Guidelines for Appointment of Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) in the Department of Civil, Materials, and Environmental Engineering (CME)

TA Appointments

The TA positions in the CME department are only available to PhD students (per the College of Engineering Requirements). The typical completion time for PhD students in the CME department doctoral programs is about four years of full time study. The typical PhD student is funded through a combination of funding from the CME department as TAs and from the PhD academic advisor's research program funds as RAs. The PhD students in the CME department may be supported through a TA position at either a 25% appointment or a 50% appointment every semester (25% TA or 50% TA). A PhD student may be appointed as 25% TA and as 25% RA in a given semester. TA appointments for the FALL academic semester will start on August 16 and end on December 31. TA appointments for the SPRING academic semester will start on January 1 and will end on May 15.

TA appointments for the Fall semester and for the Spring semester are made in advance. When possible, TA appointment/offer letters are sent to prospective TAs preferably 45 days prior to the start of the Fall semester, and 30 days before the start of the Spring semester. For first-year or incoming PhD students (including international PhD students), the TA appointment/offer letter may be sent out several months before the beginning of an academic semester. Later TA appointments may be made based on fluctuations in course enrollment, PhD student availability (due to late arrival of international PhD students) and other factors.

Summer TA Appointments

There are several CME courses offered during the summer term II which may require TAs depending on student enrollment in that course. Due to the tentative number of students enrolled in summer courses and late fluctuation in enrollment for summer courses, prospective TAs may be notified of their appointments for the summer courses at least one week before the start of the summer term.

TA Responsibilities

Typical TA Duties

A 25% TA appointment requires ten hours of work per week during the semester, and a 50% TA appointment requires twenty hours of work per week for the length of appointment. TA duties and responsibilities vary from course to course; TA responsibilities may include grading of homework, grading of quizzes and exams, proctoring of exams, holding TA hours each week, occasional class lectures, advising and helping students with their term projects, and email communication with students taking the course. TA responsibilities for CME courses with labs

may include preparation of lab exercises and experiments, grading of lab reports, and holding the lab session (as lab instructor).

Preparation of course syllabi

The course syllabi for CME courses are developed by the CME faculty who teach those courses. If TAs are involved in the preparation of a syllabus for a course, they will be informed by the CME faculty teaching the course in advance about the TA's involvement with the preparation of that course's syllabus, clearly communicating course goals and providing examples of past syllabi.

TA Assignment/Allocation

The TA assignment for CME courses in an academic semester is carried out primarily through a process of nomination of prospective TAs by their PhD faculty advisors. The TA assignment and allocation for an academic semester are determined by considering the following factors: *course enrollment, availability of qualified PhD students to serve as TA in that semester, and requests from core CME faculty*

course enrollment

The number of TAs assigned to a CME course depends on the enrollment in that course. Typical TA allocations for 100-level, 200-level, 300-level and 400-level CME courses are:

one 50% TA for a course with enrollment larger than 50 students (1 TA)
one 50% TA for a lab course with enrollment larger than 30 students (1 TA)
one 25% TA for a course with enrollment more than 30 but less than 50 students (0.5 TA)
one 50% and one 25% TAs for a course with enrollment larger than 75 students (1.5 TAs)
two 50% TAs for a course with enrollment larger than 100 (2 TAs)

There are no TA allocations available for CME 500-level graduate courses.

availability of qualified PhD students to serve as TA

Prior TA experience for a specific CME course
Prior TA performance record
Specialization area of PhD student (applicability to a specific CME course)
PhD student availability to serve as TA rather than an RA for their academic advisor
Continuing PhD student versus first year PhD student

request from core CME faculty who want their PhD student to serve as TA for their own course

Core CME faculty may nominate their PhD student (advisee) to serve as TA for a CME course that faculty is teaching that semester. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) of the CME department will consider the nomination of the PhD student based on the nominee's prior TA experience and past TA performance, however there is no guarantee that the request will be accommodated.

request from core CME faculty who want a PhD student (other than their own PhD student) to serve as TA for their own course

Core CME faculty may request other CME faculty's PhD student to serve as TA for a CME course that faculty is teaching that semester. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will consider the selection of the nominated PhD student based on the nominee's availability, TA experience and past TA performance, however there is no guarantee that the request will be accommodated.

request from core CME faculty and/or their PhD student (advisee) to serve as TA for a CME course not taught by that core CME faculty

Core CME faculty and/or their PhD student may request to serve as TA for a CME course not offered by the CME faculty who is the PhD student's advisor. The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will consider such requests based on the PhD student's prior TA experience and past TA performance, however there is no guarantee that the request will be accommodated.

Re-appointment of previous TAs for the next semester will be determined through the TA assignment process as described above.