SESES
GENERAL GRADUATE STUDENT POLICIES

Details regarding graduate assistantships are outlined in the Graduate Catalog (http://nau.edu/GradCol/Policies-and-Forms/Policies/), and graduate assistants should read them carefully. The University expects graduate assistants to be available for work at the beginning of the fall and spring semesters, which is one week prior to the start of classes, through final exams for each semester and the completion of posting of grades. These are contractual obligations.

SESES-funded graduate assistantships are primarily in the form of teaching assistantships. Teaching is an integral part of your professional development and should be treated as such. Expectations vary by course and it is your responsibility to know these expectations for each course in which you are assigned. You should schedule a time during the first week of the semester, before classes to begin, to meet with the professor of the course(s) for which you are a teaching assistant. During this meeting you should discuss, at minimum:

- Lab content: is it your or the professor’s responsibility to define the content of the lab and to insure that the lab and lecture are successfully intermixed. In either case, the professor should approve the content before the lab starts.
- Syllabus: Will you or the professor create the syllabus for the lab? If it is your responsibility, be sure to review the syllabus and get her/his approval for it.
- Lab exercises: is it your or the professor’s responsibility to create lab exercises? If it is yours, will the professor review the exercises before you present them? Professors might have a library of exercises for each lab class; this can aid you in constructing lab exercises if this is your responsibility.
- Participation: how much does the professor expect to be present in the lab and/or direct the lab activities.
- Grading responsibilities: Will you create answer keys or will the professor supply them? Will you be grading all assignments? Will you be keeping track of lab grades? Will you give final grades to the professor or will you be responsible for putting grades into LOUIE?

It is recommended that you and the class professor put together a list of goals and responsibilities for the lab. In the event of a major disagreement between you and professor regarding performance of duties, this list could provide documentation of the expectations you and he/she agreed upon at the beginning of the course.

Teaching Assistant Minimum Expectations:

- Weekly meetings with the faculty coordinator/lab manager are required for all introductory lab TAs (i.e., 100-level courses).
- You are expected to work 20 hours per week (including office hours) at your duties. You should inform the person in charge of your teaching assignments (e.g., SESES Lab Manager) and your Graduate Advisor if you are consistently spending more than 20 hours per week in your TA duties or if there are other serious problems with the professor/lab manager of the course.
- The university considers the syllabus a legal contract. Be sure to prepare it according to NAU policy and adhere to it as closely as possible. All new teaching assistants are
provided with the minimum syllabus requirements during TA Training day.
  o Make clear to students the rules and regulations of the classroom and any other
    expectation you have of them, especially on field trips, by listing those
    expectations in your syllabus
  o Make firm statements about cheating and plagiarism in your syllabus
• A minimum of 1 office hour per week per section of lab taught is required. You are
  expected to list scheduled office hours your syllabus and be available during those times.
• You are expected to respond to student inquiries via email or other format (BB Learn
  message, phone, etc.) in a timely manner.
• You should keep in contact with the professor or lab manager in charge of the class to
  which you are assigned and with the SESES Director, who might assign additional tasks
  within the scope of your position.
• The College of Engineering, Forestry, and Natural Sciences recognizes the importance of
  appropriate record keeping. Therefore, you must maintain all course materials for no less
  than one full year following the semester of study. Information that should be included,
  but not limited to is: required textbooks or other course books, the course syllabus, all
  handouts, tests, papers that the instructor does not return to the student, and grade report
  spreadsheets.

Work with the supervisor(s) of your classes to obtain help with any of the above. The SESES
Director and/or Faculty Graduate Program Coordinator can also be consulted if a problem
develops. The Graduate College offers a course on being a teaching assistant (GC 599) that is
highly recommended.

Research assistants must contact the faculty member who is in charge of funding the
assistantship. Research assistants are governed by the same rules and regulations as teaching
assistants, and consequently they might be asked to perform departmental duties as well as
research, although this is unusual. Furthermore, the research tasks they perform might not be
related to their thesis topic.

In the event of a conflict between a field trip for a university course in which you are
enrolled for credit toward your degree and a TA assignment the priorities are: top priority is the
student's own class field trip; second priority is the student's chief TA assignment; third priority
is any secondary TA assignments (grader). In all cases the student is responsible for finding a
substitute for classes or responsibilities missed. This should be done at least a week in
advance and the supervisor must be notified.

OFFICE SPACE
SESES makes every effort to provide graduate assistants with adequate office space in which to
carry out the terms of their contracts. Office space for students not under contract is a privilege,
not a right, and will be allocated as available. The Graduate Program Coordinator, approximately
according to the following priority schedule, assigns office space at the beginning of each
academic year.
1. First and second year teaching assistants (second-year TAs have priority for offices with
   windows)
2. First and second year research assistants

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a different section or delete?
3. Third year teaching assistants
4. Unfunded first and second year graduate students
5. Third year graduate students (many will have offices in their advisor’s lab)

BUILDING POLICIES
All graduate students that are assigned office space will be issued a building key and a key to their office. The SESES office staff can issue keys. Please have a $10 cash deposit with you in order to receive your keys. All buildings must be locked at night and on weekends. Numerous thefts have occurred because this policy has not been followed.

The proper place for bicycles and sports activities is outside of the building. Glass display cases have been broken as a consequence of not following these policies. Penalties for misuse of building facilities are loss of building keys and possible loss of office space. Students will be required to pay for any damage to the building resulting from their inappropriate actions.

