
Introduction

Welcome to the Computer Science Undergraduate Grader cohort. As our program has grown in size, it has also seen a sharp rise in the quality of our students and their work. Consequently, becoming a part of the Grader cohort has become much more competitive. Every semester the average GPA of our graders rises and the number of returning graders increases. You are among an elite group of CS students and you should take pride in that!

The program faculty rely heavily on you and you are an integral part of the undergraduate experience in Computer Science. This document was written to help you navigate your role as a Computer Science Undergraduate Grader at Vanderbilt.

Structure

Every course will vary slightly but the general structure of the grading system is the same. The faculty member teaching the course to which you are assigned is the final authority. If you are assigned to a course with several sections, one of the professors will be identified as the person overseeing UGG (UnderGraduate Grader) activities. Some courses will have a graduate Teaching Assistant assigned to the course as well. This TA *may* be assigned additional supervisory duties concerning the UGG's so check with your professor during your course orientation. In courses where there is a large number of UGG's, an undergraduate may also be assigned administrative duties that help in the management of such a large group. Here are a few other people that may be helpful to you during your time with the Cohort.

- Hiring and course assignments: Ms. Carly Niebrugge carly.r.niebrugge@Vanderbilt.Edu
- I-9 Documentation and Payroll: Ms. Linda Koger linda.l.koger@vanderbilt.edu
- Director of Undergraduate Studies: Dr. Julie Johnson Julie.L.johnson@vanderbilt.edu

Eligibility

Vanderbilt undergraduate and Masters students are eligible to apply for a UGG position if they are in Good Standing (according to their academic record in YES) and have not been convicted of an Honor Code violation. Ph.D. candidates are not eligible for the UGG positions.

Different courses have different hiring requirements that include exemplary performance in the course for which you are applying. Eligibility requirements for select courses can be found on the application.

Because there is a 19-hour limit on total hours worked as a Vanderbilt student-employee, UGG's may not have another Vanderbilt job. Exceptions are made on a case-by-case basis and you should make note of any other Vanderbilt job on your UGG application. Your UGG responsibilities come first, making it very difficult to manage a second position.

Hiring

Ms. Carly Niebrugge in the EECS office manages the hiring of UGG's. Hiring decisions are made jointly with the DUS and program faculty. Students are ranked according to:

1. past performance as a UGG (if applicable)
2. recommendations and requests by program faculty
3. performance in the class for which you are applying
4. current GPA
5. current classification (sophomore...)
6. number of classes you are applying for (the more classes you apply for, the better chance you have of being hired)
7. CS major, minor, CmpE major, minor (note this is a "tie-breaker" ranking only; you do not need to be a department major to be hired)

Applications and deadlines are posted each semester at

<https://my.vanderbilt.edu/juliejohnson/>

Fall semester applications are usually available in late April. Spring semester applications are usually available in November.

Binding offers can only be extended by Ms. Niebrugge in the EECS office or the CS DUS. If you ask a professor if you can be a UGG for their class or a professor asks you to apply to be their UGG this should be viewed as an *invitation* only, and not a guarantee of a UGG assignment.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of a UGG vary greatly from course to course but will most likely include grading of student work. The privacy and handling of graded student work is protected under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

Every UGG must complete FERPA training before beginning their duties as a grader. Your supervising professor will provide you with details on where to receive this training.

You may also be required to hold office hours. Your supervising professor will share their philosophy and guidelines on office hours. Another good resource is the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt. Cancelling office hours with short notice or no notice creates a lot of problems for the students and the other UGG's in your course. Failure to hold office hours may result in early termination or a poor performance review by your professor.

Most UGG's are required to grade for the final exam and in most cases must remain on campus until all grading for their assigned course is complete. If this may pose a problem for you, discuss your responsibilities thoroughly with the supervising professor *before* accepting your position. Failure to complete your grading duties during the final exam period will result in a negative review and you will not be rehired as a UGG at Vanderbilt. You may also jeopardize your final paycheck.

Your Responsibility to the Honor Code

As a Vanderbilt student, you are subject to the Honor Code (undergraduate or graduate) and are held to a higher standard as a UGG. In your role as UGG, program faculty entrust you with homework answers and exam keys as well as access to student grades. This bond of trust is critical to the success of the UGG system and the mission of the department. Any breach of this trust is viewed as an egregious violation of the Vanderbilt Honor code not only because you damage your own reputation, but because you have put the reputation and honor of the entire UGG Cohort at risk.

