

Department of English and Comparative Literature Policies and Procedures for Appointing Teaching Fellows

Teaching fellows (TFs) serve a vital role in the mission of the Department of English and Comparative Literature. They provide outstanding teaching for significant numbers of students, instilling in many undergraduates new confidence in their abilities to read and write. TFs also make a conscientious investment in professional development, participating in programs designed to strengthen their teaching and sharing their expertise with less experienced colleagues. The teaching fellowship represents an indispensable experience for graduate students preparing for a profession that requires, values, and rewards good teaching.

In awarding teaching fellowships, the Department assumes a responsibility both to its graduate students and to the undergraduate students enrolled in classes taught by TFs. Undergraduate students deserve excellent instruction, and graduate students merit not only the financial support that teaching fellowships offer but also the opportunity to enhance their résumés and to realize a commitment to teaching as an important professional goal. To that end, the Department has developed the following guidelines. They are intended both to inform graduate students of the policies and procedures governing the appointment of TFs and to assure others that this process entails carefully reviewing an applicant's qualifications and making necessary professional judgments about the quality of his or her work.

The eight sections of this document outline the following topics: Responsibility for Appointments, Selection Criteria, Application Materials, Initial Appointment, Reappointment, Teaching Loads, Tuition and Health Insurance, and Appeal Procedures.

I. Responsibility for Appointments

- A. The Chair's Advisory Committee¹ appoints Senior Fellows and Senior Teaching Fellows and selects recipients of the Hartsell, Gaskin, and Betts awards for excellence in teaching.
- B. The Administrative Committee² determines
 1. which graduate students shall be reappointed as TFs;
 2. which graduate students admitted directly to the PhD program shall receive contracts in their first year;
 3. which second-year MA students shall be recommended for teaching fellowships.

The Committee will consult with directors of film courses, creative writing, and Writing In the Disciplines programs prior to selecting TFs for those programs.

¹. The Chair of the Department; the Directors of Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, and the Writing Program; and four faculty members elected by the faculty. A graduate student elected by the graduate students also serves on the Committee but has no responsibility for appointments or for award selection.

². The Chair of the Department and the Directors of Graduate Studies, Placement, Undergraduate Studies, and the Writing Program.

- C. The Faculty Director of SITES lab consults with the Writing Program Director to appoint SITES interns (subject to the approval of the administrative team).
- D. The Writing Program Director chooses the Graduate Assistant to the WP Director (GAD), subject to the approval of the administrative team.
- E. The Chair retains the responsibility for all teaching assignments in the Department.
- F. Special Contingencies: Though the Department sets as a goal to award second-year MA students two sections and PhD students three sections of teaching per year, restrictions on the instructional budget and other factors may sometimes make it necessary to award partial contracts. When awarding such contracts becomes necessary, the Directors of Undergraduate Studies and of the Writing Program are responsible for increasing or upgrading contracts if funds subsequently become available.

II. Selection Criteria

- A. All applicants for teaching fellowships must have completed one year in a graduate degree program.
- B. Formal training in teaching composition is required. Ordinarily, completing English 606 or ROML 700 (or an equivalent course at another institution) satisfies this requirement. Second- year MA students may complete this requirement concurrently with supervised teaching.
- C. All applicants for appointment or reappointment as TFs will be evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:
 1. Academic excellence, as demonstrated by such evidence as course grades, performance on written and oral examinations, and faculty members' written reports on MA and PhD coursework and MA theses;
 2. Teaching excellence, as demonstrated by such evidence as written teaching observation reports and student evaluations;
 3. Professional responsibility, as demonstrated in such activities as helping to administer or score the Placement Examination, complying with deadlines, attending staff and coordinating group meetings, allowing students to observe classes, conducting or attending workshops, and so on.
 4. Timely progress toward the degree. "Timely progress" is defined by a combination of factors that include completing coursework on schedule, passing comprehensive written and oral examinations, and successfully defending the dissertation prospectus in the appropriate semester, given an individual's approved course of study.³ The Director of Graduate Studies (from a student's home department) will evaluate each student's "progress toward the degree" and convey this information to the Writing Program Director.

³ Time toward degree varies according to choice of major or minor in the English & Comparative Literature Department or to requirements determined by whatever department a student belongs to.

