

**Application for Fall 2019 Graduate Teaching Associate Positions  
(Due April 29, 2019)**

The Writing Program at SFSU is now accepting applications for Fall 2019 Graduate Teaching Associate (GTA) positions.

General information:

- Applications are due April 29, 2019 and announcements will be made May 6, 2019.
- GTAs are generally appointed to teach one section of First Year Composition (FYC) during the fall semester.
- The gross salary for a 3-unit FYC GTA position is approximately \$529 per month, paid over six months.
- GTAs who attend full time (over 6 units) may also apply for a tuition reimbursement of \$2,080. (See below.)

Course-related **prerequisites**:

- You must have a GPA of at least 3.0.
- You should be on track to complete ENG 700, 704, 709, and 710 before you begin your GTAship.
- However, if you are missing one of these courses, you may still apply if you have equivalent coursework or experience. Please explain in your cover letter.

Requirements **during** the semester of the GTAship:

- You must be matriculated in an MA degree program at SFSU.
- If you are currently a certificate-only student, you will need to apply and be admitted to an SFSU MA program for the semester of the GTAship. Ask the Composition Coordinator for information on how to do this.

Information about **ENG 718** (the 3-unit GTA support and professional development course):

- The primary purpose of the GTA program is to contribute to your long-term professional development as a teacher.
- GTAs traditionally take ENG 718 while teaching and find it to be the most rewarding part of the GTA experience; the course helps GTAs reflect on what they're learning and apply it to future (post-GTA) growth in the profession.
- **However, per the official contract, ENG 718 is neither required, nor is it a part of your GTA workload. It is simply an additional (highly recommended) opportunity for you learn from your experiences and to grow and succeed in the profession.**

Other restrictions:

- During the GTA semester, you are not allowed to hold another SFSU faculty/staff appointment, but you can hold work study and student assistant appointments.
- You may not be appointed as a GTA for more than 4 semesters across all SFSU departments.
- See the University Bulletin description of "Teaching Associate Positions" for further information.

Applicants will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Commitment to teaching
- Completion of designated course work (or equivalent)
- Pedagogical knowledge
- Feedback from faculty
- Prior teaching/tutoring experience
- GPA

Information about SFSU's GTA tuition reimbursement:

- SFSU is currently piloting a program that will provide a \$2,080 "stipend" for eligible GTAs in Fall 2019.
- **However, the stipend is only available to students who attend full time and pay full-time tuition.**
- You should apply for this stipend only if you feel that you can handle a combined workload of:
  - Teaching an FYC course as a GTA
  - Taking three other SFSU courses (e.g. electives such as ENG 718, as well as other major courses).
- If you would like to be considered for the tuition reimbursement, please indicate this in your cover letter.

An important note on scheduling for those who are selected as GTAs:

- In your application, you may specify times/days that you are unavailable to teach.
- However, be aware that we have a very limited number of FYC courses available for GTAs; therefore, you may have to teach as a time that is not necessarily optimal for you, e.g. at 8:00 a.m.

## APPLICATION

Applicants must provide the following materials:

1. A brief cover letter (approx 500 words) in which you discuss how you will use the GTA experience as part of your overall growth trajectory in the teaching profession. Discuss:
  - The **skills and experiences** that you will bring to the GTA experience.
  - The **habits of mind** that that will help you profit from the GTA experience.
  - Your abilities to **collaborate, learn from, and contribute to** the professional growth of your fellow GTAs.
  - The formal and informal ways that you will **reflect upon and leverage your GTA experience so that you will grow in the teaching profession** (e.g. through reflection, discussion, and participation in academic/professional forums such as ENG 718, scholarly conferences and events, professional activities at SFSU and/or professional activities outside of SFSU).
  - **Note: Our goal is to give priority to applicants who are highly committed to the teaching profession and who will effectively use the GTA experience as part of their long-term professional growth trajectory.**
2. The Curriculum Task:
  - A written unit proposal.
  - A one-page cover memo that explains your pedagogical rationale for your design.
3. The Response Task:
  - A written response to the student essay provided in the application. Please emphasize revision.
  - A one-page cover memo that explains your pedagogical rationale for your response.
4. Your signature on the "Expectations" form.
5. A current c.v.
6. Transcripts of all completed upper-division undergraduate and graduate work. (Unofficial is OK.)