SESES FRONT OFFICES
The SESES office staff are willing to assist incoming students as much as possible, or by directing her/him to the appropriate individual or office on campus. They cannot serve as individual advisors. Curricular matters can be addressed with the Graduate Coordinator, Faculty Graduate Coordinator, or faculty thesis advisor. Teaching assistantships are allocated through a process headed by the Faculty Graduate Coordinator in consultation with the SESES Director, Lab Coordinator, and SESES faculty members. Specific teaching assignments of graduate students are made by the Lab Coordinator in consultation with faculty and graduate students. The number of teaching assistantships made available mostly depends on allocations from the Graduate College and University based SESES Geology needs to staff lab sections.

Following is a list of policies and procedures now in effect for the SESES Program. These guidelines are an effort to make the school run smoothly for all concerned. Your help in adhering to these policies is greatly appreciated.

Keys: Keys to SESES buildings are available to all graduate assistants from the SESES office. There is a one-time $10 cash deposit (no checks, please) required before they will be issued. This covers any number of keys you have checked out. Your deposit will be returned when all of the keys have been turned in.

Photocopying: Graduate assistants may copy materials, only for work-related to courses that they are teaching, with permission from SESES offices admin staff. Please check in with the office staff if you have an immediate and large copy job. We understand that there are emergencies. However, your emergency may not be the only one, so please plan ahead. Personal photocopying is not to be done using the SESES copiers.

Computer Lab: The lab hours will be posted on the door. The student workers are responsible for keeping a supply of paper available for the printers and for answering the students’ questions. A code to enter the computer lab can be obtained from the office staff.
**Supplies:** Supplies (notebooks, pens, tape, paper clips, etc.) are to be used for instructional use only as needed to teach labs. Supplies are not for personal use. You will need to come to the Program office for access to the supply room in order to obtain teaching supplies.

**Mail:** All SESES faculty and graduate students have a mailbox in the Program offices. Absolutely no personal mail is to be sent out from, or received by, SESES (this includes credit card bills, phone bills, magazines, etc.). Likewise, no personal faxes are to be sent to, or received by, the SESES fax machine.

**Time Entry:** If you have a Graduate or Research Assistant position, time entry is not necessary because you are on contract. However, you will need to go to Payroll to show identification after you have completed an online New Hire packet so that you can begin receiving pay. If you did not receive the New Hire packet email, please check with the office.

If you are hired as an hourly worker, you will need to enter time in the LOUIE system every other week in order to get paid. Instructions are available in the office. Once you log in to the LOUIE system, click on the icon “Employee Time Sheet Entry.” If you need and do not have this icon, please contact payroll. Please observe time entry due dates and paycheck distribution dates, as per the Payroll Schedule made available at the SESES office. Be aware of early time entry due dates due to holidays. It is your responsibility to enter your time by the posted deadline. Time that is not entered on time might not be processed that pay period; this situation is difficult to rectify. You are responsible for all information on your time slip and must keep track of it yourself.

**Paychecks:** Only direct deposit of paychecks is available. Direct deposit forms are available on the Payroll web site, or in the geology office, and should be completed and turned in to the payroll office. You can view your pay statement in the LOUIE system.

**Lab Grade Reports:** You should keep your grades in spreadsheet format; this is the preferred and recommended method. You may also keep grades in a handwritten format, if you so choose.

**Mid-Term and Final Grade Reports:** Mid-term reports are filed electronically; you will receive email notification from the University about mid-term grades during the semester. Final grade reports are also entered over the computer and will be available at the end of the semester.

**Labs & Field Trips:** Follow the instructions of the Lab Coordinator. See the Lab Coordinator for clarification or other assistance regarding your teaching assignments. Let students know the schedule for make-up lab sessions. Be sure the students are clear about where and when they are to meet for field trips. Post the field trip information on the lab room door and in the lobby of the main geology building. Please inform the office staff of important field trip information, even if it was announced in class. Students frequently call the office for this kind of information. If field trips are cancelled or postponed, post this information and also tell the office staff.

**STUDENT EVALUATIONS**

Near the end of each semester the students will evaluate all classes through the on-line evaluation process. This includes the labs that you teach. The Graduate College handbook has information on ABOR policy on teaching evaluations. You will also evaluate the instructors of the classes you
take. These are serious evaluations that are one of the main items in evaluating the faculty member’s performance and are used to improve courses. Be responsible and constructive in your evaluations. Do not let your evaluation be influenced by personal matters best handled by consulting with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

**STUDENT FILES**

Your application to NAU as well as information such as class evaluations and records of grant spending are kept in a file in the main office. In most cases files contain material written under conditions of confidentiality (e.g., letters of recommendation). From time to time you might need access to undergraduate transcripts or other material that might be in your file. The office staff will assist you with obtaining this information; under no circumstances are you permitted to access these files yourself.

**VAN-DRIVER TRAINING**

All state employees, including all SESES teaching assistants, who drive 11-passenger vans are required to take the van driver training course. You must complete this course before driving a state van. The Graduate Coordinator will make arrangements for training before the semester begins.

**RESIDENCY**

The Graduate College controls the process for obtaining Arizona residency for graduate students. If you intend to apply for residency in Arizona, which we highly recommend you do to qualify for certain kinds of financial aid, you should initiate the process during your first semester at NAU; you can contact Karen Cornelius of the Graduate College for help with the application. You typically apply in June and July of your first summer for the second year. If you intend to apply for residency, you should be aware that physical presence in Arizona for one full year and financial independence are the primary consideration of the residency evaluation group. You must show evidence of having been present in Arizona, generally by presenting a Arizona driver's license, being able to show rental agreements and utilities bills, registering your automobile with the state of Arizona, and registering to vote. For the most part, In-State Tuition Waivers are reserved for students who are formally Arizona residents in the spring of their first year or who will likely obtain residency by early July.