

Linguistics Department

Appointment and Reappointment Procedures

January 1, 2002

I. Appointment and Reappointment Procedures.

1. Procedure for requests by graduate students for funding.

In the Spring Semester of each academic year, normally by March 1, the Head will distribute a preliminary funding request survey to all linguistics Ph.D. students currently in residence whom the head believes meet the minimal requirements for potential eligibility for financial aid. This questionnaire asks if students are planning to be here the following year, asks students if they expect to need funding for the coming year, inquires about known or applied-for sources of external funding, and asks students to indicate their preference rankings among the courses for which TAs are likely to be available. A deadline is specified for returning these forms to the Head; returning them by the deadline with an indication that funding is desired for the following year unless some applied for fellowship or grant is received constitutes an application on the part of the student for any and all sources of funding that may be available from or through recommendation by the department. The later steps of the process described below provide means for further departmental and student input into the allocation of particular jobs to particular students.

Any student in the Ph.D. program who for any reason has not received such a funding request questionnaire by February 25 and who wishes to be considered for funding for the following year should by March 1 request a questionnaire from the Head.

Incoming students request consideration for assistantships and/or fellowships by checking the appropriate boxes on the application form.

2. Procedures for deciding who will receive funding.

The Department has determined general policies concerning eligibility for funding, and these are reviewed from time to time by the Department. The Department has also set requirements for remaining in good academic standing. Appointment and reappointment criteria for particular kinds of jobs are spelled out below in Section II. When resources permit, all eligible students who are in good standing and who meet appointment or reappointment criteria for some available job are funded; if resources do not permit full funding of all those who are eligible, allocations of department-controlled funding are made by the Head, who will normally consult with the faculty for advice. In cases where full funding of all eligible students in good standing is not possible, the department will assure, if possible, that all eligible students in good standing receive at least sufficient funding to be eligible for a tuition waiver and other contractual benefits.

3. Notification of intention to fund.

Those who will receive funding for the coming year will be notified in writing by the department (i.e. by the Head or grant P.I. or other person delegated by the Head.) If by May 15 and December 15 of each year the department head cannot definitely notify graduate students of whether or not they will be funded in the coming semester, the head will inform the students in writing of the department's expectations on the likelihood of funding.

4. Posting job possibilities available to graduate students both from inside and outside the department.

Linguistics department TA and TAs are normally available only to Ph.D. students inside the department; those possibilities are described, insofar as they are known, in the funding request questionnaire distributed to students in the spring semester. Principal Investigators of grants are responsible for notifying potentially eligible students of PA, RA, and Traineeships available to graduate students inside or outside the department.

The Head will regularly post, or post information about, announcements of these and other job possibilities available to graduate students both from inside and outside the department on the Jobs Bulletin Board in the department as the Head receives (or generates) such notices.

5. Assignment of TAs and TAs to courses. (Follows language of Article 23, Section 4B; conforms to present practice except for the sequencing specified in the first clause; we inform students of available course assignments and solicit preferences at the same time that we solicit applications for funding. Since our practice seems to me

better for all concerned than the sequence called for in the contract, I will continue current practice unless the graduate students request otherwise.)

After deciding who will receive funding and prior to making formal assignments of TA and TO duties to currently enrolled graduate students (insofar as the availability and timing of budgetary information makes this sequence possible), the head will advise all "Article 23 funded" graduate students of which courses are expected to be staffed with graduate student employees. The Head will provide an opportunity for the graduate students to express their preferences for assignments. After receiving these indications of preference from students the Head will make assignments which take into account:

- a. academic performance
- b. the preferences of the applicants
- c. the needs of the department
- d. the previous experience and qualifications of the applicants, and
- e. faculty and student schedules.

6. Notice of assignment.

TAs and TOs will be notified of their assignments to particular courses in writing by the Head as soon as assignments are made. If circumstances require changes to be made later, changes will not be made without consultation and negotiation with the student employee(s) affected.

