

UNIVERSITY OF  
NORTH★TEXAS™

**Handbook for  
Teaching Fellows &  
Teaching Assistants**

*2005-2006*

*Prepared by  
the Office of the Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs*

*And*

*the Robert B. Toulouse School of Graduate Studies*



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# Chapter One: Teaching Fellows and Assistants at the University of North Texas

## Chapter Contents

- Who is a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant?
- Payment
- Employee Benefits
- Teaching Load and Required Class Enrollment
- University of North Texas English Language Certification
- Continuing as a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant

## Who is a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant?

At UNT, a **Teaching Fellow (TF)** is a graduate student who assumes total responsibility for the instruction in one or more classes. The TF is the instructor of record and is responsible for assigning of grades. A **Teaching Assistant (TA)** is a graduate student who assists a faculty member in a class or laboratory, but does not have total instructional responsibility for a class.

## Payment

Each academic department determines salary. TFs and TAs are classified as exempt employees and do not qualify for overtime pay.

Out-of-state tuition is waived for non-residents of Texas and international students who are employed by the university at least half time in a teaching or research position that relates to the student's degree program. A student is eligible for this waiver only for terms when he or she is actually on the payroll.

## Employee Benefits

TFs or TAs whose appointment requires them to work 20 hours or more a week are eligible to participate in the university's group insurance program. Enrollment information may be obtained from the departmental office, the university's Human Resources Office or at <http://www.unt.edu/hr/benefits/index.htm>.

## **Teaching Load and Required Class Enrollment**

Teaching fellows and teaching assistants must be enrolled in a minimum number of semester credit hours during the term they hold an appointment.

- Teaching fellows or assistants who hold a half-time appointment (i.e., with assigned duties that require twenty hours of work per week) must be enrolled for nine semester credit hours in long terms or three semester credit hours in summer terms.
- Teaching fellows and assistants who hold a quarter-time appointment (i.e., with assigned duties that require ten hours of work each week) must enroll for six semester credit hours in long terms or 3 semester credit hours in summer terms.

Individual departments/units may require a higher load than these university requirements, but the total load of course enrollment and teaching assignment may not exceed 16 semester hours in any long semester. Approval of the Graduate Dean is required for loads in excess of this amount, but approval will not be granted for a combined load in excess of 18 semester hours.

With written approval from the College/School Dean and approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, the minimum registration may be reduced to three semester hours for the long term for students who have filed an approved degree plan, have completed all course work, and are either ready to take the qualifying exam and/or registered for thesis or dissertation.

## **English Language Certification for International Teaching Fellows**

An international student must be certified by the International TA/TF Program, sponsored by the Intensive English Language Institute, before being appointed by a UNT academic department as a TF.

The certification program is designed to measure effectiveness in spoken English and to provide training and assistance tailored to individual needs. A detailed description of the International TA/TF Program and the Intensive English Language Institute is given in Chapter 6, “Advice to International TFs.” Contact the Intensive English Language Institute to schedule the review.

## **Continuing as a Teaching Fellow or Teaching Assistant**

In some academic units, TFs and TAs can expect to continue in their position as long as they are performing satisfactorily (please confer with academic unit for guidance) and as



long as student enrollments and availability of funds are sufficient to allow their classes to make. To continue, TFs and TAs must maintain high academic and teaching performance and make satisfactory performance toward the completion of their degree. Academic performance is measured primarily by the grade point average with 3.0 out of 4.0 as the minimum acceptable average.



# Chapter Two: Knowing the Students and Knowing the Rules

## Chapter Contents

- Who are our students?
- University Procedures

## Who Are Our UNT Students?

In fall 2004, UNT enrolled 31,115 students, 24,274 of whom were undergraduates. Most of our students (91.6 percent) were Texas residents, with about four percent coming from out of state and five percent coming from other countries. Fifty-seven percent of our students are female. The average age of our undergraduates is 22.9 years. Most of our students are Caucasian (67.9 percent). African-Americans made up 10.7 percent of the student body and Hispanic-Americans made up 9.6 percent. While minority enrollment is still low, it is increasing. African-American enrollment increased 101 percent since 1991 and Hispanic enrollment increased 145 percent during the same period.<sup>1</sup>

The average SAT score for students entering in 2004 was 1092 (recentered SAT). The Texas average was 992. Of first-time new from high school students who entered UNT in 2003, 74.5 percent returned in fall 2004. Of first-time full-time freshmen who entered UNT in 1997, 38.8 percent had graduated from UNT six years later.<sup>2</sup>

According to the most recent student survey, 72 percent of all undergraduate students work while attending UNT. Forty percent of them work more than twenty hours per week. Thirty-four percent of the survey respondents lived outside Denton, and 33 percent travel more than 20 miles per day to come to UNT.<sup>3</sup>

Most UNT students have access to a computer off campus. Ninety-three percent said they had access to a computer at home.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> All information in this paragraph comes from the University of North Texas Fact Book, Fall 2004, Office of Institutional Research and Accreditation.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> University Student Survey, Spring 2002.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Most students think highly of UNT. Eighty-seven percent said that the university had a high quality faculty and 82 percent of undergraduates thought the university had high quality undergraduate programs.<sup>5</sup>

