

# HARVARD COLLEGE

OFFICE OF UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION



UNIVERSITY HALL, FIRST FLOOR NORTH  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

---

From: The Office of Undergraduate Education  
Date: June 30, 2020  
Re: The Appointment of Undergraduate Course Assistants

---

## Academic Year 2020-21 Hourly Rates (Fiscal Year 2021)

- Undergraduate Course Assistant: Senior Rate, e.g., section leaders
  - \$19.00/hour
- Undergraduate Course Assistant: Junior rate, e.g., grading objective assignments
  - \$17.00/hour

## PeopleSoft Temp Student Hire, General Guidance

- All undergraduate student instructional support staff are considered Course Assistants and must be hired as such.
- Use a descriptive **Business Title**, e.g., “Course Assistant CS50” or “Grader CS 50.” (Please override the default “Temporary Harv Student OT Elig” text.)
- Course Assistants are hourly student employees. CAs are **paid weekly** and should report hours on a weekly basis.
- The **appointment start date** should be the date that the student started working during the term.
- **Payroll Process** instructions can be found on the Student Employment Office website: <https://seo.harvard.edu/payroll-processes>. A **PeopleSoft work steps** guide for FAS users can be found in the Aurora Knowledge Center: <https://about.aurora.fas.harvard.edu/templht-transactions>

---

In this memo, the Office of Undergraduate Education clarifies the terms of appointment for undergraduate course assistants as defined in *Information for Faculty*. We do so in order to ensure that course assistants are well prepared for their instructional roles and that their appointments do not interfere with their academic progress.

*Information for Faculty* (<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/facultyhandbookpdf/files/information-for-faculty-2019-20.pdf>) defines course assistants as “currently registered Harvard undergraduates who, under the supervision of instructors who hold Faculty-level teaching appointments in the FAS or another Harvard Faculty, assume limited instructional responsibilities.” It specifies that an instructor wishing to hire a course assistant confirm with the student’s Allston Burr Resident Dean that the candidate 1) has attained sophomore standing and 2) is not on academic probation. *Information for Faculty* also states that, “ as undergraduates may fail to recognize the implications of serving in an

instructional role, instructors should take special responsibility for initiating discussions about professional conduct, including the impropriety of amorous relationships with students and the importance of both equity and confidentiality.” Finally, *Information for Faculty* states, “teaching fellows, teaching assistants, or course assistants may have a role in the evaluation of the students in the course, subject to the limitations set by the Faculty Council and the Educational Policy Committee.” As *Information for Faculty* explains, “while undergraduate course assistants may participate in the evaluation of students, they should not be involved in the subjective evaluation of essays and examinations.”

The Office of Undergraduate Education affirms these guidelines, and makes the following clarifications and refinements:

- Departments and committees that employ undergraduate course assistants should consult with the candidate’s Allston Burr Resident Dean to confirm that the candidate has attained sophomore standing and has earned a cumulative GPA of 3.33 or higher. Departments may also wish to consult with the candidate’s resident dean and academic adviser about the candidate’s ability to successfully balance the duties of the course assistant position with his or her other commitments.
- Under faculty supervision, undergraduate course assistants may lead sections or problem-solving sessions and assume other limited instructional duties. Over the term, they **may work an average of 10-12 hours per week**. However, undergraduate course assistants may not take on administrative responsibilities for a course, such as those typically held by a head teaching fellow.
- Under faculty supervision, undergraduate course assistants may evaluate other students’ assignments when the grading involves objective assessment, such as checking answers on a problem set. However, undergraduate course assistants may not grade other students’ work when that work requires subjective assessment, such as evaluating essays, written portions of examinations, or final projects.  
<https://projects.iq.harvard.edu/files/facultyhandbookpdf/files/information-for-faculty-2019-20.pdf>