

## End-of-semester Evaluation of GTAs

Each GTA is evaluated by three sets of people: themselves (self-evaluation), the lab coordinator (faculty member running the lab), and the students in the labs (student evaluations). The Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) will **use these three sets of evaluations** to provide an overall evaluation of each GTA's performance and will make recommendations, if necessary, about how to help each GTA improve. Lab coordinators will receive copies of the self-evaluations and student evaluations and will also be active in helping improve teaching.

A summary of the GTA's performance will appear on the continuing-student progress report that comes from GAC in the summer at the end of each academic year. We comment on the overall teaching performance as well as the number of responses on the student evaluations. We let each GTA know what kind of action(s) they should take to improve their teaching.

### **Student evaluations (Appendix A):**

Each GTA will be evaluated by students in their labs. There are a special set of questions for these GTA evaluations (Appendix A) that are different from those administered for faculty. The questions are focused on how well the teaching assistant was able to explain material, answer questions, and run the lab. Students also comment in text blocks on what they perceive are the GTA's strengths and weaknesses in teaching.

The portal for students to conduct all evaluations is Canvas. The evaluations are automatically scheduled for the last 3 weeks of the semester. Each GTA should check that they have been assigned the correct sections of lab before the evaluations are open and encourage students to fill out the evaluations. We aim for at least 85% of each section to evaluate each GTA. Instructions are sent to GTAs by email at the end of each semester about how to download and report the evaluations.

### **GTA self-evaluations (Appendix B):**

Each GTA self-evaluates themselves after reading the student evaluations (see Appendix B). They send it to the head of GAC (Bill Baldwin) and their lab coordinator in the same document as their student evaluations. GTAs will be able to respond to what they feel are accurate as well as inaccurate assessments of their teaching.

### **Lab coordinator evaluations (Appendix C):**

Each lab coordinator also evaluates each GTA using their experience with the GTA during prep meetings, seeing the GTA teaching (if applicable), and reading the student evaluations and the GTA's self-evaluation. Lab coordinators will comment on how well-prepared GTAs were for prep meetings, whether they reported grades on-time, whether they acted professionally with students, and how effective of a teacher they were.

### **Rolling it all together:**

In summary, all of these evaluations go into GAC's evaluation of the student. We do not make evaluations just on student evaluations, as we know that students often evaluate GTAs poorly because of things out of the GTA's control (lab content, design of the lab, availability of materials, difficulty of the material, etc.). We also realize that few people are stellar GTAs the first or second semester that they teach. We are looking to see that GTAs are improving and actively trying to improve.

Any questions? Email: [biolgrad@clemsun.edu](mailto:biolgrad@clemsun.edu)

## **Appendix A**

### **Instructor Evaluation Questions**

You are being asked to evaluate your instructor and the course on a number of factors that relate to effective teaching. The information you give WILL be used by your instructor to improve his/her effectiveness as a teacher. Your responses WILL ALSO be used by administrators and colleagues to make decisions concerning your instructor's retention, promotions, tenure, and post tenure review, so please think carefully about each answer. Be as accurate and candid as you can. Your responses will remain anonymous.

1. The instructor clearly communicated what I was expected to learn.
2. The instructor made the relevance of the course material clear.
3. The course was well-organized.
4. There was a positive interaction between the class and the instructor.
5. The instructor's teaching methods helped me understand the course material.
6. The instructor's verbal communication skills helped me understand the course material.
7. The instructor clearly explained what was expected on assignments and tests.
8. The instructor kept me informed about my progress in the course.
9. The feedback I received on assignments and tests gave me the opportunity to improve my performance.
10. The instructor's grading procedures gave a fair evaluation of my understanding of the material. (If this instructor did not do any grading, choose not applicable)
11. How much work did you put into this course relative to your other courses?
12. How difficult was this course for you relative to your other courses?
13. Was this course required to graduate?
14. Was this course in your major?
15. Was this course team-taught?
16. Please indicate your satisfaction with the availability of the instructor outside the classroom by choosing one response from the scale. In selecting your rating, consider the instructor's availability via established office hours, appointments, and other opportunities for face-to-face interaction as well as via telephone, email, fax and other means.
17. Please comment on the strengths of the instructor and the course.
18. Please comment on the weaknesses of the instructor and the course.
19. Please comment on any teaching methods you found particularly helpful, and suggest alternative methods that you feel would improve the course.
20. Would you recommend this instructor to a friend? Yes or no? Why?

