

# GSI and Your Classroom

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# Agenda

1. Brief Overview of Working with GSIs
2. Understanding Haas Classroom Dynamics

# **GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTORS (GSI)**

# Hiring GSIs

- # of GSI applications received this year: 240
- # of GSIs selected: 105
- You should expect to have several applications for your GSI position.
- With budgets cuts, more MBA students are seeking partial fee remissions through GSI work. Partial fee remission is granted if the position is a **25%** appointment or more (earns \$964 monthly income).

# GSI vs. Reader

- **GSIs** are registered UC Berkeley students who lead discussion sections and/or serve as an assistant instructor **during lecture**. Duties include teaching, grading, proctoring, holding office hours, and meeting with the instructor to consult on the class throughout the term. As GSIs do provide instruction, they are required to attend trainings and must be included in the Instructor Evaluation Process (TIES).
  - Typically, if a course has discussion sections, it will have GSI(s)
- **Readers** assist with grading homework assignments and examinations. Specific duties may include attendance at lectures, holding office hours and meeting with GSIs and instructor(s) to discuss the class throughout the term. **Readers DO NOT provide instruction to students.**
  - If enrollments of 40 or more, Jay determines whether a reader is warranted

# Description of Duties Form

GSI's are given little specific information about what their role is and the kind of work they are expected to do...

- Attend lectures
- Instruction of [X] section/labs per week
- Preparation
- Hold [X] office hours per week
- Supervisor meetings [X] hours per week
- Read and evaluate [X] papers per student
- Proctor [X] examinations
- Perform individual and/or group tutoring
- Class/faculty visits
- Maintain/submit student records (e.g. grades)
- Perform other tasks

# *Actual* GSI Responsibilities

- Respond to student and instructor emails in a timely manner (24-48 hours)
- Teach section or tutor (sometimes)
- Maintain consistent communication schedule with the instructor
- Oversee class logistics (access to website, readings, slides, and other learning content)
- Grade assignments (and possibly participation)
- Maintain gradebook
- Manage student stress about assignments, grades, careers, and life

# Best Practices

- Meet with your GSIs *before* the semester begins.
- Learn about your **GSIs' backgrounds and goals**.
- Set up **weekly meetings**.
- View your course as an important **part of your GSIs' career development** (within and outside of academia).
- Provide your GSIs with **feedback** when appropriate and relevant.
- **Mentorship.**



# Setting Expectations

- **Meeting schedule:**
  - How often do you want to meet? For how long?
- **Email responses and communication with students:**
  - What do you consider an appropriate email response time? Who is primarily responsible for managing student emails?
  - Who is responsible for maintaining the course website and managing announcements? (Do they have access to do this?)
- **Grading:**
  - How many assignments will be graded? Who determines the grading rubric? Who manages the gradebook? What are the grading deadlines?
  - How much feedback do you want to provide to students??
  - What happens when it seems like grading will take longer than expected?
- **GSI role:**
  - Will GSIs be expected to help design lectures/homework/exams or review lectures with the instructor ahead of time?
  - Will GSIs be expected to attend lectures?
  - What scheduling conflicts can be anticipated?

# Setting Expectations

- **Attendance and participation:**
  - How do you want to grade participation?
  - Will you be tracking attendance each day? Students have busy lives and will send *many* emails about their absences. Do you want to make a note of each of these?
- **Room reservations:**
  - Who is responsible for this?
- **Managing student conflict/issues:**
  - What is your protocol for this? Do you want GSIs to refer students to services on campus or discuss this with you first?
- **Miscommunication between students, GSIs, and faculty:**
  - What happens when a GSI accidentally contradicts what you have said about content, assignments, or exams?
- **Procuring/implementing additional course content:**
  - Will GSIs be expected to purchase and manage any online simulations?
  - Will GSIs be expected to program any surveys?

# What else can GSIs help with?

- Your GSI is an important source of information and support!
- Soliciting informal feedback – taking the temperature of the course.
- Advertising your class to potential students.
- Gathering information about other classes that might have overlap with your content.
- Recruiting GSIs for you in the future.

# Managing GSIs: Where To Get Help

- Rosina Rocco

[rrocco@haas.berkeley.edu](mailto:rrocco@haas.berkeley.edu)

<http://groups.haas.berkeley.edu/ASE/>

- Sanaz Mobasseri

[sanaz\\_mobasseri@haas.berkeley.edu](mailto:sanaz_mobasseri@haas.berkeley.edu)

- Campus GSI Center

<http://gsi.berkeley.edu/>

# UNDERSTANDING HAAS DYNAMICS

# Haas Dynamics

- Haas classroom culture is strongly student-driven.
- Students have been actively organizing around three initiatives at Haas
  - Race/Ethnicity
  - Gender
  - International Students

# Haas Dynamics

- In the past, some of these conversations have been responses to:
  - The class materials/cases that were selected
  - The diversity of guest speakers
  - How class discussions are moderated by faculty
  - How participation is graded

# Race Inclusion Initiative (RII)

## Feedback from RII:

- Students are significantly *less comfortable talking about race* than they are talking about gender dynamics or sexual orientation. **Only 50% of students feel comfortable talking about race.**
- International and domestic students have different perceptions on the need for conversations on race and the importance of understanding racial dynamics to be an effective leader. **US domestic students find both more important than international students.**
- Students and faculty often only see race in the United States as **Black, White and Other**. This is insufficient.
- RII has been **asking faculty to incorporate race in their curriculum.**



# Gender Equity Initiative (GEI)

## Recommendations from GEI for Faculty:

- Professors' upfront acknowledgement of the lack of female protagonists in subject-matter case material and subsequent attention to incorporating more cases with female protagonists.
- Professors' share-out and participate in conversations about research regarding lack of gender parity in Silicon Valley in regard to technical hires, VC funding, and female founders.
- A professor's willingness to listen to and address students' ongoing concerns with race/gender equity concerns throughout the semester.
- 50/50 male-female representation in guest speakers.

# International Students

- Cultural barriers make it harder to fully integrate with U.S. social culture at business schools.
- Be mindful of this when drawing on cultural content, using examples in class, or making jokes.
- International students have expressed that their social and professional networks from their experience at Haas often remain segregated.

# Best Practices

What to do when a challenging/difficult issue is raised in your class?

1. Listen
2. Don't be defensive
3. Ask for time to think and process
4. Reflect, discuss with colleagues, solicit feedback and advice
5. Decide how to proceed and communicate to your students

# Hypothetical Scenario #1

Midway through the semester, a group of your students come to office hours to highlight a pattern they believe they detected. Students suggest that you call on male students more than female students. They argue that this contributes to an unfair difference in their participation score as well.

How would you respond?

## Hypothetical Scenario #2

In the middle of a vibrant discussion about a case, a student raises their hand and asks how the protagonist's behavior would change if they were not white? And, how would other actors in the case change their response to the protagonist's actions?

How would you respond?

# Questions?