

Guiding principle: Evaluation of GTAs should be viewed as an extension of faculty mentoring of graduate students.

Each unit should establish its own evaluation and post-evaluation procedures according to unit and/or discipline standards and KU requirements, in keeping with the KU policy on [Performance Evaluations for Graduate Teaching Assistants](#). We recommend different evaluations and targeted feedback keyed to different GTA positions/roles. Unit procedures should acknowledge that evaluation is not necessarily just a one-time visit to the classroom - it may include one or more visits, or none at all, depending on the format of class (discussion/recitation sections, lab, online, etc.), the specific role/experience of the GTA, the skills being evaluated, etc. Effective evaluation may also include reviewing course materials, discussing teaching practices with the GTA and/or directing the GTA to relevant resources. Evaluations should encompass both “hard skills” (knowledge of material, carrying out responsibilities, compliance with unit and KU policies) and “soft skills” (e.g., interpersonal skills and effective communication). In addition, feedback should focus primarily on specific observations and suggestions for improvement, rather than on quantitative evaluation (e.g., “Outstanding/Exceeds Expectations/Meets Expectations/Needs Improvement/Unsatisfactory”). The evaluation process should include input from the GTA.

Units should be able to give negative evaluations to GTAs for constructive purposes, without fear of drastic consequences. Negative feedback may fall into three categories of seriousness: (i) areas that need improvement; (ii) seriously unacceptable performance according to unit and/or discipline standards; (iii) serious violation of professional conduct according to the [Student Rights & Responsibilities Policy](#), the [Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#) between KU and GTAC, and other [KU policies](#). Units should determine for themselves the boundary between (i) and (ii), and should clearly specify outcomes in each of the three cases. It is important that policymakers, administrators, and evaluators at the unit level understand HR’s role in GTA appointments and know what does and does not need to be reported to HR. Feedback of type (i), which typically should comprise the majority of negative feedback, can be handled at the unit level and need not be reported to HR or elsewhere. Units should document in writing such feedback and steps for improvement. For feedback in (ii), the unit may choose to consult with and/or report to HR to lay a foundation for further action if the behavior persists. Feedback in (iii) must be reported to HR.