

SoCS Council Meeting Interim Director's Remarks

Tue., Jan 15, 2019

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Welcome

A. Xiaodong Lin

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Retirement and Replacement

- A. David Chiu is on phased retirement.
- B. Replacement of the position has been approved by the Office of Provost.
- C. Rank: Assistant or Associate Professor – Tenure Track
- D. Search will commence in May upon arrival of the new Director.

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New Faculty Position

- A. The Centre for Advancing Responsible and Ethical AI (CARE-AI) includes 3 new faculty hire's in CEPS.
 - ☐ One position comes to SoCS.
- B. Dean has instructed SoCS to recruit an Assistant or Associate professor in the AI field.
- C. Hiring focus
 - 1. Responsible and ethical use of AI
 - 2. Master level Collaborative Specialization in AI (CSAI)
 - 3. Possible affiliate member in Vector Inst preferred
- D. AI Faculty Search Cmt will be formed immediately.
 - ☐ Suggestions on Search Cmt and hiring are welcome.

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Facts on TA Hiring Operation

A. Teaching 3000~3600 students per semester

- ☐ Hiring 50~60 TAs per semester
- ☐ Processing 300~450 TA applications

B. Constraints

- a. TA needs by individual courses
- b. TA Budget
- c. Financial support to graduate program
- d. Applicant pool
 - ☐ Undergrad
 - ☐ Grad with or without guaranteed GTAs
- e. Collective Agreement (CUPE 3913)

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TA Hiring Process

A. Current process

1. Guaranteed GTAs to a subset of grad students through assessment of 2 committees
2. Per-course TA allocation by its TA needs and enrolment
3. Per-course applications from student applicants
4. Application evaluation and TA selection by ASH Cmt
5. TA position offering and TA hiring
6. Adjustment after course start

B. Significant effort

ASH Chair, ASH Cmt, Assi Dir, Prog Consul, Asso Dir, Grad Assi, Clerk, Admin Officer, & Director

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Process versus Utilization

- A. Evolution of the process
 - 1. The initial process was in operation in W18.
 - 2. Positive impact
 - 3. Continue to identify limitations and to improve
- B. Best operation also depends on good understanding and proper usage by all involved.
 - ☐ Instructors
 - ☐ Student applicants

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Stipulating TA Qualifications

- A. Qualifications are separated as *required* or *preferred*.
- B. Applicants without a required qualification are significantly lower scored.
 - ☐ Ex Stipulation: 1 req qual; 10 preferred qual;
 - ☐ X: has 1 req qual; 0 preferred qual;
 - ☐ Y: has 0 req qual; 10 preferred qual; → X is ranked higher than Y.
- C. Too many non-essential qualifications may cause difficulty to find any good candidate for the course.
- D. Not-To-Do list for instructors
 - 1. Don't ignore opportunity to update TA quals for your course.
 - 2. Don't put preferred qualifications as required.
 - 3. Don't include non-essential qualifications.
 - 4. Don't list qualifications that don't make sense to people unfamiliar with the course (e.g., new grad, ASH Cmt).

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Advise Students for Better Applications

- A. Grads without guaranteed GTA may be hired if apply.
- B. Vital to respond to **each qualification** in job posting.
 - ☐ It is easy to do so by completing the survey.
 - ☐ The response does not need to be long.
- C. Not-To-Do list for applicants
 1. Don't assume that ASH Cmt know your qualifications (e.g. level of coding skills) not explicitly stated in your application.
 2. Don't forget to respond to each relevant qualification.

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How Should Instructor Influence TA Hiring

- Guidelines
 1. "In all cases of job competition, the University's selection criteria shall only include: qualifications (academic and professional), competence, capability, skill and ability, and prior relevant experience." – CA (CUPE 3913)
 2. CA directs that hiring decisions can only be made by the hiring committee.
- A. Stipulate qualifications that can be objectively specified by applicants and evaluated by ASH Cmt.
- B. Help students to file **complete** applications.
- C. Not-To-Do for instructors
 - ☐ Refrain from asking ASH Cmt to hire a specific student.

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Limitations for Improvement

A. Late discovery of time conflict

- ☐ After TAs for a course are hired, it is discovered that no one can cover a lab section due to time conflict.

B. Late faculty influence

- ☐ After a student applied and was hired as GTA, the thesis advisor advised student not to take the job.

- ❖ Identification of limitations and suggestions for improvement are welcome.