

To: Graduate Students and Faculty
From: Susan Brennan, Graduate Director
Subject: **Guidelines for SDI TA** (Substantial Direct Instruction)
Date: February 4, 2014

The following guidelines for the Psychology Department's SDI requirement have been revised.

1. Two SDIs are required for advancement to candidacy. This fulfills both a Departmental and a University teaching requirement for Ph.D. students. The idea is for the student to have a substantial teaching experience, serving as an expert and authoritative figure in the classroom.
2. SDI TAs are arranged **before the start of the semester**. Students should pick up an **SDI Approval Form** from the Graduate Office, have the form signed by the instructor, and then submit it at least one week before the start of the semester to the Graduate Director for approval.
3. Students doing an SDI TA must do between 4 and 28 hours of class presentations. The upper limit is appropriate when SDI TAs are teaching a laboratory section, their own section of a course, etc. The lower limit of 4 hours distinguishes an SDI TA from a regular TA for which students might be asked to do (or may wish to do) one or two lectures as part of their regular TA, which would *not* be counted as an SDI. The sessions counted toward an SDI must be part of the regular required class meetings (with all students expected to attend). As an example, an SDI associated with a 1:20 lecture course would require doing (at least) 3 full-class-period lectures. Running review sessions is *not* counted, as these are optional for students in the class.
4. Students must be observed by faculty (either the course's Instructor, or another faculty member), ideally during two or more presentations, but at least once during each SDI. This requirement also applies to students who complete the SDI requirement by teaching a course during the summer session. With the prior approval of the Graduate Director, students may also receive feedback on videotaped class sessions. The observing faculty member should provide a written evaluation for the SDI at the end of the semester.
5. Students must obtain student evaluations on their SDI presentations. If the presentations occur early in the semester, students may choose not to wait until the end of the semester to obtain those evaluations. The evaluations may be obtained electronically or via forms available from the graduate office. Evaluations must be conducted anonymously, following University rules (so the student instructor may not be in the room while the evaluation is conducted, nor handle the evaluations themselves; this should be done by a volunteer from the class).
6. To teach a course as the primary instructor, prior completion of one SDI experience is necessary.
7. With the exception of PSY 310 (Research and Writing in Psychology) and the graduate statistics courses (PSY 501 and 502), a course should **not normally have more than one SDI TA** associated with it, since the purpose of an SDI TA is not to substitute for instructor teaching responsibilities. Exceptions must receive prior approval from the Graduate Office.
8. Students may not do an SDI for a course being taught by another graduate student, unless prior approval is received from the Graduate Office. All SDI evaluations must be conducted by an appropriate faculty member (or other qualified individual) approved by the Graduate Director.
9. Students must complete at least one SDI TA in PSY 310. This part of the requirement is motivated by two factors: (a) it is important for each student to have at least one real experience of running a course individually, with substantial individual contact with students; and (b) meeting the department's undergraduate teaching obligation requires that essentially all students help to cover this course. This requirement applies to all graduate students who enter the program during or after Fall, 2002.