Note: Letters of recommendation are not required. The English Department will ask Composition Program faculty to provide feedback on all applicants that they have had in their seminars.

**Please submit application materials in print form to the English Department Writing Programs Office (HUM 488) by 4pm on Monday, April 29, 2019.**

## EXPECTATIONS OF THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSOCIATE

### 1. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

- In the cover letter, applicants may specify times/days that they are prefer to teach.
- However, only a limited number of FYC “course slots” are available for GTAs and course assignments are ultimately made based on the needs of the Writing Program.
- Therefore, GTAs must be prepared to teach whatever section of FYC is offered to them, even if those sections are at an inconvenient time, e.g. 8:00 a.m.

### 2. CURRICULUM

- GTAs are expected to teach a course that is aligned with SFSU’s current FYC curriculum and learning objectives.
- The GTA offer is contingent on you submitting a complete and appropriate course design before you begin employment. (The Writing Program Director will evaluate your materials and work with you over the summer if you need help revising your English 710 project.)

### 3. ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS

- GTAs must attend the beginning-of-semester faculty meeting; arrange your summer schedule accordingly.
- The Writing Program and the English Department offer many additional professional development activities throughout the semester. These are not mandatory nor are they part of your contractual GTA workload. However, you are invited and encouraged to participate in any activities that you feel will benefit your professional growth.

### 4. ENGLISH 718 (The GTA support/professional development course)

- Per contract regulations, ENG 718 is not required for employment as a GTA nor is it part of your official employment hours; it is an optional professional development opportunity.
- However, GTAs find ENG 718 to be an invaluable part of their overall growth in the teaching profession; therefore we strongly recommend that you take ENG 718 and/or find comparable professional development activities that will allow you to leverage your GTA experience so that it contributes to your future career growth.

### 5. WORKLOAD

- According to the official contract, GTAs are paid to work a total of 8 hours per week, including class time, grading, office hours, and the beginning-of-semester meeting. This does not allow much time for course/unit/lesson planning and materials preparation. Nor does it allow much for time for experimenting with ways to respond to student essays. Your signature on this form indicates that, in your prior coursework, you have created a workable and appropriate FYC curriculum, and that you have learned how to respond to student essays efficiently, such that you will be able to accomplish you GTA responsibilities in the allotted time.

### 6. EVALUATION

- At the end of each semester, all instructors (GTAs and lecturers) are evaluated by students via SFSU’s online course evaluation system. Individual teachers receive emailed copies of their evaluations; evaluations are also be read by the Director of the Writing Program.
- In order to ensure a quality education for SFSU undergraduates, GTAs may receive classroom visits from the Writing Program Director or other members of the Hiring, Appointment, and Evaluation Committee, or may be asked to give evidence of their teaching ability at any time during their employment in the Composition Program. An instructor’s failure to cooperate in evaluation proceedings may lead to termination of employment.

### 7. MISCELLANEOUS

- By University Policy, GTAs cannot be appointed for more than four semesters.
- For other obligations that all faculty are required to meet, see the San Francisco State University Faculty Manual.

I have read and understand the document above, and I agree to abide by its provisions.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

## GTA APPLICATION: CURRICULUM TASK

The new SFSU **First Year Composition** curriculum has the following **Student Learning Objectives**:

- **Writing for Inquiry, Belonging, and Self-Development**: Students will use writing as a form of inquiry, in order to build inquiry-driven academic arguments, culminating in a print or digital portfolio of writing. (Assignments should allow students to explore/discover their experiences, goals, interests, and purpose at SFSU.);
- **Rhetorical Knowledge**: Students will demonstrate a familiarity with rhetorical conventions, including purpose, audience, and genre;
- **Information Literacy**: Students will read actively and use information acquired from readings critically in their own writing; integrate reading effectively into their writing; locate, evaluate, and use information ethically in their writing;
- **Writing Processes**: Students will use writing processes and strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proofreading their own and others' work; collaborate with faculty and peers during the writing process and on writing projects; use writing processes and strategies for discovering ideas;
- **Reflection and Metacognition**: Students will reflect on and develop student success and writing strategies; identify and practice habits of mind such as curiosity, openness, engagement, persistence, flexibility, and responsibility.