Most students (62 percent) think UNT is a university that cares about students. Ninety percent of undergraduates think that diversity is valued here.<sup>6</sup>

Finally, UNT students have high regard for their teachers. Ninety percent of undergraduates agreed that regular faculty “have a good attitude toward students.” More than 80 percent agreed that their teachers “provide high quality instruction,” “communicate effectively,” and are “fair but demanding.” More than 60 percent of undergraduates think teaching fellows/assistants “have a good attitude toward students,” “communicate effectively,” “help students learn,” and are “fair but demanding.”<sup>7</sup>

## University Procedures

### ***Class Rolls***

#### **Preliminary Class Roll**

On the first class day, you will receive a preliminary class roll from the registrar’s office or you can log into **my.unt.edu** and print the most up to date class roll. It contains the names of students who have registered for your class during regular registration. Students who register during late registration will not be on this roll. Be careful to identify those who are attending, but not registered, and those who are registered, but not attending.

If a student who registered during regular registration does not appear on the roll, then you should check your class roll through **my.unt.edu** to view the most up to date information.

Continue checking the roll carefully during the time before audit class rolls are issued. Make sure that everyone attending your class is on the roll by the time that audit class rolls are issued.

#### **Audit and Final Class Rolls**

You will receive an audit class roll near the beginning of the term. Follow the attached instructions exactly. The audit class roll must be checked very carefully, signed, and returned to the department office by the date and time specified. A final class roll will be issued after the audit class rolls.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

## ***Dropping Courses***

Students who wish to drop a course before the 12th class day (the fourth class day of a summer term) may do so by visiting **my.unt.edu** or visiting the Registrar's office. After the 12th class day (or fourth class day of a summer term), students must first receive the written approval of the instructor prior to dropping a course.

The grade of W will be recorded for any course dropped with the instructor's approval prior to the end of the sixth week of classes (summer term: 10 class sessions). After that time the student must have a passing grade in order to receive a grade of W for a dropped course; otherwise, the grade will be WF.

No student may drop a course after Tuesday of a given semester's 10th week (summer term, 15 class sessions).

Instructors may drop students with grades of WF from courses for nonattendance at any time after the completion of the sixth week of classes (summer term: 10 sessions) if they have advised students in writing of this policy.

## ***Attendance Policies***

### **Requiring Class Attendance**

Responsibility for class attendance rests with the student at UNT. If a student's grades are to be based wholly or partially on attendance, then the instructor must notify the students in writing at the beginning of the semester.

An instructor who so informs students in writing about the necessity of class attendance may request the Registrar to drop any student from the course with a grade of **F** upon the accumulation of a stated number of absences. The instructor uses a form that may be obtained from the Registrar's office or from the department for this purpose.

If the instructor requests such a drop during the time period when the student is eligible to drop without penalty, the Registrar's Office will notify the student that he or she will receive an **F** unless the student initiates the drop procedure.

### **Authorized Absence**

Absences due to participation in sponsored activities must be approved in advance by department chairs and academic deans. Within 3 days after the absence, students must obtain authorized absence cards from the Dean of Students for presentation to their instructors. Students with authorized absence cards may make up the work missed, when practicable, or be given special allowance so that they are not penalized for the absence.

Absences due to other causes, such as illness, emergency, death in the family, etc. are termed "excused" or "not excused" at the discretion of the instructor, but in accordance with applicable absence policies set by the department/division, school, college, or the

course syllabus. Students should show proof that the absence was unavoidable, such as a physician's statement, accident report, obituary, etc.; and contact the instructor. (Note: The Student Health Center provides cards that verify the date and time of a student's visit. Hospitalized patients are given a form showing the inclusive dates of their hospitalization.)

### **Absence for Religious Holidays**

In accordance with State law, students absent due to the observance of a religious holiday may take examinations or complete assignments scheduled for the day missed within a reasonable time after the absence. Travel time required for religious observances shall also be excused. Only holidays or holy days observed by a religion whose place of worship is exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code may be included.

### **Grades and Grading**

In the system of grading employed in the University, the letters **A, B, C, D, F, NP, I, W,** and **WF** are used. Letters other than **A-F** have the following significance:

**W** indicates a drop or withdrawal without penalty given prior to the end of the sixth week of classes (summer term, 10 class sessions) as designated in the Academic Calendar. (See Dropping Classes.)

**WF** indicates a drop or withdrawal with a failing grade given after the sixth week of classes (summer term, 10 class sessions) as designated in the Academic Calendar. (See Dropping Classes.)

**I** (incomplete) is a non-punitive grade given only during the last one-fourth of the semester and only if a student

- is passing the course,
- has justifiable reason why work cannot be completed on schedule, and
- arranges with the instructor to finish the course at a later date by completing specific requirements that the instructor must list on the electronic grade report. See electronic grade report for additional information.

The grade of **I** should only be given in extraordinary or unusual situations such as serious physical illness. If a student asks for an Incomplete, require a written request that states:

- the reason for the incomplete,
- what work will be completed,
- the date by which the work will be completed.

### **Pass/No Pass Grades**

The grades of **P** and **NP** are given to students who are taking a class on a pass/no pass basis. The instructor gives a normal letter grade (**A-F**) and the **P** or **NP** is recorded by the Registrar's office.