III. Application Materials

- A. Application materials are confidential. They are made available only to persons directly involved in making hiring decisions and cannot be shared with faculty members or other applicants.
- B. Applicants have the right to inspect any documents in their hiring files, unless they have previously waived in writing the right to read particular documents such as letters of recommendation.
- C. Selection committees may review any of the following materials in considering graduate students for teaching fellowships, senior fellowships, or teaching awards:
 - 1. Application materials submitted for admission to the Graduate School;
 - 2. Departmental application forms for teaching fellowships;
 - 3. Supplemental applications for literature, film, and other special courses (e.g. advanced composition or English education, etc.)
 - 4. Letters from applicants wishing to be considered for senior teaching fellowships or senior fellowships;
 - 5. UNC-CH transcripts;
 - 6. Grades on written and oral examinations required of MA and PhD candidates;
 - 7. Written reports from faculty members evaluating an applicant's MA and PhD coursework;
 - 8. Written reports from faculty members evaluating an applicant's MA thesis;
 - 9. Student evaluations for all courses taught at UNC-CH;
 - 10. Narrative observation reports prepared by Peer Review Committee members. Because these reports contain balanced assessments by trained observers, they offer important evidence of a teacher's strengths and weaknesses, especially read cumulatively over several semesters. The primary purpose of these reports is to improve teaching; therefore, selection committee members do not consider suggestions intended to strengthen a teacher's performance as negative evidence.

IV. Initial Appointment

- A. Second-year MA students are eligible for appointment to no more than two sections of English 101 or 102 per year. SACS accreditation standards require MA candidates to complete a minimum of 18 hours of coursework beyond the BA before teaching undergraduates. Students entering the MA program currently will teach their first two sections (or hold the equivalent appointment in the Writing Center) without having these sections count toward the 15-section limit of fellowship support.
- B. First-year PhD students who have completed English 606 (or its equivalent), including students admitted directly into the PhD program and students in Comparative Literature, are eligible to teach no more than three sections of English 100, 101, 102 or 102i per year or to serve in equivalent capacities (e.g. PRC member, GAD, etc.).

V. Reappointment

- A. Under normal circumstances, English graduate students should complete the MA degree in two years. TFs whose teaching is satisfactory may expect reappointment for a third year in the MA program; thereafter, reappointment is contingent on receiving permission to proceed to the doctoral program.
- B. Ordinarily, TFs whose teaching is satisfactory and who make timely progress toward the PhD merit reappointment and a full contract of three sections for the subsequent academic year. TFs reappointed to the staff may elect to teach fewer than three sections; if they wish a reduced contract, they may indicate this preference in their original application or, having received a letter of reappointment, they must notify the Department of their request within two weeks. Requests for reduced contracts are not automatically granted but are honored whenever possible, given the needs of the Department.
- C. No graduate student can be reappointed
 1. who has taught 15 sections;
 2. who has held a Senior Fellowship (regardless of how many sections the TF has taught);
 3. who will exceed the Graduate School's eight-year time limit for the doctoral degree during the period of reappointment.
- D. No contract will be awarded to graduate students who apply after the announced February deadline, unless departmental need and sufficient funding make it possible to consider such late applicants for appointment. Typically, the Department does not appoint TFs in mid-year.
- E. When it becomes necessary to award partial contracts, the Department assumes in awarding such contracts that the TF has satisfied all criteria for excellence in teaching and scholarship. Given this assumption, all TFs holding partial contracts (excepting TFs discussed in V.F. below) merit opportunities for additional teaching as funds become available. In distributing funds to fill out partial contracts, the Department will observe the following priorities:
 1. TFs in the PhD program who have received only one section for the year will receive a second section;
 2. TFs in the PhD program who have been assigned only two sections for the year will receive a third section, beginning with students who have had the dissertation prospectus approved (ABD students), continuing with students who have completed written and oral comprehensive examinations, and ending with students who have been in the doctoral program for the longest period of time (for example, students admitted in Fall 2003 would be upgraded before students admitted in Spring 2004).
- F. A student whose academic record reflects one or more of the following weaknesses can expect to be evaluated and may be awarded a partial contract (less than three) for the subsequent academic year:
 1. Failing to remove a grade of IN within a year of earning it;

2. Earning a second grade of L in a course required for the PhD;
3. Accumulating three or more IN grades since admission to the PhD program (except for documented medical reasons);
4. Failing to take written and oral examinations according to the recommended schedule for the doctoral program;
5. Failing to have the prospectus accepted in the semester following completion of written and oral examinations.

Students who restore their standing (by completing the coursework that resulted in a year-old IN grade, by passing written and oral examinations, or by having the prospectus accepted) may receive additional teaching in the semester following the completion of these requirements. Such upgraded contracts, however, are subject to departmental need and available funding.

