

## Guidelines for PhD Teaching Assistants (TAs) at SCGC

### Requirements

All PhD students at EPFL are required to teach besides their research. Students registered with SCGC (Section of Chemistry and Chemical engineering) are required to teach a total of 580h within the section during their studies. This amount should be reached by the thesis defense and generally every TA is expected to have at least one teaching duty per semester (excl. supervision of project master students) until this is reached, starting no later than their second semester. Teaching hours are then converted to “teaching credits” (not to be mistaken with ECTS credits) and updated in IS- Academia at the end of every semester by the section.

### Procedure

#### Preliminary phase

Shortly after matriculation the student fills out a competence questionnaire given by the section secretary to understand what courses they are able to teach. Students from EPFL antennas will be asked whether they are willing to start teaching at 8-8.15 am. If not, they will only be assigned to courses starting at 9-9.15 am.

#### Phase 1 - about 3 months before semester start

Teachers are informed of the number of TAs they will receive based on the attribution below. Any requests for additional TAs must be validated by the section director and is not guaranteed. They can request names of TAs they may prefer but the final attribution will be made by the section. PhD students particularly interested in a specific course should contact the teachers earlier than 3 months before the semester and inform the section of their preference.

#### Phase 2 - about 2 months before semester start

The section makes a teaching assignment, based on the teaching needs, the competences of the student and, as much as possible, their choices. If a student cannot teach, they should inform the section with their reasons. Vacations, conferences, supervision of master’s students, conflict with group meetings are not accepted excuses. Longer term scientific exchanges may be an excuse but need to be validated by the section director with the requirement that this will not impede the students ability to complete the required credits by the end of the PhD.

#### Phase 3 - about 1 month before semester start

The section makes the final teaching assignment, based on the teaching needs, the competences of the student and, as much as possible, their choices. This assignment is final and mandatory.

Please note that our Section offers a wide range of courses for non-chemists to the students of medicine, pharmacy and biology at UNIL (Université de Lausanne). Your active cooperation is therefore mandatory as needs in TAs for those courses are very important.

### Absences

Teaching sessions must not be missed and the teaching semester should be planned carefully by PhD students (no leave during term time).

### Attribution of assistants to courses

In theory, the following maximum ratios apply:

- TP and projects: 1:4 (TA for n° of students)
- Courses including exercise sessions (of more than 25 students): 1:25

Exceptions need to be validated by the section during phase 1 of the teaching assistant attribution. First-time assistants are allowed to follow the lecture of a new class they are teaching (with teaching credits). First year classes with large student numbers (over 100 students) can have an assistant during lectures at all times.

### Attribution of teaching hours at SCGC

In order to guarantee a consistent and uniform TA participation, SCGC has put in place a standardized attribution of hours. Except in cases, where prior approval was obtained by the section, we do not allocate teaching hours for classes that are given by other section or doctoral classes. Hours/teaching credits are automatically given by the section, based on the following standards:

- Exercise session: total exercises hours \* 2 (to include preparation time) \* number of weeks
- Practical: ((Total TP hours) \* number of weeks) + 8 hours (setup and/or grading)
- Attendance of lectures: effective hours
- Exam attendance and correction: effective hours for attendance + 0.5 hour/copy corrected
- Projects supervision (including *projet de chimie computationnelle, Ia, Ib, II* and *PDM*): 56 h per student or group supervised  
Note: teaching credits will only be granted for the supervision of SCGC students (including EPFL and exchange students registered to SCGC courses). Supervision of external students and from other sections at EPFL do not qualify for teaching credits.
- Exceptional work (new lecture preparation, new exercise sessions, translation work, etc. It should not be standard class preparation): effective working hours with justification (which will be validated by the section). For duties over 40 h, pre-validation by the section is required.
- Outreach/promotional events: effective working hours / to be announced to the section beforehand (hours worked during the weekend are doubled)
- Doctoral school classes or Summer schools organization do not qualify for teaching credits

### Travel compensation

TAs travelling from EPFL antennas will receive extra teaching credits per day spent teaching in Lausanne (3h from EPFL Sion, 7h from PSI). Train tickets are to be arranged directly with the lab's secretary.

External students (industry, PSI, Empa, etc.)

→ students with an EPFL contract: teaching hours are required with compensation for travel time

→ students with an external contract: teaching exemption or they follow teaching requirements at the external entity.

### Language issues

In principle, all courses accommodate non-French speakers.