

Biology Program Graduate Student Teaching Assistants

Graduate students play an important role in the teaching of undergraduate students in the Biology Program at UBC. Not only do TAs participate in delivering quality undergraduate Biology education they also gain valuable professional development.

The TA positions in the Biology Program are funded separately through the Botany and Zoology Departments. The following is a general overview of TA application procedure and policies for TA assignment as determined by TA Union (CUPE 2278) regulations, specific Departmental policies will vary. The graduate student TA positions available through each department for each academic year will be posted by March 31.

Application Procedures

Graduate students need to apply for each academic year. Those who are currently TAing in this academic year must reapply for the next year.

Ensure that your graduate advisor or research supervisor is aware of your application to TA and there are no conflicts with your research program.

Complete the appropriate application form clearly indicating which courses you prefer and are qualified to teach in each term (Term 1 September to December, Term 2 January to April). If this is your first TA application, you are required to submit a brief resume of the biology courses you have taken and previous teaching experience.

Submit your application directly to the departmental representative indicated on the application form. Deadline for the application is the end of April.

The University of British Columbia hires on the basis of merit and is committed to employment equity. We encourage all qualified applicants to apply.

Priorities in TA Assignment

Graduate students will be assigned on the basis of the following criteria, as stipulated by the TA union and Departmental policy.

1. Preferred Status. Graduate students that currently or previously held a TA position with the Department are entitled to a maximum of 4 years (8 consecutive 1-term positions) for a PhD student and 2 years (4 consecutive 1-term positions) for a Masters student. Masters students that transfer into a PhD program will be allotted 8 1-term positions in total, while students that complete a Masters program and then begin a PhD will be allotted 4 + 8 consecutive 1-term positions (Sect. 13.03 (b) (i) and (ii)).
2. On-going graduate students who have had scholarships but not completed their degree or their years of entitlement (PhD 4 years, MSc 2 years)

3. Incoming graduate student.
4. Graduate students who have finished their allocations but not their degree and require support.
5. Graduate students that have scholarships but want the teaching experience.
6. Graduate students from other Departments (E.g., Medical Genetics, Pharmacy, Forestry)

Note: Incoming graduate students are not guaranteed a TA position in their first year.

International students are required to complete the ITA before they will be considered for a TA position (see Qualifications below).

Offers of TA appointments will be made by the first week in August for the fall (T1) and winter (T2) sessions.

Qualifications

A Graduate Teaching Assistant I (GTA I) is a graduate student who holds a masters degree and/or is registered in a doctoral degree program at the University of B.C., or is student who holds a masters or doctoral degree in the posted discipline.

A Graduate Teaching Assistant II (GTA II) is a graduate student who holds a bachelors degree and/or is registered at the University of B.C. or is a student who holds a bachelors degree in the posted discipline.

Botany Department policy (effective October 2008) requires that all incoming international graduate students with no experience in teaching at a English speaking institution take the International TA Training Program (ITA) before being considered for a TA position in the Biology Program.

Salary effective September 2013

Yearly salary for the full- time GTA I is \$11,801 (\$5,900 per term or \$30.73 per hour).

Yearly salary for the full-time GTA II is \$11,357 (\$5,678 per term or \$29.57 per hour).

Salaries for half-time positions are calculated on a pro rata basis.

Duties and Hours

Successful candidates will be assigned to teach classes, mark papers and/or conduct tutorials and laboratories. A full TA position involves an average of twelve (12) hours per week for the Winter Session (September 1 to April 30), for a total of 384 hours. A one-half position involves an average of twelve (12) hours per week for one term (September-December or January-April), for a total of 192 hours.

Descriptions of the TA duties for specific courses are available. Each course will have a schedule of teaching and TA preparation meeting days and times. For large multi-sectioned

courses there may be flexibility in TA scheduling, other smaller courses have set schedules. Make sure your own course or research schedules do not conflict with the courses you indicate your preference in the application. For more information on the duties and course scheduling contact the course coordinator or the instructor in charge.

Biology TA Professional Development (BioTAP)

It is highly recommended that graduate students that are new TAs in the Biology Program participate in the BioTAP program.

The first session of the series of five professional development sessions *is required* for all new TAs. The fall TA Orientation session is a one day workshop that introduces graduate students to the academic culture of UBC, appropriate teaching strategies, class room management skills as well as addressing other issues in teaching undergraduate students in the Biology Program.

Subsequent workshops offered in the fall and winter terms are recommended for further professional development. A more complete description of BioTAP and additional information can be found at the Biology TA Resource and Interaction Place [<http://blogs.ubc.ca/biotaprod/>].

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