The new SFSU **First Year Composition** curriculum divides the 16-week semester into 4 large "projects" (3-5 weeks per project), each of which may contain a variety of formal and informal writing assignments:

- **The Writing Project**: Your history, voice, and (digital) identity as a writer/student, your transition from high school to college, your writing strategies in college, your growth and development as a writer.
- **The Purpose Project**: Your future goals and identity, your professional voice, your purpose as a student, your campus resources and opportunities; your mindset for college success.
- **The Inquiry Project**: Your interests, questions, discoveries; your research and reading on topics that matter.
- **The Digital Portfolio Project**: Writing for lifelong learning and self-development.

**Your task is to create a day-by-day plan for "The Writing Project."**

- Assume that you're planning for an FYC that meets 2 days per week, 90 minutes per class meeting.
- Your plan should include in-class activities and homework and it should be about 3 to 4 weeks long.

**In the plan, be sure to include:**

- Beginning-of-semester activities (e.g. syllabus review, ice-breaker, diagnostic, and/or whatever you find important).
- A variety of **reading activities**. You don't need article titles; you can just indicate type, e.g. "article on literacy."
- A variety of **informal writing activities**.
- Any points where you will **respond to students' texts** (e.g. commenting on a draft or meeting in conference).
- At least one **formal piece of writing**. Include a short prompt.

**Do not exceed one page!** Feel free to follow the example 1-page grid on the next page.

**When you've completed your grid, write a 1-page (500 word) rationale** in which you explain to us the pedagogical choices that you have made. Be sure to talk about how this unit will fit in with the rest of the course.

EXAMPLE GRID

<p><b>Day 1:</b> Tuesday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>	<p><b>Day 2:</b> Thursday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>
<p><b>Day 3:</b> Tuesday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>	<p><b>Day 4:</b> Thursday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>
<p><b>Day 5:</b> Tuesday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>	<p><b>Day 6:</b> Thursday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>
<p><b>Day 7:</b> Tuesday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>	<p><b>Day 8:</b> Thursday in class:</p>          <p>Homework for next class:</p>

## GTA APPLICATION: ESSAY RESPONSE ACTIVITY

The attached student essay, “**Expertise in Dance**” is from the first unit of SFSU’s new FYC curriculum: “**The Writing Project.**”

The readings and activities in this unit focused on students’ formal and informal learning experiences, the various types of expertise and funds of knowledge that they bring to their college experience, and their trajectory of lifelong learning.

Throughout the unit, students read, annotated, discussed, and wrote responses to articles focusing on:

- non-traditional/out-of-school learning
- various cultural approaches to learning
- funds of knowledge
- the nature of expertise
- the role that intuition and tacit knowledge play in “expertise”
- the nature of lifelong learning

Students were given the following prompt for the formal essay:

***Choose one type of out-of-school expertise you have (e.g. hobby, leisure activity, personal interest, fandom) and write an essay in which analyze this your experience in order to give readers new and deeper insight into the nature of learning and expertise. Use ideas from the articles that we’ve read and discussed so far in order to support your analysis. You may also use outside articles that you’ve found on your own, but this is not required. Aim for about 750 words (3 pages double-spaced).***

What this student has done already:

- She wrote a brainstorming draft (the so-called “sh\*tty first draft”).
- She shared her topic idea with her peers in class and received oral feedback.
- She wrote a full first draft.
- She did a short peer response on the draft. Her peer responders’ suggested that she include more information from the articles they read and discussed in class.
- She did minor revisions after the peer response, adding some quotes.
- She handed in the draft to you, the teacher, for revision feedback.

### **Your task is to respond to the draft:**

- Print and respond by hand. (Don’t use computer annotations.)
- You can mark up the text; add marginal comments; write an endnote; or use any combination of these methods.
- Your goal is to facilitate revision:
  - The student will revised this draft based on your comments.
  - The student will also make further revisions at the end of the semester for her Digital Portfolio.