**P** is a credit grade

- on the pass-fail option,
- on student teaching,
- in selected graduate individual problems and research courses, and
- in selected internship courses.

**NP** is a failing grade on the pass-fail option; non-punitive.

### **Grade Sheets**

All student grades are submitted online. Grade Rosters are made available via <https://my.unt.edu/> and should be submitted by the deadline assigned by the UNT Registrar's Office. For detailed information on online grading procedures go to <http://essc.unt.edu/eis/>.

### **Grade Changes**

No grade, except I, may be removed from the student's record once it has been properly recorded. Changes are not permitted after grades have been filed with the Registrar's Office except to correct clerical errors.

Requests for error correction must be initiated within 30 days after the close of the semester or summer term the grade was awarded. Corrections require the approval of the department chair and appropriate dean. Check with the department for the procedure to remove a grade of **I**.

### **Posting Grades**

Students should be notified of their grades in a manner that protects their right to privacy. Grades may be posted in a public area (including the class website), at the instructor's discretion, in a manner that does not identify the student by name, social security number, student identification number, or in any other personally identifiable/recognizable form. When posting grades, instructors should assign the student a random number known only to the student and the instructor and then post the grades in a random (non-alphabetical) order. Instructors should not use any sequential section of a student's social security number (e.g. the last four digits) or any sequence of numbers that could lead to personal identification of the student. Please visit the University training on FERPA (family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) for more information: <http://www.unt.edu/ferpa/>

## **Grade Appeals Process**

Any student who believes that a grade has been inequitably awarded should first contact the instructor who awarded the grade in order to discuss the issue and attempt to resolve the differences. Any instructor no longer associated with UNT at the time of the appeal will be represented in these proceedings by the chair of the department in question.

A student not in residence the semester following the awarding of the grade or a resident student who is unable to resolve the differences with the instructor has 30 days following the first class day of the succeeding semester to file a written appeal with the chair of the instructor's department or of the equivalent administrative unit.

The chair of the department may follow any of the four procedures below, or a combination of them.

- The departmental chair may confer with the instructor, or
- request that the instructor submit a written reply to the student's complaint, or
- conduct a meeting of the two parties, or
- refer the case directly to the appropriate departmental committee, as outlined below.

In following one of the procedures listed above, the chair should make a judgment on the merits of the case and recommend a specific action in regard to the disputed grade. Either the student or the instructor may appeal the recommendations of the departmental chair.

The appropriate departmental committee to hear cases sent directly to it by the chair, or appealed to it by either the student or the instructor, shall be constituted as follows and shall perform the following duties:

- It shall be an ad hoc committee consisting of two faculty members from the department in which the grade is being questioned, one of those members to be chosen by the student and one to be chosen by the instructor. If either party to the dispute declines to choose a member of the committee, the department chair will select that member.
- The third faculty member of the committee, who shall serve as chair, will be chosen from either within or outside the department by agreement of the student and the instructor. If they cannot agree upon this third member, the member shall be chosen by the chair of the department, with the proviso that the student and the instructor may agree to stipulate that the third member of the committee be chosen from a related department rather than the department in question.
- This ad hoc committee should require written statements from each participant in the dispute. Judgments may be rendered upon the basis of these statements, upon other evidence submitted in support of the statements, and upon the basis of an oral hearing, if such a hearing seems necessary.
- The committee must make a recommendation for disposition of the case within 30 days of its appointment.



- All records in the case will be filed with the chair of the department in which the grade originally was awarded.

Either party to the dispute has 15 days following the rendering of the *ad hoc* committee recommendation to appeal that recommendation to the dean of the respective college, if the appeal is based solely upon alleged violations of established procedures.

Substantive matters, up to and including the refusal of the instructor to act in accordance with the *ad hoc* committee's recommendation or the student's refusal to accept the verdict, may not be appealed to the dean.

The dean of the college in question shall, after a review of the submitted written materials (and oral hearings if desired), make within 15 days a ruling about procedural questions. Said ruling may be appealed by either the student or the instructor to an *ad hoc* committee composed of three faculty members appointed by the dean and representing departments other than the one in that the disputed grade was awarded and three students appointed by the Committee on Committees of the Student Association.

- This *ad hoc* committee will have 30 days from the date of its appointment to complete its work.
- This committee shall operate within the guidelines set out above for departmental *ad hoc* committees.
- All rulings made by this committee regarding procedural questions shall be final.
- All documents relating to the case shall be returned to the chair of the originating department or departmental files.

For additional information, contact the Dean of Students Office.

## ***Pre-Finals Week and Finals***

### **Pre-Finals Week**

So that students can more adequately prepare for their final examinations, special rules apply to the seven calendar days preceding the final week of each fall and spring semester.

Student organizations do not meet; activities requiring student participation such as field trips, athletic events, or performances by dance, drama or music ensembles are not scheduled unless approved in advance by the appropriate dean.

Themes, reports, notebooks, research problems or exercises of similar scope are not to be assigned during this period, but students may submit previously assigned work.

Only examinations covering daily assignments, make-up tests or laboratory examinations may be given. Faculty members shall not give any portion of the final examination during this seven-day period without advance approval from their academic dean.

On the final Thursday and Friday of Pre-Final Week, classes must be used for review only; students may not be required to attend. Graduate classes and classes that meet only one time per week are exempted.

