GSI Appointments

Q: What is a GSI and what are the duties of this appointment?
GSI is the acronym for Graduate Student Instructor, which is equivalent to Teaching Assistant (TA) at many other universities. As a GSI, students are limited to working not more than 50% during the fall and spring semesters. A GSI is chosen for excellent scholarship and for promise as a teacher to serve an apprenticeship under the supervision of a regular faculty member.

Q: How do I find out about opportunities to be a GSI?
All GSI appointments are made at the department level. In April, a GSI/Reader Application will be posted on the departmental web site (http://www.ce.berkeley.edu/resources/forms.html). If you are expecting or interested in becoming a GSI you should complete the application no later than April 30. Because there are many more applicants than positions, students are highly encouraged to contact instructors whose courses they are interested in assisting.

You should also check with other departments that teach subjects allied with your field of study, or your previous education or teaching experience. For example, Civil Engineering students have often been hired in the Math, Chemistry and Physics departments, while students who speak English as a second language sometimes have been able to find a position in their native language department.

Q: What are the minimum requirements to be a GSI?
In order to receive a GSI appointment, a student must have a GPA of at least 3.1, may not have more than two Incomplete grades, and must not be on probation or in lapsed candidacy status. All students must be registered for the semester during which they hold a GSI appointment, and they must be enrolled in at least eight units for the entire semester. Graduate students are usually only assigned to perform the duties of a GSI only for undergraduate courses. Under exceptional circumstances, a department may propose that a registered graduate student who has been advanced to candidacy at the doctoral level be appointed as a GSI for a graduate course. Assignment as a GSI for a graduate course always requires advanced approval by the Graduate Dean, and such GSIs may not assist with the course until that approval has been received.

Students who indicated that English is not their native language, have not passed the Test of Spoken English, or do not hold a bachelor’s degree from an institution in the United States are required to take the Speaking Proficiency English Assessment Kit (SPEAK Test) AND receive a passing grade before they may be considered for an appointment. Information about the language SPEAK Test can be found at http://gsi.berkeley.edu/

Q: How much is a GSI paid?
Depending upon the number of semesters a student has served, a 25% (10-hour a week) GSI will earn a gross salary of between $754.00 - $897.00 per month in addition to a fee remission (see below). GSIs are paid for five months during the semester they are appointed. Pay checks are issued on the first of the month.

Q: In addition to salary, what other benefits are associated with a GSI appointment?
If the GSI appointment meets certain criteria, a portion of assessed fees is paid for the student. This benefit is called a fee remission. In order to receive a fee remission, the semester appointment must be for 25% or more time. Students must be registered and enrolled in at least eight units not later than the end of the third week of the semester, and they may not have any registration blocks. The fee remission does not cover the Berkeley Campus fee or the Class Pass fee, students are responsible for paying these fees themselves. Please see the Registrar’s website for the exact amount of these fees (http://registrar.berkeley.edu/Registration/feesched.html)

Reader Appointments

Q: What is a Reader and what are the duties of this appointment?
Appointees to the Reader title are employed to render diverse services as course assistants, which will normally include the grading of student papers and examinations. Subject to assignment by the department, duties might also include attendance at lectures, office hours, consultation with the instructor, and other course-related duties. Readers may not perform teaching duties.

Q: How do I find out about opportunities to be a Reader?
All Reader appointments are made at the department level. Beginning April a GSI/Reader Application will be posted on the departmental website (http://www.ce.berkeley.edu/resources/forms.html). If you are interested in becoming a Reader, you should complete the application no later than April 30.

Students should also contact instructors whose courses they are interested in assisting. You should also check with other departments that teach subjects allied with your field of study, or your previous education or teaching experience. For example, Civil Engineering students have often been hired in the Math, Chemistry and Physics departments, while students who speak English as a second language sometimes have been able to find a position in their native language department.
Q: What are the minimum requirements to be a Reader?
Must have at least a 3.0 grade-point average, not have more than two Incomplete grades in upper division and graduate courses on their transcript, be in good academic standing (i.e., may not be on academic probation or have had their degree candidacy lapse), have taken and received at least a B grade in the course or another course equivalent to the one in which they are serving, and be registered and enrolled in at least eight units not later than the end of the third week of classes.

Students may not be enrolled in the course for which they are a Reader and may not simultaneously serve as a Reader and GSI for the same course. Graduate students may be assigned to perform the duties of a Reader only for undergraduate courses. Under exceptional circumstances, a department may propose that a registered graduate student who has been advanced to candidacy at the doctoral level be appointed as a Reader for a graduate course. Assignment as a Reader for a graduate course always requires advance approval by Associate Dean Duggan, and such Readers may not take up their duties until that approval is received.

Q: How much is a Reader paid?
Graduate student readers are paid $12.18 per hour. Additionally, a reader with a 25% appointment (or 10 hours per week) will also be eligible for a partial fee remission. Readers must submit time cards and are paid on the 8th of the month. Late time cards will delay payment.

Q: In addition to salary, what other benefits are associated with a Reader appointment?
If the Reader appointment meets certain criteria, a portion of assessed fees is paid for the student. This benefit is called a fee remission. In order to receive a fee remission, the semester appointment must be for 25% or more time. Students must be registered and enrolled in at least eight units not later than the end of the third week of the semester, and they may not have any registration blocks. The fee remission does not cover the Berkeley Campus fee or the Class Pass fee; students are responsible for paying these fees themselves. Please see the Registrar’s website for the exact amount of these fees (http://registrar.berkeley.edu/Registration/feesched.html)

GSR Appointments
Q: What is a GSR and what are the duties of this appointment?
GSR is the acronym for Graduate Student Researcher, which is equivalent to Research Assistant (RA) at many other universities. As a GSR, students are limited to working not more than 50% during the fall and spring semesters. During the winter, spring, and summer breaks, students may work up to 100%. A GSR performs research broadly related to the degree program in an academic department or research unit under the direction of a faculty member or authorized Principal Investigator. GSRs do not perform teaching, administrative, or general assistance duties.

Q: How do I find out about opportunities to be a GSR?
All GSR appointments are made at the department or research unit level. You should check with your faculty advisor in your department about being appointed to be a GSR. You should also check with other departments or organized research units that conduct research allied with your field of study, or your previous education, training, or work experience.

Q: What are the minimum requirements to be a GSR?
In order to receive a GSR appointment, a student must have a GPA of at least 3.1, may not have more than two Incomplete grades, and must not be on probation or in lapsed candidacy status. All students must be registered for the semester during which they hold a GSR appointment, and they must be enrolled for at least eight units for the entire semester.

Q: How much is a GSR paid?
The salary associated with each step in the GSR academic appointment series is the responsibility of the Academic Personnel Office on the Berkeley campus. For the current salary structure, check the Academic Personnel Office Web site (http://www.ucop.edu/acadadv/acadpers/0910/table23.pdf). The department or organized research unit that hires the student determines the step at which a student is appointed. Each hiring unit should have written guidelines that spell out the requirements for appointment at each level and the criteria for advancement.

Q: In addition to salary, what other benefits are associated with a GSR appointment?
If the GSR appointment meets certain criteria, a portion, or all, of assessed fees may be paid for the student. This benefit is called a fee remission. In addition, GSRs with appointments that are at least 45% time may be eligible for coverage of their non-resident tuition through a tuition remission. In order to receive a fee remission, the appointment must be for 25% or more time for the entire semester. For more information, please read the fee remission program bulletin (http://www.grad.berkeley.edu/policies/pdf/fee_remission_bulletin.pdf).