As a UGG you are also our first line of defense against cheating. It is most likely that you will be the first one to notice suspicious student submissions. As a UGG and student at Vanderbilt, you are required to report any suspected violations to your supervising professor.

As a UGG you have a unique relationship with the Honor Code as detailed below.

- Giving and receiving unauthorized aid: Naturally, you are authorized to give aid to students while you are working as a UGG. This includes your time in assigned office hours and while grading (giving constructive feedback). **You are not permitted to**
 - help students enrolled in your course outside of your regularly scheduled office hours
 - answer private electronic communications with students enrolled in your course unless this is explicitly permitted by your supervising professor
 - work as a private tutor for Vanderbilt students enrolled in your course (paid or unpaid)

If a student contacts you outside of your scheduled office hours you are encouraged to notify one of your supervising professors who will inform the student that such contact is not permitted (unless the course policy states otherwise).

- Plagiarism: You are the first line of defense against plagiarism. If you suspect copying, notify your supervising professor immediately.
- Any action designed to deceive: This often occurs when a student submits late homework directly to a UGG in an effort to avoid a late penalty. Your supervising professor may or may not decide to report this violation to the HC, but it is critical you notify your supervising professor so that they can issue a warning to the student. This protects your integrity and reputation as a UGG. Any request from a student to alter a grade outside of approved re-grading should be reported at once.
- Did you know that examinations and the questions therein, as well as lectures, teaching notes, scholarly writings, course handouts, assignments, and other course materials, are the property of the individual faculty member? Copying or distributing any such materials without the permission of the copyright owner may constitute an infringement violation. If you see or hear of students distributing previous class material, you must report this to your supervising professor. If you engage in distribution while a UGG or after your work is finished, you will be reported to the HC.

Leaving your Position Early

At Vanderbilt you are a student first and a UGG second. During the semester you will need to learn to balance your study load and your responsibilities as UGG. There are many people that can help you with this. They include current and past UGG's, your professors, your advisor, Ms. Maddie French in the Office for Academic Services (FGH 104) and the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt. If you feel you are unable to fulfill your duties as a UGG during the semester

- Communicate with your supervising professor *immediately*. Early communication is key and will not reflect negatively on your job review or application for future semesters.
- Though a leave of absence and subsequent return to UGG status is rare and is usually only appropriate in cases of serious illness, this provision may apply to you
- If you and your professor feel it is best for you to resign your position, they will contact the EECS office to begin termination
- As mentioned in the Responsibilities section above, if you feel you will not be able to grade the final examination (if assigned) you need to discuss this with your supervising professor in the first half of the semester. You may be terminated from your position but, depending on your circumstances and the timeliness of your notification, it may not reflect poorly on your job review.

Failure to fulfill your duties as UGG is grounds for immediate termination. Missing a grading deadline or struggling to fulfill your duties does not necessarily result in early termination, but here is what does:

- Failure to communicate with your supervising professor. If you are going to miss a deadline, or feel overwhelmed with your current responsibilities, talk with your professor right away. The program faculty are committed to the tenet that you are a student first, a UGG second. Let them help you to manage your responsibilities
- Conviction of an Honor Code violation
- Missed office hours with no notice
- Repeated cancellation of office hours
- Repeated complaints from students in your course that are substantiated by your supervising professor

Job Performance Review

Professors (and possibly TA's who had administrative duties in their course) will review the performance of each UGG and send their confidential remarks along to the DUS to be used in the next semester's hiring. Exemplary performance as a UGG along with continued success in your studies almost guarantees that you will be rehired in subsequent semesters should you choose to reapply. Returning UGG's are also given preference in grader course assignments whenever possible. If at any time you have questions about your performance and how you are doing in your job, ask your professor and they will be happy to discuss it with you.

Conclusion

As a UGG, you are a valuable member of the CS program. You are in a partnership with professors and other UGG's that relies on trust, cooperation and open communication. You influence the reputation of our program and have a direct impact on the undergraduate experience. A successful career as a UGG can reflect favorably on your resume and may result in letters of recommendation from faculty that are full of anecdotes and real-world scenarios where you showed exceptional skills and judgment. The benefits of being a UGG in CS are enormous, but so is the commitment. Measure these things before you commit to joining us.