### **Final Examinations**

All instructors are expected to administer final examinations at the designated times during the final week of each long semester and during the specified day of each summer term.

Any deviation from the published schedule of final examinations must be approved in advance by the appropriate academic dean.

If a final examination is not given in a particular course, the faculty member is expected to utilize the final examination period for summary, evaluation or other productive purposes.

# Chapter Three: Working with Students

## Chapter Contents

- Understanding Student Rights and Responsibilities
- Interacting with Students
- Introduction to Testing and Grading

## Understanding Student Rights and Responsibilities

TAs and TFs need to understand the rights and responsibilities of students. The Office of Student Development and the Office of Academic Affairs have developed the list below.

1. **Protection of Constitutional Freedoms** – Students and all other members of the university community are guaranteed the constitutional freedoms of speech, peaceful assembly, petition and association.

**Responsibility:** Students and others must exercise their rights by lawful means subject to university rules and regulations regarding time, location, method and duration. Students may not disrupt the operations of the university or interfere with the rights of others to exercise their constitutional freedoms.

2. **Academic Freedom** – Students and all other members of the university community are guaranteed the rights freely to study, discuss, investigate, teach, conduct research and publish as appropriate to their respective roles and responsibilities. In the classroom and in conference students have the right within the scope of the course of study to state divergent opinions, challenge ideas and take reasoned exception to the data or the views offered.

**Responsibility:** Students and faculty share the responsibility to protect and to preserve conditions which are conducive to the learning process, including withholding judgment on matters of opinion, ensuring a fair hearing for divergent viewpoints and observing rules of courtesy in the classroom.

3. **Academic Standards** – Students have the right to know the standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.

**Responsibility:** Students are responsible for seeking clarification of any standard in question at the beginning of the term, for preparing assignments in advance of

each class session and for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Rules applying to academic dishonesty must be followed, including those related to plagiarism and academic dishonesty.

4. **Academic Evaluation** – Students have the right to be evaluated solely on an academic basis, without regard to issues of diversity, opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students have the right to review tests and other written work after the instructor has evaluated them and are accorded protection through the Grade Appeals Procedure against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation.

**Responsibility:** Students are responsible for bringing academic grievances first to the attention of the instructor who performed the evaluation in an effort to resolve the issue. If the matter cannot be settled at this level, it may be appealed in writing as outlined in the Grade Appeal Policy.

5. **Improper Disclosure** – Except when disclosure may be required by state or federal law, students have the right to confidentiality of information about views, beliefs and political associations which they may share privately with instructors, advisors or academic counselors. Judgment of ability and character may be provided under appropriate circumstances, normally with the knowledge and consent of the student.

**Responsibility:** Students have the responsibility to state clearly what is and what is not confidential disclosure.

6. **Personal Safety** – Students have the right to a classroom environment that is free of obvious hazards to safety and security.

**Responsibility:** Students are responsible for compliance with university rules and regulations prohibiting firearms, explosives, incendiaries and weapons of any kind on the campus. Students are also responsible to abide by all health/safety rules and procedures in all academic courses and laboratories.

7. **Illegal Drugs and Alcohol** – Students have the right to a learning environment free from illegal drugs and alcohol.

**Responsibility:** Students are responsible for compliance with university rules and regulations prohibiting possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs or alcohol in classroom buildings.

8. **Disruptions** – Students have the right to pursue an education without disruption or interference and to expect enforcement of norms for acceptable classroom behavior that prevents disruption of the teaching/learning process.

**Responsibility:** Students may not disrupt class or any other university process by any means whatsoever (including sideline conversations, comments, arguments,

noise of any kind or other activity which would hinder access to or utilization of academic information).

9. **Non-discrimination** – Students have the right to learn in a classroom environment where diversity is respected.

**Responsibility:** Students are responsible for respecting diversity and for behaving courteously to both faculty members and other students in the classroom regardless of difference in race, creed, color, religion, age, nationality, sex, sexual orientation or disability status.

10. **Intellectual Property** – Students have the right to expect that presentation of material in a class will be in compliance with copyright law and that their own creative work will not be disseminated or published without their permission.

**Responsibility:** Students who receive written notification from a faculty member that the information provided in his or her course is the faculty member's intellectual property shall not distribute, use for commercial purposes, or create derivative works of the intellectual property without obtaining the express permission of the faculty member. Students shall not assume permission in the absence of written notification from a faculty member. Students shall also respect and treat in similar manner, the intellectual property of other students.

## Interacting with Students

### *Clarifying Roles*

In the beginning of the semester, decide what relationship with students will be most effective. It is easy for TAs and TFs to forget how much power they have over students because they feel so powerless themselves. TAs and TFs are stuck at the bottom rung of the teaching hierarchy. Within the department and the university as a whole, they have as little power as the undergraduates in their classroom. A TA or TF's feelings of powerlessness—and the insecurity it can generate—complicates the problem of authority in the classroom.

Examples of outright authoritarianism and manipulation of students by TAs or TFs are relatively rare, but undergraduates often say they perceive an attitude of superiority. TAs or TFs with this attitude put off their students by failing to take their comments seriously. Try to respond to each student question or comment in an encouraging manner. Avoid any kind of individual criticism, in class or on written assignments, even if you think you are being funny.

