

December 1999

To: Graduate Employee Organization

From: Deborah Carlin, Director of Graduate Studies, Department of English

RE: TA/RA Appointment Policies and Procedures

Appointment/Reappointment Criteria and Procedures for English Department TAs/TOs and RAs

I. General Statement of Eligibility.

All graduate students enrolled in the MA/PhD and MFA Programs, as well as students accepted for graduate study in these programs, are eligible for positions as TAs/TOs or RAs in the English Department. Students already enrolled in such programs must be in good academic standing and have a record of solid academic achievement, as determined by the evaluative judgement of the Graduate Director and/or the MFA Program Director. Students must have qualifications appropriate to the curricular needs of the Department, and must demonstrate a capacity for making a useful contribution in the classroom. For reappointment, students must have a record of satisfactorily fulfilling teaching responsibilities relevant to the appointment as a TA/TO or RA. Assessment of satisfactory performance may include, but is not limited to, consideration of student evaluations or reports, as well as the evaluation of the direct supervisors of the TA/TO or RA.

II. Distribution of Graduate Appointments Between Programs.

Distribution of appointments between the MA/PhD and MFA Programs will generally reflect the proportionate size of the respective programs, taking into consideration the qualifications of applicants. Appointments within the MFA Program will generally be divided equally between fiction writers and poets.

III. Appointment/Reappointment Procedures and Hiring Criteria for TAs/TOs and RAs.

a) Invitation to Apply for Positions.

As curricular planning permits, the Program Director will advertise a

notice of expected job openings in English, appointments to which are covered by the University's agreement with GEO. The Graduate Program Director will regularly post announcements of job possibilities available to graduate students both from inside and outside the Department, as such notices are received. The Department Chair, on the recommendation of the Program Director, will decide on and provide notice of TA/TO appointments and assignments to courses, and all other appointments and assignments of graduate students in English that are covered by the agreement between the University and GEO, as provided for in that agreement. Those who are given appointment will be notified in writing by the Department Chair.

IV. Specific Criteria.

The English Department has as its highest priorities the hiring of qualified MA/PhD students between their second and sixth year of graduate study, and those qualified MFA students in their third and second year of graduate study. Appointment decisions are made on the basis of each student's progress in the program as well as his/her qualifications to teach the specific course in question. In evaluating applicants, the Graduate Director considers:

- applicant's academic standing, lack of Incompletes, time in program, and progress toward degree (students with two or more Incompletes will not be eligible for English Department TAs/TOs or RAs);
- applicant's qualifications for teaching the specific course or for holding the specific RA;
- where applicable, applicant's course proposal.

Evaluations will be based on application materials and the student's academic file. Application materials consist of the completed application form (listing preferred courses, experience, specific qualifications) and (optional) letters of recommendation submitted by the student in support of the application. On the basis of the evaluation of these materials, applicants will be assigned to specific courses or specific research projects. A ranked waiting list will be maintained of those applicants who do not receive a TA/TO or RA.

V. Notification.

Candidates will be notified in writing of the evaluation of their application materials by the end of the Spring semester. If by May 15 the Program Director cannot definitively notify graduate students whether they will be hired or not, each will be notified as to the likelihood of employment. When formulated, a list of TAs/TOs and RAs

will also be posted prominently outside the Graduate Office and outside the Graduate Lounge. The Waiting List will be presented to the TAACE Committee.

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