## Teaching Assistant Evaluation Questions

Graduate teaching assistants help support Clemson University's teaching program and provide valuable teaching experience for our graduate students. Please help us improve the quality of instruction and provide useful feedback by evaluating this TA. If you have no experience with a particular TA, please indicate with N/A.

1. This TA displayed an adequate knowledge of the material presented.
2. This TA was well prepared with lecture material for every class session.
3. For in-class activities, this TA provided clear directions and helped students focus on the important concepts being illustrated.
4. This TA was enthusiastic about the subject.
5. This TA clearly communicated expectations for student participation and performance in class.
6. This TA was able to explain difficult concepts.
7. This TA was able to understand and respond to student questions in a clear and accurate manner.
8. This TA was able to assist me with understanding the subject.
9. This TA was interested in helping students.
10. This TA treated students with respect.
11. Overall, how would you rank this TA?
12. What suggestions do you have to improve this TA's ability to teach?
13. What do you consider to be this TA's greatest strength?
14. What do you consider to be this TA's greatest weakness?
15. Additional Comments for this TA, if any:

**Appendix B**  
**EXAMPLE - Department of Biological Sciences**  
**Teaching Self-Assessment Fall 2021 (Do not use this form)**

- Please fill out this self-assessment *after* examining your student evaluations from the semester.
- Compile your student evaluations and *add them* to this file using instructions sent to you in a separate email with this self-assessment.
- **Rename** the file with *your* last name, the course you GTAed, and the semester (e.g. “DeWalt BIOL\_3080 Fall 2018.pdf”).
- Email this file to [biolgrad@clermson.edu](mailto:biolgrad@clermson.edu) *and your lab coordinator* by 5 pm on **February 3**. The sooner you can send it, the better.

1) Your name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2) The course you TAed this semester on which you are reporting (e.g. BIOL 1101 or BIOL 1050): \_\_\_\_\_

3) How many semesters have you been teaching in your current degree program at Clemson? Include this semester in your total. \_\_\_\_\_

4) Did anything particularly unusual or noteworthy, either positive or negative, occur this semester? Elaborate. Do not discuss online learning here (see question 7).

5) What do you feel was/were your greatest strength(s) in the classroom this semester?

6) To what area(s) do you feel you need to give more attention in the future?

7) If you were involved in teaching an online or hybrid laboratory section, please summarize your thoughts on this learning environment, what you think about student satisfaction about the mode of learning, and ideas you have for any improvement in the mode.

8) Are there ways you think we, the teaching faculty, could help you improve?

## **Appendix C**

### **Lab coordinator evaluations**

Lab coordinators are asked to evaluate each GTA on a scale: 1 (not at all/lowest/strongly disagree) to 5 (very much/highest/strongly agree)

1. The GTA appeared to have an adequate background in the material he/she was teaching.
2. The GTA was well-prepared and arrived on-time for lab prep meetings.
3. The GTA acted professionally with students.
4. The GTA prepared adequately for teaching.
5. The GTA graded assignments and reported grades in a timely manner.
6. The GTA does NOT need more training before being put in a lab again.
7. The GTA was receptive and responsive to feedback.
8. Overall, this GTA was an effective teacher.
9. I would like this GTA to teach this lab again.
10. Please provide any comments you have about this teaching assistant's performance including any suggestions for improvement.