When you are done responding, write a **1-page (500 word single spaced) rationale** explaining to us how and why you responded to the paper the way that you did. Feel free to indicate to us what further revision steps the paper will go through during this unit and what revision steps the paper will go through during the final digital portfolio unit.

## Expertise in Dance

When people say the word “learning”, they often think about formal learning in a classroom.

However, there are actually two types of learning. Marsick and Watkins (2001) describe them as:

Formal learning is typically institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, and highly structured. Informal learning, a category that includes incidental learning, may occur in institutions, but it is not typically classroom-based or highly structured, and control of learning rests primarily in the hands of the learner.

Boekarets & Minnaert (1999) describe the two types of learning as:

Formal and informal learning settings are defined as complementary learning environments and it is pointed out that students differ with respect to the learning environments they find conducive to learning.

My experience learning to dance shows how informal learning is an important way to develop expertise in a lifelong way. Ever since I started dancing when I was six year old, I was exposed to many cultural dances that the world could offer. Many of the cultural dances that I’ve experience or heard are salsa, tango, modern dance, tap dance, and West African dance. Every cultural dance represents each ethnic culture and have their own stories told within the dances. Dance is truly important because you develop physical expertise (dancing skill) and cultural expertise (the history of dances) and you can continue learning for your whole life.

Learning to dance simply starts after a person learns to walk as a tiny tot so almost everyone have the ability to dance in any circumstances. The first step to learning to dance is to choose an interesting cultural dance and find a person that mastered the dance to teach the steps. The next step is learning to coordinate the steps according to the beat of the music. Hand motions, spinning, and twirling are part of the dance movements besides from the steps.

There are varieties kinds of cultural dances that people able learn from tango to West Africa dance. According to W.G. Raffé’s Dictionary of Dance, most of cultural dances are considered ritual or court ceremonial from their native countries. To name the few definition of different cultural dances, Chinese dance is an example of ritual dance while definition of jazz dance is considered “Islamic perform as ritual prayers until later slavery took it to New Orleans where black slaves displaced by Christian hymns.”

People learning certain cultural dances will eventually learned to appreciate the culture that the dance originated. People will realize that each cultural dance has its own meanings and stories such as Hawaiian Dance and West African. Hawaiian dance is one of the examples of what I called “storytelling” dance because during my dance class in my high school years, we were taught a day worth of lessons on Hawaiian dance and realized that most of the movement relates to Mother Nature. My high school dance teacher’s sister from Hawaii was invited to show us that when one hand moves in a wavy motion in the air while moving hip from side to side meaning being in the ocean. Another movement from a day of Hawaiian dance was having one arm act like picking something out from the tree while the other hand holds straight up in front means picking fruits out of a tree.

Dancing can also be perceived as another kind of exercise or sport activities to improve healthier lifestyle. According to American Heritage Dictionary, exercise means “to put into play” so dancing is just as similar as exercise from a health perspective. I am considered dancing as such as West African dance just like an exercise, a way to lose weight and gain strength. For example, West African dance looks similar to aerobic class but West African dance requires no plastic steps or no exercise on the floor and each dance step represent its own meanings; otherwise, it look like another kind of aerobic exercises.

In conclusion, dancing helps develop much healthier bodies and mind but most of all you can develop lifelong expertise in cultural appreciation. In fact, Dancing can be seen as part of lifelong learning according to Hager (2001). Dancing can be easy to learn for certain people like me but others may find it hard to pick up the dance steps. Learning to dance is just the first step to health benefits and cultural appreciation. Dancing can be a lifelong health regime to losing weight, gain strength, and decrease stress, just like many other exercises and recreational activities. Other than health benefits, people will eventually develop expertise in cultural appreciation because ritual dances represents each culture by sharing the dancing techniques to many people who are unfamiliar with them.

#### References

- Boekarets & Minnaert. (1999). *Self-regulation with Respect to Informal Learning*. International Journal of Education Research.
- Hager (2001). *Lifelong Learning and the Contribution of Informal Learning*. Chapter in The International Handbook of Lifelong Learning.
- Marsick & Watkins. (2001). *Informal and Incidental Learning*, Chapter in New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education.
- Raffé. (1975). Dictionary of Dance. Oak Tree Publications.