

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Approved 4-29-11.

Teaching Advisor Policy

Each TA who is in the third year or above, or who is assigned to teach his or her own class, will ask a member of the faculty to serve as teaching advisor. The TA should make the request at least two months before the beginning of the semester in which the course will be taught. The role of the teaching advisor is to mentor the TA with regard to his or her pedagogical development.

The normal term of a teaching advisor is one academic year. TAs should not have the same faculty member as teaching advisor for more than one year, nor should the teaching advisor also serve as the dissertation director. A faculty member should have no more than two teaching advisees at any one time.

A month before the start of each new semester, the TA should provide the teaching advisor with copies of TEQs, including written comments, from the previous year, along with any written reports on the student's teaching from the previous year's teaching advisor or from faculty for whom the student served as a TA during the previous year. The TA should inform the teaching advisor of areas of concern about his or her teaching. Together, the TA and the teaching advisor should identify areas for improvement or development in the TA's teaching, set reasonable and achievable goals for the year, and make an appropriate plan for meeting those goals. For example, the plan might involve meetings to discuss pedagogy with the teaching advisor, the teaching advisor visiting one or more classes and providing feedback about the TA's progress, the TA reading books or journal articles about pedagogy, the TA observing experienced teachers in the classroom, or the TA attending workshops about pedagogical methods or issues. The plan should also involve assessment of how well those goals have been met at the end of the academic year.

The TA must seek the advice of the teaching advisor as he or she drafts the syllabus for courses taught as a graduate instructor. If the course falls outside the teaching advisor's area of expertise, he or she may instruct the TA to consult an appropriate faculty member about the content of the course and about appropriate texts. The TA should list the advisor and his or her contact information on the syllabus. The teaching advisor should ensure that the syllabus conforms to department and university policies. Non-compliant TAs should be reported to the Director of Graduate Studies.

The teaching advisor should visit a minimum of one class meeting each semester for TAs who are in their third or fourth year of teaching, and a minimum of one class meeting during the year for students who are beyond the fourth year of teaching, review the TA's teaching materials, and on the basis of the visits and teaching materials write up at the end of each semester a brief report on the TA's teaching performance, a draft of this report to be discussed with the TA before a copy of the final report is sent to the TA, to the chair of the Department, and to the Director of Graduate Studies. At the end of each semester, the

Department Chair will circulate to all faculty a link to https://muis1.missouri.edu/gradedist/mu_grade_dist_intro.cfm; the faculty member will then review the grade information for TAs whom they are advising. The teaching advisor should also review the grades assigned by each TA for appropriateness, report any problem to the Director of Graduate Studies, and discuss it with the TA.

The teaching advisor will hear any complaints from students in sections taught by solo TAs, and attempt to resolve problems in a way satisfactory to the student, the instructor, and the Department. (Recalcitrant problems will be referred to the chair of the Department; the teaching advisor will cc the DGS.)

The teaching advisor should bring to the immediate attention of the Department chair any irregularity in the teaching of a TA sufficiently serious that it cannot wait for the teaching evaluation of the TA.

The teaching advisor should report their work as teaching advisor to the chair in the annual report under Service.