TAs or TFs who like to have an informal relationship with their classes should make sure that this informality is not alienating anyone—particularly shy students. If students are

not coming to see you in office hours or seem uncomfortable speaking with you, inquire as to the problem and make special provisions to accommodate them.

### ***Students with Personal Problems***

If students come to you with personal or family problems, or problems with university life outside of the scope of the course you are teaching, tell them about the Counseling and Testing Center. The center, described in more detail in the chapter on “Facilities and Services,” provides free individual group counseling in the areas of educational, vocational, marital, emotional, and personal development.

### ***Disruptive Students***

Students occasionally disrupt class discussion by having separate conversations, giggling, passing notes, doing other work, reading a newspaper, etc. You might first try frowning at the offending students to make it clear that you disapprove.

If students persist in disruptive behavior, then you should verbally request that they desist or that they see you after class—the latter is in some ways better since it will avoid humiliating them in class. In your meeting with the student explain that it is disrespectful to ignore or disrupt fellow students.

Many TAs and TFs understandably feel uncomfortable policing the classroom like this, but in real classroom situations you will sometimes face a choice between asserting your authority or letting disruptive students undermine the learning process. The former is clearly the better option.

### ***Flirtation, Familiarity, and Favoritism***

You can also help minimize grade disputes by making it clear to students that you treat everyone equally. This may sound self-evident, but it is really not so simple. Many TAs or TFs want desperately to be liked by their students and will go to great lengths to be friendly, especially since they know that their students (depending on the department) will write evaluations of them at the end of the semester.

Friendliness has its drawbacks. If some students perceive that you are especially friendly to other members of the class, they are likely to assume that you will not grade objectively. Carefully evaluate the social distance that you establish and maintain between yourself and your students: are you equally friendly and accessible to all students?

Make sure not to become personally involved or conspicuously friendly with individual students. TFs need to be sensitive to the potential for charges of sexual harassment, as well as conflicts of interest, when developing personal relationships with students. The university has specific policies dealing with this and other related subjects (see “University Policies” section of this handbook for more detailed information).

## ***Sexual Harassment***

It is the policy of the University of North Texas that no member of the University community may sexually harass another and that all allegations of sexual harassment be investigated. All members of the faculty, staff and student body will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy. Please refer to the sexual harassment policy, UNT Policies Manual, vol. 1, Human Resources Department policy number 1.3.19, [http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT\\_Policy/volume1/1\\_3\\_19.html](http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume1/1_3_19.html) . Also refer to the consensual relationship policy (policy 1.3.23).

**Sexual Harassment:** Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

Criteria:

1. Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or education, or
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or education decisions affecting such an individual, or
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or education performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work or educational environment.

Types:

1. Quid Pro Quo

Examples: "If you have sex with me, you will get a raise."  
"If you have sex with me, you will get an 'A' grade."

2. Hostile Environment

Unwelcome behavior that is severe and pervasive and unreasonably interferes with the person's work or education.

- Third Party  
Sexual conduct that is welcome and reciprocated, but creates a hostile environment for others.
- Sexual Favoritism

Sexual conduct that is welcomed and reciprocated, but results in unfair treatment of others.

- Sex-Based  
Any harassing conduct that is based on gender can constitute sexual harassment.

Responding to Sexual Harassment:

1. Confront the harasser and tell that person that the harassment must stop.
2. Report the harassment to the appropriate person to include supervisory personnel, Human Resources, or the Division of Equity and Diversity.

<b>BEHAVIOR WHICH MAY CONSTITUTE SEXUAL HARASSMENT</b>	
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>
Sexual Comments	Jokes or remarks that are stereotypical or derogatory to members of the same or opposite sex; repeated comments about a person's anatomy; sexual innuendo.
Undue Attention	Flirtation.
Verbal Sexual Advances	General verbal expressions of sexual interest; inquiries of sexual values or behaviors, but short of a proposition.
Visual Sexual Displays	Display of pornographic pictures, posters, cartoons or other materials, including use of the Internet.
Body Language	Leering at one's body.
Invitations	Personal invitations for dates or to one's house or apartment, but sexual expectations not stated.
Physical Advances	Kissing; hugging; patting; pinching; fondling; provocative touching.
Explicit Sexual	Clear invitations for sexual encounter, but no threats or promises.
Sexual Bribery	Explicit sexual propositions which include or strongly imply promises of rewards for complying (e.g., higher grades, better recommendations) and/or threats of punishment for refusing (e.g. lower grades, less favorable recommendations).
SOURCE: adapted from <u>The Minority Review</u> , Vol. 1, No. 3, December 1990	

### ***Students with Disabilities***

In accordance with university policies and state and federal regulations, the university is committed to full academic access for all qualified students, including those with disabilities. Students must be registered with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to receive a special accommodation. The (ODA) collects proof of disability and



recommended compensation techniques from the licensed or certified professional who made the diagnosis of disability. Students who have disabilities that are covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act and who have been properly registered with the ODA are called “qualified students.” Instructors are expected to make reasonable and appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment and the teaching, testing, or learning methodologies in order to facilitate equality of educational access for such qualified persons with disabilities.