II. Appointment and Reappointment Criteria for TAs, TOs, PAs, RAs, Trainees, Fellows and Interns.

Note: The contract does not explicitly address the complexities that arise from the fact that the department relies on a wide variety of sources of funding for graduate students, not all of which are under direct departmental control. Even within the department, matters are complicated by the fact that the Department Head traditionally delegates to the P.I.s the responsibility for announcing, soliciting applications for, and making appointments to R.A.ships, P.A.ships, and Traineeships, and the timing of those appointments cannot always be made to fit the timing of TA and TO decisions. Results of fellowship competitions or student applications for TA or TOships in other departments also are not always known as early as we would like. The following paragraphs preserve the oversimplifications of the contract in those respects; in actual practice, we have always depended on a good faith effort on all sides to coordinate the timing of decisions and to hold off on making assignments absolutely final until we have enough information about resources to be able to make assignments as rationally as possible.

A. For TAs and TOs. Our criteria for appointments and reappointments to TAs and TOships are based on the following criteria.

1. The primary pool of eligible students are continuing Ph.D. students who are in good academic standing and who will be in their second through fifth years of the Ph.D. program at the time of their appointments. Some sixth year students may become eligible through a petition process described in the departmental graduate program handbook. First year students without external support are normally awarded non-teaching First Year Fellowships, insofar as departmental resources permit. Post-eligibility students in good standing may be appointed to full or partial TAs or TOships after all eligible students have been funded, if resources permit and there remain unfilled positions. Second semester first year students may be assigned TA/TOships in exceptional circumstances.

2. Students must have academic qualifications for teaching or assisting in teaching an available course and must show a capacity for making a useful contribution in the classroom. For TO assignment, the student must show the capacity to take full responsibility for planning, teaching, and grading an independently conducted course or section of a course.

3. TAs who conduct discussion sections and all TOS must have a sufficient command of spoken English to function effectively in the classroom.

4. Being in good academic standing is an essential qualification for all academic appointments made by the department. Decisions affecting good standing are made by the faculty at semi-annual review meetings, and may be reviewed in response to petitions at other times.

5. For reappointments of students who have already been TAs or TOs in the department, course evaluations and other available evidence of past performance must indicate acceptable performance or, in the case of previously unacceptable performance, some clear evidence that performance can be expected to be sufficiently improved by the time of reappointment.

6. If there is enough funding to cover all eligible students, assignment of students to TAs and TOs is not so much a competition as it is an attempt to make the best possible distribution of available resources, taking into account all of the factors listed in section I.5 above. If there is not enough funding to fully cover all eligible students, decisions concerning full and partial funding and particular assignments will take into account all of the factors listed in this section and in I.5 plus considerations of equity in the previous funding history of all the continuing students, and considerations of academic achievement and progress in the Ph.D. program. Considerations of need and of access to other resources may be taken into account if the students as a whole can agree to an appropriate measure of need and can devise or help to devise an instrument for assessing it. If the funding picture should change substantially, either for better or for worse, the Head will consult with the department, including student representatives, concerning the distribution of extra resources or of shortfall; student input in such a circumstance is advisory and not binding.

7. Funding decisions shall be made by the Department Head and shall not be made for arbitrary or capricious reasons.

B. For PAs (Project Assistants).

This department has never had PAs. I suggest the following statement of qualifications.

1. The basic pool of eligible students is as in clause 1 of the section above on TAs/TOs. In the case of PAs, students from other departments may be eligible if there is no available qualified student within the Linguistics Department.

2. The student must have the recommendation of the faculty supervisor(s) of the research project, and this recommendation shall be based on both the student's good standing in the program and relative priority for funding and on the needs of the given research project.

3. Funding decisions shall be made by the Department Head and shall not be made for arbitrary or capricious reasons. Funding decisions for PAs may be delegated by the Head to the supervisor of the research project.

C. For RAs, Fellows, and Trainees.

1. The primary pool of eligible students for RAs and Traineeships is as in clause 1 of the statement above on PAs, including the possibility of appointing students from other departments if there is no available qualified student in the Linguistics Department. The primary pool of eligible students for departmental Fellowships is the pool of prospective first year students.

2. The Head delegates to the Principal Investigator(s) of the relevant research or training grants full responsibility for providing written criteria for appointment and reappointment to RAs or Traineeships at the time the relevant positions become available. The Principal Investigators and the Head will consult at the time when funding decisions are being made so as to try to coordinate the needs of the department, the needs of the respective grants, and the qualifications and job preferences of the students who are applying for funding.

D. For interns. A statement of criteria for appointment of interns will be developed if and when this department ever has occasion to employ an intern.

III. Contractual Requirements on these Procedures.

All conditions pertaining to posting of available jobs and notification of appointments contained in the contract in Article 23 apply.

