

Policy on Students with Graduate Assistantships in the Graduate School Serving as Primary Instructors

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Teaching is a critical component of graduate education and training. Training future teachers is one of the central components of a graduate education and graduate students who pursue faculty positions are likely to spend a substantial portion of their professional life teaching and mentoring.

This policy outlines the conditions under which a graduate student, in receipt of a graduate assistantship (“merit award”) from the Graduate School, may qualify to serve as a Primary Instructor.

In cases where the graduate student does not fulfill all of the following requirements, a graduate program may request an exemption from the Graduate School when the graduate student has the appropriate qualifications from a prior degree in a closely related field and/or equivalent experience as outlined by the academic unit and as specified in Loyola University Chicago’s Faculty Course Assignment policy.

To serve as a Primary Instructor, a student must meet all of the following four requirements.

1. Satisfactory Progress Towards or Completion of Degree Credentials

A student may qualify to teach at a particular level of coursework if they have made sufficient progress towards or completed a degree credential.

a. A Student in a Master’s Program

A student in a master’s program will qualify to serve as a Primary Instructor (100 course level only) if they have completed at least fifty percent of the credits required for degree completion.

b. A Student in a PhD Program

A student in a PhD program without a master’s degree will qualify to serve as a Primary Instructor (100 course level only) if they have completed at least fifty percent of the credits required for the master’s degree completion.

A student in a PhD student will qualify to serve as a Primary Instructor (100-300 course levels only) if they either have completed their master’s degree in the field or have completed an equivalent level of coursework and/or degree requirements during their graduate degree as specified in the department’s Graduate Handbook.

2. Pedagogical Training

In their role as Primary Instructor, the graduate student must receive the required pedagogical training.

- The graduate student must have availed themselves of the pedagogical training offered by their department, the Graduate School, and the Faculty Center for Ignatian Pedagogy before being a Primary Instructor in the classroom.
- During their first time serving as Primary Instructor, the graduate student must be concurrently enrolled in the Graduate School's Teaching Effectiveness Seminar unless this requirement is waived by their Graduate Program Director with approval of the Graduate School.

3. Faculty Supervision and Support

In their role as Primary Instructor, the graduate student must receive appropriate faculty supervision and support.

- The faculty supervisor must orient the graduate student to their unique roles and responsibilities and relevant university policies and procedures (e.g., grade submission, reporting academic misconduct, Title IX reporting) before the start of the course and be available for ad hoc consulting and guidance during the semester of teaching.
- The supervisor should observe and provide feedback for at least one of the student's classes if the student is in their first semester of teaching.
- The graduate student serving as a Primary Instructor must be evaluated for the semester by their faculty supervisor. Each department must possess a procedure for evaluating the performance of the graduate student serving as a Primary Instructor.
- There must be a clear understanding among all concerned about what constitutes unacceptable performance. Each semester, the Graduate Program Director (or a person assigned to this task) should read the official course evaluations for each graduate student serving as a Primary Instructor and address quickly and directly any deficiencies or problems that they may reveal. A graduate student serving as a Primary Instructor is subject to the Graduate School's policy regarding Teaching Assistantships, including non-renewal.
- The department is charged with collecting faculty evaluations, including feedback on class observation, of students as well as documenting GPD review of students' performance on a semester by semester basis.

4. Good Academic Standing

The graduate student must be in good academic standing to serve as a Primary Instructor.