Within the first week of class, qualified students must notify the instructor that special accommodations will be needed. A qualified student should present a Special Accommodation Request Form that will contain information relative to the special needs of the student and will assure the instructor that proof of disability is on file with the ODA. Students who do not present such a form can be referred to the ODA for assistance in completing the Special Accommodation Request.

The qualified student and the instructor will attempt to reach mutual agreement on how accommodation is to be achieved. ODA can be called upon assistance in determining the accommodations that shall be provided and for assistance in providing some of those accommodations. (See the chapter on university services and facilities.)

### ***Dealing with Language Problems***

Most international students have passable English. They understand the lectures and comprehend the reading material. As they use English actively in discussions and especially in writing, language acquisition errors become more evident. Accents can affect pronunciation and understanding by native English speakers. As a general rule, all TAs or TFs need to be aware they may have a student in class whose first language is not English. Showing concern and awareness about the students’ specific language difficulties will aid in their overall performance in the class.

In a class based upon students’ verbal participation, heavy accents may prevent students from contributing to the class discussion and may consequently affect their grades. Usually, accents do not change even when students improve their English skills. Certainly, TAs or TFs cannot correct accents, but they can encourage students to participate and help them with their efforts to express themselves.

- Repeat the student’s main argument. If you do not fully understand the argument, you should say so openly. One of the most frustrating experiences of international students is to talk without any reaction.
- Ask for further explanation. Many students, out of politeness or indifference or a fear of embarrassing their classmate, prefer to remain calm and to give the impression that they understand.
- Correct expressions that may help the student in the future.

Pronunciation can become clearer to Americans if the speaker can identify his or her specific difficulties. In extreme cases, if a student’s accent is incomprehensible, you can

suggest ways of improvement, such as attending a course offered by the Intensive English Language Institute (see Facilities and Services section).

When the course requires extensive written work, such as essay exams or term papers, the international student faces a real disadvantage. You cannot and should not exempt such students from these assignments, but there are ways of helping international students. If the midterm and final exams are taken in class, you have only limited devices, such as giving some extra time to the international student or allowing them to bring a dictionary to the examination.

If some of the assignments are take-home exams or term papers, the TA or TF together with the student can ease the burden of language. You can ask for a volunteer among the American students to proofread the paper, correct grammar, spelling, and style. You can also refer the student to the University Writing Center for assistance (see the “Facilities and Services” section of this Handbook.)

## **Introduction to Testing and Grading**

One of the principal duties of a TA or TF is to assign letter grades in accordance with UNT regulations. Grading is tricky. What is fair at midnight, after all, when your eyes are swimming and you have a dozen more papers to grade before dawn? The following points are designed to help you avoid common grading problems.

Hard work, enthusiasm, and politeness count, but do not substitute for the quality of a student’s work. A UNT degree certifies competency. Our responsibility is to uphold this goal.

If a radical discrepancy occurs between in-class performance and the graded paper or exam, work closely with that student to try to uncover the problem.

Grading multiple choice or short answer examinations is relatively straightforward; standardize answers and assign numerical equivalencies. Before grading an essay examination, establish the components of a good answer.

### ***Tips on Administering Tests***

- Unless there is some compelling reason to distribute the tests later, pass them out as students come into the room. This protects students from mounting waves of panic while they wait for the test to be distributed.
- Minimize interruptions. Tell students before the exam that you will write announcements, instructions, or corrections on the blackboard.
- Give a warning (say 10 minutes) before collecting tests.

### ***Preventing Academic Dishonesty***

- Reduce the pressure. Provide a number of opportunities for students to demonstrate achievement of course goals, rather than relying upon single examination.
- Make reasonable demands and write a reasonable test. Some academic dishonesty is simply the result of frustration and desperation arising from assignments too long to be covered adequately or tests requiring memorization of trivial details.
- Show that you are concerned about academic dishonesty. Move around the room during the test. Avoid a tense atmosphere, but convey a sense of alert helpfulness while strolling down the aisles or watching for questions.
- Ask students to raise their hands if they have questions so that they don't have to move around the room.
- Make different versions of a single test to keep students from looking at their neighbor's test.
- Restrict use of cell phone in class during testing

### ***Handling Academic Dishonesty***

- Follow department and university procedures.
- If you have time to think about the suspected academic dishonesty, consult an experienced faculty member before taking any action.
- Know in advance how to handle a student looking on another's paper during a test. Will you take up the paper, ask the student to move to another seat, or take some other action?
- Have a written policy that prescribes what will happen if academic dishonesty is discovered. Make sure your policy conforms to departmental or university rules.
- Follow your written policy.
- Where appropriate, require students to use pen rather than pencil to fill out the tests. Students may correct their answers after grading trying to get more points from exams.

### ***Favoritism and Fairness***

Despite a TA or TF's best attempts to keep grading objective, every grade contains an element of arbitrariness. However because they see it as a direct attack on their authority, some TAs or TFs bristle and get defensive when a student questions a grade. The best way to avoid this appearance of arbitrariness is to spell out as clearly as possible your grading policy and have a reasonable number of assignments throughout the semester. The student should know how he or she is doing in the class all during the semester, so the final grade will not be a shock.

