Notice of Graduate Assistantship Nomination

Congratulations! The Department of Biology has nominated you to receive a Graduate Teaching Assistantship (GTA) appointment. This is the first step towards joining our teaching program, which we consider to be a critical part of graduate student training.

Here, we provide information about serving as a GTA in our department. After you have reviewed it, please accept or decline as soon as possible (and no later than April 16, 2018). If you accept this nomination, CSU’s Human Resources Services will handle your official appointment, including verifying your eligibility. We encourage you to contact us with any additional questions you may have as you consider accepting this nomination.

First, please carefully read the Graduate School’s “Graduate Assistantship - Terms and Conditions of Appointment.” These are university-wide terms and conditions of being a GTA, and we adhere to them in our department. They can be found here: http://catalog.colostate.edu/general-catalog/graduate-bulletin/financial-support/. Please note that GTA appointments are not final until a routine background check is completed and reviewed. The CSU policy on background checks can be found here: http://policylibrary.colostate.edu/policy.aspx?id=461.

Below, we provide additional information specific to serving as a GTA in Biology.

Initial GTA appointments for Ph.D. and M.S. students are for 10 and 4 semesters of support, respectively. In all cases, continuation of a GTA appointment is contingent on (1) good progress toward the degree, (2) maintaining a faculty member in the Department of Biology as the primary advisor, and (3) satisfactory completion of GTA responsibilities. Students may use these semesters of support at any point during the degree (i.e. GTA semesters can be integrated with other funding sources as students/advisors see fit). For students serving as GTAs during the 2018-2019 academic year, the dates of the appointment will be August 16, 2018 through May 15, 2019.

1. Monthly Stipend is $2,111 for a 20 hours/week teaching assignment (typically 2 labs) and $1,055 for a 10 hours/week teaching assignment (typically 1 lab).

2. In addition to this stipend, full tuition (excluding online courses) is paid for students teaching 20 hours/week. Half tuition (again, excluding online courses) is paid for students teaching 10 hours/week. Tuition is considerably less for Colorado residents than for out-of-state students. During the first year of enrollment, out-of-state tuition is covered by the university; however, only “in-state” (i.e. Colorado resident) tuition will be paid after the first year. To avoid being
responsible for out-of-state tuition in future years, students must immediately take steps to establish residency upon arrival in Colorado. Information on establishing residency can be found here: http://sfs.colostate.edu/residency. Please note that this applies only to domestic students. Graduate students are responsible for payment of all Fees and Technology charges. Information on fees is here: https://financialaid.colostate.edu/base-tuition/.

3. GTAs receive a graduate assistant health insurance contribution that covers 100% of the cost of the CSU Student Health Insurance plan, conditional on enrollment in 5 or more resident-instruction credits. Please carefully read all of the information about student health insurance options for graduate students and their families here: http://health.colostate.edu/communications-toolkit-for-new-graduate-students/.

4. Teaching assignments for the fall semester are typically finalized in the last week of July. The majority of our first-year GTAs are assigned to teach in one of our introductory courses, some of which (e.g. LIFE 102, LIFE 103) are coordinated by multi-departmental units that include the Department of Biology. Below, we include a few conditions of appointment for such courses because this information is relevant to planning arrival dates on campus and graduate course loads. All new GTAs must arrive in Fort Collins by Monday of the week before classes start.

— GTAs must attend a mandatory GTA meeting the week before classes start.

— GTAs teaching in introductory courses for the first time must attend the corresponding lectures, although this requirement may be waived in extreme circumstances.

— GTAs teaching in introductory courses must follow this set of assigned duties and expectations: http://www.biology.colostate.edu/files/TA_Duties_and_Responsibilities.pdf.

5. New GTAs are required to attend a Graduate Teaching Assistants Orientation Program led by the Graduate School and The Institute for Learning and Teaching (TILT). This year’s program will be held Monday, August 13, 2018 from 8:30 – 4:00 in the Grand Ballroom of the Lory Student Center. Information is available here: https://tilt.colostate.edu/proDev/gradStudents/gtaTraining/index.cfm.

6. Our GTAs receive their paychecks on the last working day of every month. New GTAs must complete all payroll/hiring paperwork by the end of the first week of August to ensure that the first paycheck is received at the end of August. This includes undergoing the routine background check and signing the Graduate Assistant Appointment and Certification Form. An e-mail initiating the background check will come from HireRight (CSU’s background check provider) to your official CSU e-mail address. This e-mail address is based on your
eID, and you check it using an Outlook client. Instructions are here: http://graduateschool.colostate.edu/for-current-students/getting-started-for-new-students/steps-once-admitted/. Please be sure to check this e-mail account all summer (including the junk/spam folders), and please contact Maylou Flores (Department of Biology payroll, maylou.flores@colostate.edu) if you haven’t heard from HireRight by mid-June. Maylou will contact all incoming GTAs, following background checks, with further forms and instructions. Incoming GTAs who are unable to complete these forms by early August will receive the first paycheck (including compensation for both August and September) at the end of September.

We hope that you will accept this nomination as a first step towards playing an integral role in our teaching program. Congratulations again on being recommended for admission to Colorado State University!

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Antolin
Professor and Chair

Dr. Rachel Mueller
Associate Professor and Associate Chair

To accept or decline this GTA nomination: please send an email to our Graduate Coordinator, Dorothy Ramirez (dorothy.ramirez@colostate.edu) with “GTA Nomination” in the subject line. Please cc lab coordinator Donna Weedman at donna.weedman@colostate.edu on this e-mail. The deadline to accept is April 16, 2018, but we appreciate hearing from you as soon as you have made your decision.

All recommendations of financial support at Colorado State are contingent upon the continuation of the programs in which the students are enrolled and on the availability of funds to support the awards. Since receipt of this assistantship may affect eligibility for certain student loans, grants, or work-study opportunities, the Student Financial Services Office needs to be informed of all acceptances.