

# ***Graduate Teacher Certificate – Alternative \****

***\*Alternative Certificate for Graduate Students without a Teaching Assistantship Purdue University, West Lafayette, IN***

The mission of Purdue University is to serve the citizens of Indiana, the United States, and the world through **discovery, learning, and engagement**. Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), as apprenticing instructors, play vital roles in accomplishing this mission.

To assist graduate students in developing teaching skills while simultaneously documenting their teaching experiences and challenges for their resumes, Purdue offers the four following programs, i.e., the:

1. Graduate Teacher Certificate (GTC)
2. Graduate Teacher Certificate-Alternative (GTC-A)
3. Advanced Graduate Teacher Certificate (AGTC)
4. Graduate Teacher Technology Certificate (GT<sup>2</sup>C).

Overseeing these programs is the Center for Instructional Excellence (CIE), Committee for the Education of Teaching Assistants (CETA), the Lilly Endowment Retention Initiatives, and the Graduate School.

**The Graduate Teacher Certificate - Alternative (GTC-A)** program is centrally administered by Center for Instructional Excellence (CIE), in collaboration with the applicants' department or school.

The program is designed to help graduate students who are not awarded teaching assistantships, acquire teaching experiences while being mentored by a faculty member. By definition, graduate students need to apply for

the GTC-A to initiate this alternative teaching experience on campus.

The specific requirements for the GTC-A are:

1. Alternative classroom teaching experiences
2. A semester course on college teaching
3. Participation in continuous improvement activities
4. Classroom visitation/videotaping with consultative feedback and self-analyses
5. Implementation of student feedback and evaluation with self-assessment.
6. Being mentored and maintaining a journal.

How to document the above appears in *Teaching Reports 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6*.

## **1. Alternative Classroom Teaching Experiences**

To be certified, the graduate student is assigned a professor-as-mentor (from any West Lafayette academic department) for a minimum of two semesters in a substantive, meaningful teaching experience each semester. The time period for actual "teaching" must cover no less than two weeks of classes subject to approval by CETA (Committee for the Education of Teaching Assistants), regardless of whether the class meets on a daily, semi-weekly, or weekly basis in a classroom, studio, or lab. Mentor (faculty) and student are expected to meet at least once a week, every week of the semester, and to keep records about the context and content of those meetings.

Assessment and evaluation of both teaching and learning is to be built into the teaching and mentoring experience. Responsibilities consisting of grading and/or writing tests/exams, holding office hours, and proctoring tests/exams do not fulfill this requirement. See *Teaching Report 1* for how to document these required experiences.

## **2. Semester Course on College Teaching**

To be certified, the graduate student must enroll in and complete a CETA approved course on college teaching. See *Teaching Report 2* for how to document this experience.

## **3. Continuous Improvement Activities**

To be certified, the graduate student must complete a minimum of six hours of instructional workshops, classes, or seminars (beyond the pre-semester orientation) during the semesters in which they are being mentored. Typical workshop topics may include: improving teaching through the use of student feedback, test construction, administering and grading tests, classroom ethics, motivating students, and/or weekly sessions on "how to teach" upcoming classes. CIE and other Purdue academic units provide classes and workshops of this nature each semester. See *Teaching Report 3* for how to document this task.

#### 4. Classroom Visitation/Videotaping with Consultative Feedback and Self-Analyses

To be certified, the graduate students must participate in the following three activities:

- **Classroom visitation/videotaping:** being observed live or by videotape while teaching a scheduled class. The observation must be done by a faculty or CIE staff member.
- **Conferencing:** a consultative session that follows the visitation/videotaping and consists of meeting with a faculty or CIE staff member to discuss the teaching experience.
- **Written self-analyses:** follows the conferencing as a means for GTAs to reflect on their teaching.  
See *Teaching Report 4* for how to document these three components.

#### 5. Utilization Of Assessment, Evaluation, and Consultative Feedback To Improve Teaching

To be certified, the graduate student must utilize Informal Early Feedback (IEF) and some form of the Purdue Instructor and Course Evaluation System (PICES) for classes taught in the two semesters of teaching. A written narrative reflection by the graduate student on his/her teaching experience and evaluation data collection from IEF and PICES is also required for certification. See *Teaching Report 5* for how to document this requirement.

#### 6. Mentoring

This requirement has two components.

- **Being mentored** includes meeting with a faculty member on a weekly or semi-weekly basis for both semesters to discuss issues related to teaching.
- **Maintaining a Journal.** Graduate students are required to maintain a journal to document mentoring, as well as progress in teaching and assessment. See *Teaching Report 6* for how to document this requirement.

#### Documentation

Documentation for the GTC-A begins when the teaching experience or course on college teaching begins, whichever comes first. Documentation is required and resembles a pilot teaching portfolio. *Teaching Reports 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6* and information about the certification are available from the Center for Instructional Excellence. All documentation is to be completed under the supervision of and validated by a CIE staff, CETA, or faculty member from the academic unit in which the graduate student is mentored.

#### Graduate Teacher Celebration

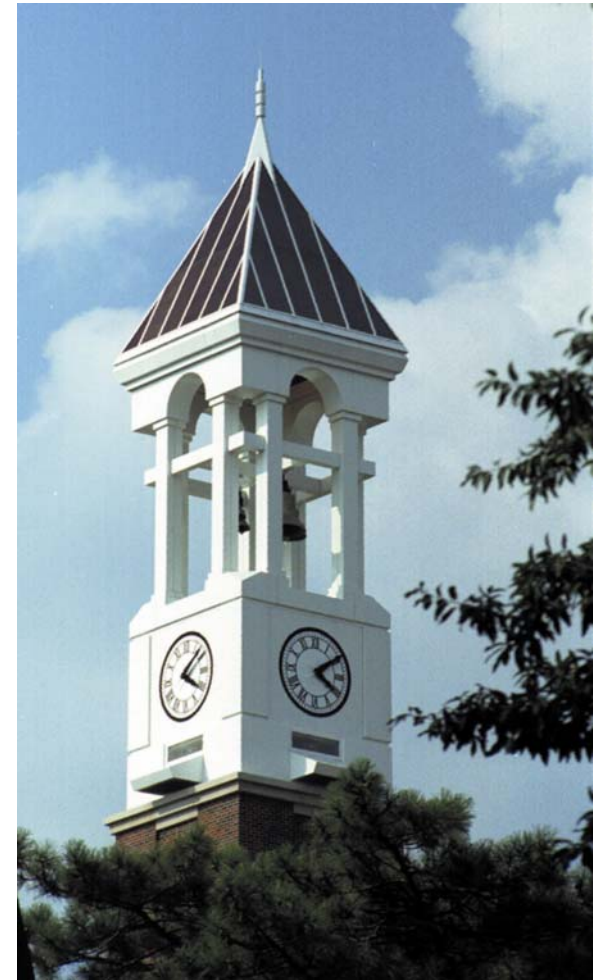
The annual Purdue Graduate Teacher Celebration will recognize students who successfully complete the GTC-A by April 1 of any given year. The GTC-A Program helps graduate students realize growth and satisfaction by providing limited teaching and mentoring experiences and instructional development activities that can be assessed and documented.

For information call CIE at 496-6422, or visit our website

[www.cie.purdue.edu](http://www.cie.purdue.edu)

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Purdue University, West Lafayette

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