



SAN DIEGO STATE  
UNIVERSITY

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To: MA students in the Department of Philosophy  
From: Steve Barbone, Director, Graduate Program in Philosophy  
RE: ISA (Grader/Reader) and Teaching Associate (PHIL 200) Applications

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Instructional Student Assistants (ISAs) assist with large sections of philosophy classes, and Teaching Associates teach their own sections of PHIL 200: Critical Thinking and Composition. Applications for these positions typically available mid-semester for the next semester's positions.

## Instructional Student Assistants

### Definition:

ISAs assist an instructor with an excess-enrollment class (80+ students). ISAs may be asked to attend course lectures, hold office hours, grade student work, proctor exams, or other tasks that will assist the instructor with the maintenance of the class. ISA funding is based on the enrollment of the class and funding from the College of Arts and Letters. ISAs are hired for a limited number of hours for a particular course; the supervising instructor will assign duties based on these hours. More than one ISA may be assigned to a section.

### Qualifications:

Instructional Student Assistants must:

- Work directly with the Instructor of Record for the excess-enrollment class;
- But need NOT have attained classified graduate standing at the time of their appointment.

ISAs may also hold other appointments at SDSU, *as long as their combined workload at SDSU accords with university guidelines*. Please refer to the SDSU Teaching Associate and Graduate Assistant Handbook ([https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/files/06814-TA\\_GA\\_Handbook\\_v5.pdf](https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/files/06814-TA_GA_Handbook_v5.pdf)) for more details about SDSU rules and regulations governing TA and GA positions.

### Application Procedure for ISAs:

To apply, submit the following to the department office:

1. A completed application form (see attached). Please note: you may indicate your desire to be considered for one or both kinds of positions by completing a single application. You do NOT need to fill out two separate applications.
2. A writing sample demonstrating both the ability to argue deductively and/or inductively in prose and to write clearly, precisely, and grammatically correctly. (8-15 pages)
3. Two letters of recommendation from current or former professors who can speak to your qualifications. (Your professors may choose to deliver their letters directly to the department office themselves.)
4. Signed and dated "Criteria for ISA/TA Appointment" form (available online during application process).

## Teaching Associates

### Definition:

Teaching Associates (TAs) teach their own sections of PHIL 200: Critical Thinking and Composition. The General Catalog description of PHIL 200 is:

Introduction to critical thinking and writing. Evaluation and development of correct reasoning and effective style and organization in argumentative writing. Correct deductive and inductive reasoning. Fallacies. Critical appraisal of evidence. Construction of rebuttals and counter-arguments.

### Qualifications:

Teaching Associates must:

- Have attained *classified graduate standing in philosophy* at the time of their appointment;
- Have completed or be concurrently enrolled in **PHIL 650** (formerly numbered PHIL 701). (Priority will be given to those students who will have already completed PHIL 650/701 by the time of their appointment.) Consideration will also be given to students who have completed a pedagogy course similar to PHIL 650/701, or who have significant prior teaching experience;
- Attend an all-day orientation/workshop, date TBD;
- Participate in TA meetings (usually once a month);
- Participate in an all-day grading session at the end of finals week.

TAs may also hold other appointments at SDSU, *as long as their combined workload at SDSU accords with university guidelines*. Please refer to the SDSU Teaching Associate and Graduate Assistant Handbook ([https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/files/06814-TA\\_GA\\_Handbook\\_v5.pdf](https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/files/06814-TA_GA_Handbook_v5.pdf)) for more details about SDSU rules and regulations governing TA and GA positions.

### Application Procedure for TAs:

To apply, submit the following to the department office:

1. A completed application form (available online during application process).
2. Your letter of application describing in detail any teaching experience and any specific preparation for teaching PHIL 200 (e.g., completion of an appropriate teaching internship or previous experience teaching philosophy or composition), and why you think you are qualified to teach PHIL 200. This letter should not exceed three pages.
3. A sample syllabus (preferably for PHIL 200).
4. A writing sample demonstrating both the ability to argue deductively and/or inductively in prose and to write clearly and concisely, using grammatically correct English. (8-15 pages)
5. Two letters of recommendation from SDSU professors or others qualified to judge your teaching ability, classroom presence, and maturity. (Your professors may choose to deliver their letters directly to the department office themselves upon request.)
6. Signed and dated "Criteria for ISA/TA Appointment" form (available online during application process).

In addition to the above items, applicants will also be judged on their graduate GPA, overall and official program if applicable (minimum: 3.5 in classes taken in this department, or for incoming students, 3.7 in undergraduate philosophy courses).