

Policies of the University of North Texas	
06.020 Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants	Chapter 6 Faculty Affairs

Policy Statement. UNT is committed to teaching, advancing knowledge, providing the highest standards of excellence in higher education, and fostering intellectual and personal development. To realize these goals, UNT identifies, recruits, and selects highly qualified and diverse teaching fellows (TFs) and teaching assistants (TAs) in accordance with relevant university accreditation standards.

Application of Policy. TFs and TAs.

Definitions.

1. **Teaching Fellow.** “Teaching fellows” are graduate students who may have direct student contact in a formal instructional setting and may be assigned primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit under the direct supervision of a faculty member or chair, and who receive regular in-service training and planned periodic evaluations. Teaching fellows may be listed as instructors of record.
2. **Teaching Assistant.** “Teaching assistants” are graduate students who may not have primary responsibility for teaching a course for credit, but who may engage in instructional activities under the instructor’s direct supervision and provide general assistance to the instructional process, such as grading, tutoring, etc. Teaching assistants may not be listed as instructors of record.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

- I. Each academic unit shall meet minimal academic criteria required for TFs/TAs, in accordance with relevant accreditation standards for the unit and university. These criteria shall be filed with each college/school and shall be reviewed periodically.
 - A. TFs who have primary responsibility for teaching a course and/or for assigning final course grades for such a course must have earned a minimum of 18 graduate semester credit hours (SCHs) in the discipline in which the TF is teaching. Whether a teaching discipline satisfies this requirement is determined by the dean of the college/school in accordance with Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges standards.
 - B. Transcripts and other documentation validating qualifications (including letters of recommendation, if required by the unit) shall be obtained for all TF/TAs, and shall be retained as long as the TF/TA is employed. UNT

transcripts and copies of official transcripts from other universities are located in the Office of the Registrar. Copies of transcripts from other universities are also on file in the Toulouse Graduate School. Each academic unit will retain unofficial copies of transcripts for all TFs/TAs in the unit.

- C. The unit must confirm the language proficiency for all TFs/TAs for whom English is not their primary language in accordance with Texas Education Code §51.917, Faculty Members Use of English; and UNT Policy 06.023, Program of Assistance for Teaching Personnel Whose Primary Language is Not English. English proficiency will be determined by UNT International. Language proficiency shall be considered at the time of selection and appointment.
 - 1. Language proficiency and communication skills of all TFs/TAs, for whom English is not the primary language, shall be carefully monitored and supervised by the department chair or the chair's designee.
 - 2. International students should be selected as TF/TAs only after having been in residence one (1) long semester or two summer sessions. Exceptions may be made only upon approval of the dean of the college/school. If exceptions are made, the following procedures must be followed:
 - a. Units should contact students via telephone (with prior student notification) to obtain an indication of the student's ability to communicate in English.
 - b. A student's letter of appointment should contain a provision that the student, upon arrival on campus, must demonstrate a facility with spoken English sufficient to function in the classroom. Otherwise the letter of appointment is void.
- D. TFs/TAs must participate in college/school-wide or academic unit orientations as a condition of employment and students must be informed of this condition in the letter of appointment. Individual academic units may establish additional academic and professional requirements as a condition of the position (enrollment in special courses or attendance at special seminars) provided the requirements are reasonably related to the responsibilities and are stated in the offer.
- E. The minimal academic work for TF/TAs in any long semester is nine (9) graduate SCHs. Upon written recommendation of the college/school dean or the dean's designee, the nine (9) SCH limit may be reduced to three (3) SCHs for the long semester for students who: (a) have completed an approved degree plan, (b) have completed all course work, and (c) are either ready to take the qualifying examination and/or registered for thesis/dissertation. Exceptions must be approved by the Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Toulouse Graduate School.

The total combined SCH enrollment and teaching assignment hours may not exceed the equivalent of 18 SCHs in any long semester. Individual academic units may specify higher minimal loads provided that a supported graduate student is not required to enroll in more than nine (9) SCHs of organized graduate coursework or more than 12 SCHs total with the additional three (3) SCHs consisting of individualized or non-organized graduate coursework such as research, practicum, special problems, etc.

- F. No offer of a teaching fellowship or teaching assistantship is valid until the applicant has been admitted to the Toulouse Graduate School and to the applicant's academic unit. Applicants must be informed of this requirement in the letter of appointment.

Responsible Party: Vice provost for graduate education and dean of the Toulouse Graduate School, deans, department chairs

References and Cross-references.

Tex. Educ. Code §51.917, Faculty Members Use of English

UNT Policy 06.043, Research/Graduate Services Assistantship Load specifications

UNT Policy 06.023, Program of Assistance for Teaching Personnel Whose Primary Language is Not English

UNT English Language Proficiency Form

Forms and Tools. None

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