate Dean will return a list of approved applications to the department. The department chair will confirm that there are no errors in the list by the deadline provided in the email. The Dean's Office will work with CUPE to post the Faculty of Arts **TA Vacancies spreadsheet** on its job board and will also maintain an up-to-date spreadsheet of closed competitions on the Faculty of Arts [TA Positions webpage](#).

All job postings must be live on the [CUPE job board](#) for five (5) business days before the hiring process can begin. Applications will be submitted to the departmental email address and collected by the administrative assistant. The application packages will be distributed to the instructors for consideration. For all qualified candidates, this is the order of priority:

1. currently enrolled SMU graduate student with either:
 - I. a scholarship
 - II. a funding offer
 - III. an offer letter, which requires a teaching assistantship to obtain funding
2. a currently enrolled SMU graduate student
3. a currently enrolled SMU undergraduate student
4. a currently enrolled student in another postsecondary institution.

Once a successful candidate is identified and accepts the role, the administrative assistant will inform the Dean's Office that the position has been filled and will provide employment forms to the student for completion. The signing authority for TA funding is the Dean of Arts and completed forms should be submitted to the Dean's Office.

In the event of a failed search, the instructor may request a repost of their position. A repost will follow the same procedure.

Distribution of hours

The fixed remuneration form should allocate hours as accurately as possible. TAs will be limited to the hours assigned in any given pay period. Please take the time to map out the anticipated workload across the semester to the best of your ability to ensure appropriate coverage.

Additional hours

If an instructor requires additional hours from their TA for marking, exam invigilation, etc., the assigned TA may take on additional hours in a new contract.

Additional hours must be approved by the Associate Dean or be paid from departmental funds.

The instructor must offer any additional hours to the TA currently assigned to their course for first refusal before searching for an alternative candidate. Should the TA refuse the offer, the same procedure outlines above will be followed.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the TA process, please contact:

Dr. Sara Malton, *Associate Dean of Arts* at assocdeanarts.fac@smu.ca

Ashley MacKinnon, *Supervisor of Administrative Services* at adminsupervisorfoa@smu.ca