### ***Grade Conflicts***

Nearly every TA or TF at one time or another will have to deal with students who are extremely unhappy with the grade assigned to their work. Many students have their ego so tied to their schoolwork that a relatively low grade becomes a blow to their self-esteem. Others are under intense pressure to perform well in order to be admitted to law

school, graduate school, maintain scholarships, etc. As a result, debates with students over grades can often become unpleasant. Explain to your students that your role is to evaluate their ability to learn and apply course material. Make it clear to them that you are not judging them as human beings and that the same standards apply to everyone in the class.

### ***Writing Effective Comments***

Another way to help prevent students from interpreting low grades as a personal attack on them is to be sure that your written comments on their work point out not only the bad, but also the good.

If you only point out the problems, then students are likely to think that they have nothing valuable to say. Preface your negative criticisms with comments on the paper's strengths. Then explain the weaknesses and tell students exactly how they can correct their mistakes so that they know how to improve.

You also might try to keep your remarks impersonal. That is, instead of saying "You misinterpret the problem here: or "You have not analyzed the question very thoroughly," write that "The paper misinterprets..." This will help ensure that students do not feel personally attacked by your written comments.

### ***Graphing Grades***

Graphing the distribution of your grades provides another means of checking yourself. A fair scale reflects the entire range of grades the bulk of students doing average work. If all of the students fail or if most students make A's, the evaluative process or course content may need re-evaluation.

### ***Pressure from Students***

Often students will try to pressure TAs or TFs by telling them they always get As or that they need to get an A in this class in order to get into medical school. Firmly explain to such students that their aspirations or previous academic performance in no way affects your grading policy and that it is not your responsibility to see that they get into the medical school of their choice. Make it clear to students that such pressure will not sway you. This will help minimize frivolous grade complaints.

Avoid intimidating students into thinking that they have no right to appeal their grades—often their complaints about grades are legitimate. When you hand back graded work, explain the procedure for appealing a grade. And make sure to treat any such complaints with an open mind.

### ***Emotional Students***

Grade disputes are sometimes charged with emotion. In a few cases, students who associate their self-worth with their grades may become distraught and begin to cry when they come to discuss their grades with you.

Obviously, it is important first to try to calm them down; then explain to them that the grade you assigned their work, though perhaps lower than they hoped for, should in no way be interpreted as a sign that they are incapable of learning. Convince such students to strive for improvement; reassure them that they are intelligent and capable.

### ***Belligerent Students***

In a few cases, students may be belligerent in grade disputes. If students approach you with grade disputes, but are unwilling to accept your explanation of their grades, then you should tell them that you will have either another TA or TF or a professor read the work.

### ***Plagiarism***

In grading term papers or other written assignments, TAs and TFs will need to be on guard against plagiarism. Since students often claim that they do not understand this form of academic dishonesty, TAs and TFs need to be prepared to explain what plagiarism is and what punishment is appropriate when it is detected.

The Code of Student Conduct states that the term “**plagiarism**” includes, but is not limited to

- (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and
- (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

It is also important to make sure that students know the consequences of academic dishonesty from the beginning of the course. The actual punishment will likely depend on what departmental policy is and what the course syllabus says. Typical punishment would be failing the assignment or failing the course. Additional penalties, such as losing a scholarship or being expelled from a program, might be at stake. In explaining the consequences, TAs and TFs should simply repeat and interpret the policy given in the course syllabus.

When a TA or TF suspects plagiarism, the student should be confronted in private and given an opportunity to dispute the charges. TFs can discuss the matter with the student themselves, make a judgment as to whether the student is guilty of plagiarism, and assess penalties if convinced that the student is guilty. TAs should turn over cases of suspected

plagiarism to the supervising professor. Students who wish to protest a decision should be informed of their rights to appeal under the grade appeals policy.

# Chapter Four: Tips for Teaching Assistants

## Chapter Contents

- Know Your Responsibilities
- Understand Class Objectives
- Contact Information
- Course Materials
- Class Meetings
- Office Hours
- Examinations and Grading
- Record Keeping
- Laboratories or Recitation Sections
- Doing Your Share Without Being Overloaded

## Know Your Responsibilities

As a Teaching Assistant, it is important for you and the instructor you assist to come to a clear understanding of your responsibilities. This chapter provides you with a list of duties for which teaching assistants might be held responsible. It is important to make sure you understand which ones you personally are responsible for in the classes in which you will be assisting. The best way to achieve that understanding is for you to schedule a meeting with your supervisor as soon as possible—preferably before classes begin.

## Understand Class Objectives

You must understand the objectives of the class in which you are assisting. This understanding can be achieved in two ways. First, get a copy of the class syllabus and read it carefully. Second, talk to your supervising instructor about the class and get him or her to explain the objectives of the class more fully.

## Contact Information

Make sure that you give your supervisor several forms of contact information. Provide a telephone number where you can be reached and an e-mail address that you check regularly.

## **Course Materials**

The department will usually supply the textbooks that will be used in courses in which you are assisting. You can usually get them from your supervisory instructor or from the department's supervisor of TAs and TFs. Check with your supervisor to see if there are other materials that you will need and how you are expected to acquire them. At the end of the semester departmental policy may require that you return textbooks and other course materials.

## **Class Meetings**

Make sure you understand the instructor's expectations about your attendance in the class with which you are assisting. Some instructors will want to have you there every class period, others may not. Also make sure you understand what you are expected to do when you attend class. Are you expected to take roll? Are you expected to take class notes? Are you expected to set up audiovisual equipment? When you meet with the supervising instructor make sure you get a clear understanding of these responsibilities.