- G. No contract can be deferred to the following year.
- H. TFs who decline an offer to teach a particular course may request to teach another course, but the individuals responsible for scheduling courses may be unable to accommodate the request.
- I. TFs offered upgraded contracts may decline them, but they may not resign a section they have already agreed to teach in order to accept the section offered as an upgrade to the contract.
- J. TFs who accept a contract and subsequently resign one or more sections will have those sections counted toward their 15-section limit, unless the resignation is prompted by receiving a dissertation fellowship that prohibits teaching, is warranted for medical reasons, or is necessary for other extenuating circumstances.
- K. It is expected that TFs who have been the instructor of record for a literature course will return to the beginning of the sequence of composition, TA, and then literature.
- L. The Department will make every effort to assign a TA-ship during the year that students are taking their exams.

VI. Teaching Eligibility

- A. This section describes the eligibility requirements associated with course assignments. There is no **guarantee** that TFs will be appointed to particular courses at specific stages of their program *even if they are eligible*.
- B. Second-year PhD students are eligible for appointment as teaching associates. Under the supervision of a faculty member, teaching associates lead recitation sections of courses taught by faculty members. The Department of English and Comparative Literature offers TA positions in the following courses: Comparative Literature 120 (Epic and Lyric Traditions), Comparative Literature 121 (Romancing the World), Comparative Literature 123 (Literature and Politics from Antiquity to 1750), Comparative Literature 131 (Savage, Native, Stranger), Comparative Literature 132 (Performance

and Cultural Identify in the African Diaspora), English 120 (British Literature to 1800), English 142 (Film Analysis), English 225 (Shakespeare), English 284 (Reading Children's Literature), and English 338 (Nineteenth-Century British Novel). Graduate students may also receive credit for serving as a TA in other programs such as Women's Studies, Romance Languages, or Language Across the Curriculum (LAC).

- C. Graduate students become eligible to assume full responsibility for a literature course after they have taught a minimum of four sections of English 100, 101, 102 or 102i (or can demonstrate equivalent teaching experience as defined below) and no sooner than the beginning of the third year of the PhD program. When calculating eligibility based on teaching experience, the Department will consider teaching and academic experience such as courses taught at other institutions and in other departments, on-line teaching, RAs, and SITES lab assignments as equivalent to teaching composition courses in the Writing Program. Timely progress will be considered in the decision to award literature sections for graduate students meeting the above minimal criteria. Assignment to literature courses depends on matching a graduate student's qualifications and interests with departmental needs. The Department will make every effort to distribute literature sections so that qualified graduate students develop experience with a broad range of courses.
- D. Eligible TFs may teach no more than one literature course per academic year. However, those who request or are appointed to a 1-0 or 0-1 contract can **only** teach a composition course (e.g. English 100, 101, 102, or 102i).
- E. For contracting purposes, a section is defined as full responsibility for one section of Composition or full responsibility for one section of Literature. A section equivalent is defined as one English 142 Film Recitation (two meetings per week), two English 225, 284, or 338 recitation sections (one meeting each per week), or other special duties named below.

Some special duties, including serving as a SITES intern, Peer Review Committee member, or as the Graduate Assistant to the WP Director, are also equivalent to one section of teaching (given the yearly contract). See the chart below to determine which additional duties do or do not count toward the 15-section limit of graduate support.

Special Duty	Relation to 15-section Limit	In addition, a TF can teach
Editorial Assistant for journal	does NOT count	maximum 2 sections per year
SITES intern	does NOT count	maximum 2 sections per year
PRC member	DOES count	maximum 2 sections per year
Graduate Assistant to Director	DOES count	maximum 2 sections per year

- F. Senior Teaching Fellows will receive an additional stipend and will teach three courses a year.
- G. Senior Fellows will receive an additional stipend and can teach up to four courses a year. The Department reserves the right to determine which of these courses will be composition and which, literature.

- H. Because the Department attempts to insure that courses are offered at times convenient for undergraduate students, all teaching assignments, including those for Senior Fellows and Senior Teaching Fellows, must be distributed across MWF and TR time slots. The Department will offer teachers the opportunity to express a preference for scheduling their courses but cannot guarantee a particular schedule.
- I. The Director of Undergraduate Studies will maintain a waiting list of students who have not been assigned literature sections to consult should any literature sections become available at the last minute.

