

Student Assistant Guidelines

1. Acceptable Use of Teaching Assistants

In general student assistants may help professors keep students accountable for daily work, keep records up to date, and coach students in the process of fulfilling assignments.

Examples:

Take roll

Enter grades

Scan student journals and workbook-like assignments (if journals are not graded on quality of thought or quality of writing)

Grade objective quizzes and objective parts of exams (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, matching, fill in the blank questions)

Lead small group discussions (specifically if assistants are upper division majors trained in this skill)

Tutor/coach peers, for instance in labs (again, upper division students suited by major and/or aptitude, appropriately supervised and trained)

2. Unacceptable Use of Teaching Assistants

In general, student assistants may not grade written assignments when the grade is in any sense a judgment call, nor may they decide how to assess other students' learning.

Examples:

Originate exams

Grade journals for quality of thought or writing

Grade essay sections of exams, whether short-answer or long essays

Grade essays

3. Rationale

Students come to George Fox expecting to have more personal relationships with professors; part of this is achieved by interaction between student and professor over written work.

Students do not often perceive student assistants to be either experienced or knowledgeable enough to grade written assignments as competently as a professor.

Evaluating student writing is an important component of overall assessment.

Class size limits have been based in part on the assumption that the professor assigns some writing in every class that he or she grades.

Student assistants are best able to assess work that simply fulfills the assignment. They are less able to recognize and reward creativity or work that is more than usually thoughtful. They are also less able to diagnose and suggest remedies for work that is severely inadequate. The excellent and the inadequate categories of written work need particularly to be diagnosed and dealt with by the more experienced and prepared professor.