

Rules for Treatment of Prospective RAs

1. A faculty member working with one of these students implicitly declares that the student is seriously being considered for an RA in their second year. These students are not to be used as "free" labor to be let go as soon as their free year is up.
2. The student should be fully and honestly apprised of their funding chances at all times. Faculty members must avoid misleading these students in terms of funding (and advising) likelihoods. A faculty member with no chance of student funding in the second year should not be working with any of the first year GA/TA students.
3. After one semester of work with a faculty member, a definitive YES/NO decision must be made as to whether an RA will be offered the subsequent year. The faculty member should alert the student as soon as this funding decision has been made. If the faculty member cannot make up their mind after one semester, the student should be advised to work for another faculty member.
4. After one semester, if the decision is "I want to hire you but I am not sure I will have the money" then the student should be advised to work for another faculty member for a semester while still leaving the possibility of returning to the original faculty member if funding does arrive.
5. Faculty should not expect too much from these first-year students. Most of them are just taking the major area courses, preparing for the written PhD exam in January and adjusting to a new life away from home (likely in a new country). In addition, the TAs are working half time on their teaching responsibilities.
6. Faculty should be clear about what is expected to join group. Should students attend meetings, complete an independent study project, take specific classes, write an essay, etc. Set clear boundaries for what should be done before a decision will be made.