VII. Tuition and Health Insurance

- A. To be eligible for tuition remission, in-state tuition awards, and health insurance, TFs must be registered full time no later than the day before classes begin in any semester for which they seek such support. **Full time** registration is defined as taking **three** credit hours of ENGL or CMPL 992, 993, or 994, or nine or more credit hours of other coursework, or six credit hours supported by a Waiver of Hours Form available from the Writing Program Office. TFs who change the courses or the number of credit hours for which they are registered may become ineligible for tuition support, even if they make these changes during the official drop-add period. Consequently, TFs should check with the Office of Graduate Studies or the Writing Program Office before revising their course loads after classes have begun. Otherwise, they may become personally responsible for paying the full costs of tuition that semester. There is no restriction on the number of semesters that an eligible graduate student may participate in the UNC-CH Graduate Student Health Insurance Program.
- B. To receive these benefits, TFs must be paid a minimum stipend of one section or section-equivalent and must complete the appropriate paperwork at the beginning of each semester. Tuition remission and in-state tuition awards are not available for courses taken during the summer.
- C. The Department of English and Comparative Literature will recommend to the Graduate School all TFs who are eligible for tuition remission and in-state awards. Ordinarily, out-of-state graduate students are limited to a maximum of five semesters of tuition remission and should apply for North Carolina residence for tuition purposes no later than their fourth semester of graduate study. In exceptional circumstances, graduate students who cannot meet the criteria for North Carolina residence may receive a maximum of 10 semesters of tuition remission.
- D. TFs are eligible to receive a maximum of ten (10) semesters of tuition remission from the graduate school. In regard to tuition remission, the Department of English and Comparative Literature follows the policy set by the Graduate School. The Graduate Student Handbook states the following:

DURATION OF SUPPORT

In general, students in terminal master's programs are eligible for tuition remission and/or in-state tuition awards for four (4) semesters; doctoral students (or students in master's/doctoral sequence programs) are

eligible for tuition remission and/or in-state tuition awards for ten (10) semesters. Semesters in which the student does not have an appointment, and is therefore not receiving a stipend, do not count toward the four or ten semester limit. In any case, no student is eligible for more than a total of ten (10) semesters of tuition remission and/or in-state tuition awards during their enrollment at the University, regardless of rate of remission or award. Students who complete a degree in one academic program and then enroll in another academic program or change academic programs without receiving a degree are only eligible for the maximum semesters of eligibility as noted above during their enrollment at the University.

The Graduate School will count those semesters in which a tuition award was received towards a student's ten-semester tuition support limit (this limit also includes semesters in which a tuition award was received from a Department **other** than English and Comparative Literature). Currently, the Graduate School regards the following minimum levels of support to constitute "funding": \$7,200.00 per semester for doctoral) and \$4,000.00 for terminal masters. Also, the only appointment types that qualify as "funding" are: TA (rank code 21), RA, (rank code 22), and Predoc fellow/trainee (rank code 23- NSF fellowship, NIH training grant, or Graduate School Fellow). GAs (graduate assistants) and work study would not qualify as "funding." Most TFs will receive their in-state awards simultaneously while holding a teaching fellowship, with their funding and tuition support running in tandem for 10 semesters.

- E. Graduate Students who have used up their ten semesters of tuition remission are still eligible to receive a teaching contract as long as they are registered for at least three credits. However, such TFs (past ten semesters of tuition remission) are responsible for paying their own tuition.
- F. **All** teaching fellows are responsible for paying their student fees each semester. Graduate Students can have their fees deducted from six of their nine biweekly paychecks in a semester or pay their fees in full by the date specified by the University Cashier. Payroll deduction forms are available from the Program Office.

VIII. Appeal Procedures

- A. Before filing any appeal of a hiring decision, the applicant shall first address his or her concerns to the Director of Graduate Studies. If the applicant wishes to pursue the appeal, he or she must write a letter to the Director citing evidence by which the applicant judges 1) that an impermissible element existed in the evaluation of the applicant's credentials, 2) that a procedural error or oversight occurred, 3) that evidence of a medical condition was not present or available, or 4) that arbitrariness, discrimination, and/or personal malice influenced the decision to the applicant's detriment. No appeal may be made after the last day of classes of the semester in which the applicant received notice of the decision.
- B. Within 10 business days after receiving the appeal, the Director of Graduate Studies shall appoint an ad hoc committee to hear the appeal. The

committee shall include a member of the Chair's Advisory Committee; the Chair of the Peer Review committee; the applicant's faculty advisor; one of the three program directors (Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Studies, or the Writing Program); and the AGES Teaching Liaison. All members of the committee hearing the appeal shall be eligible to vote, and a simple majority of those members present and voting is required to approve any recommendation.

- C. The committee will investigate the applicant's appeal and render a written set of findings and recommendations to the Chair of the Department of English and Comparative Literature with a copy to the applicant.