## **Office Hours**

In most cases, Teaching Assistants are expected to hold regular office hours. Make sure you understand the policy of your department and your supervising instructor about the number of office hours you are expected to hold. Also make sure you understand what kinds of things you are expected to be able to do during those office hours. Are you expected to be able to answer questions about lectures? Are you expected to explain grades and grading policy?

## **Examinations and Grading**

Ask your supervising instructor what your responsibilities will be with regard to grading and examinations. Will you be expected to help construct exams? What part of the grading will be your responsibility, if any? Will you be grading assignments? Will you be grading examinations? What will your role be in administering exams?

## **Record Keeping**

Teaching assistants often have some responsibility for record keeping. You may be expected to take roll and keep a record of each student's number of absences. You may also be expected to keep the records of grades for the class. Make sure you understand your supervising instructor's expectations about your role in record keeping.



## **Laboratories or Recitation Sections**

In some departments, a teaching assistant's principal responsibilities may involve teaching a lab or recitation/discussion section that is associated with the course taught by the supervising instructor. In such cases, it is important that TAs get a clear understanding of what is expected of them. They must know what material is to be covered, what techniques they should use, and what part they will play in grading. The most important thing is to make sure that you and your supervising instructor share a common understanding of your responsibilities.

## **Doing Your Share Without Being Overloaded**

As a teaching assistant you must balance your responsibilities as an employee of the university and your responsibilities as a graduate student. Your department has the right to expect you to work a number of hours that is appropriate for your appointment. For a half-time appointment, your department can expect you to work an average of twenty hours per week. For a quarter-time appointment, an average of ten hours per week can be expected. Some weeks you may be expected to work more hours and you will work fewer hours other weeks. Focus on the average workload.



# Chapter Five: Tips for Teaching Fellows

## Chapter Contents

- Preparing Your Course Syllabus
- Preparing for Your First Class
- Conducting Your First Class
- Adopting Realistic Expectations
- Motivating Students
- Grading
- Providing an Outline
- Consultation Hours
- Using E-Mail to Communicate with Students
- Choosing Teaching Techniques

## Preparing Your Course Syllabus

The first step in preparing to teach your class is to prepare a thorough syllabus. The syllabus should cover a variety of kinds of information about the class, including the following:

- title and section number of the course
- instructor's name, office number, office telephone number, and e-mail address
- office/consultation hours
- textbooks
- course objectives
- grading policy (relative weights of components of the grade)
- academic dishonesty policy
- attendance policy
- policy on accepting late work
- course content by topics
- reading assignments
- approximate test dates
- deadlines for turning in assignments
- disability accommodations statement
- other items required by your academic unit

The syllabus should map out your plans for the semester. Include the topics that will be covered in the course, reading, and other assignments. Include approximate due dates for

assignments and exams, but point out to the students that the schedule is a guide for the semester and is subject to minor modification as the course develops.

Turn in a copy of your syllabus to the department secretary during the first week of the semester along with a separate listing of your office hours.

## **Preparing For Your First Class**

The first class is a common source of anxiety for new TFs, and even for those with experience. TFs fret about a host of potential problems that can easily be avoided with proper preparation. Remember, a well-prepared TF is a confident TF—at least most of the time.

Before your first class session, try to meet with the professor who supervises the course you are to teach. Ideally, an orientation meeting should be planned which includes all the TFs teaching a particular course. This way everyone can be clear on their responsibilities and can prepare properly for the semester. In addition, veteran TFs who have taught the course can explain to their less experienced colleagues what to expect.

Read the material required for the earliest part of the course. This will enable you to give your students an accurate idea of what academic delights await them. Do not over prepare for the first class, however, by blitzing through the entire semester's reading. If you do, you are likely to overwhelm your students and exhaust yourself.

## **Conducting Your First Class**

There is no “best” way to conduct a first class. What goes on the first day may differ among courses and even among TFs in the same course. Some TFs prefer not to discuss class materials during the first session, but instead focus more attention on creating an open class atmosphere. Others may have no choice because they are required to cover specific material in the first session.

A case of the pre-class jitters is shared by most first time TFs. Some TFs say that careful preparation helps ease apprehension; others stress that discussing teaching methods with more experienced colleagues before the first class calms them down. One TF suggested getting to the classroom early and chatting with students before class formally begins, so that you do not walk late into a classroom overflowing with anonymous faces.

### ***Creating a Positive Class Atmosphere***

On the first day, students are most concerned with the basic aspects of the course. They want to find out what books they will be reading, what supplies may be required, and about grading policy and exams. Be responsive to those concerns. Hand out a syllabus and a reading list. Talk about grades. Let them know the nature and frequency of exams

and other assignments. Tell them whether you will take class participation and attendance into consideration when grading. Begin and end class on time. Most importantly, let them know that you are concerned about their education and well being by eliciting their questions and responding to them openly and candidly.

### ***First Class Discussion***

Sometimes it may not be best to jump right into the meat of the course on the first day. Even if the course covers a lot of material, with 15 weeks of instruction you can afford to “go lightly” in the first class meeting. Some interested students always seem to miss the first day of class.

### ***Hints for Your First Class***

Here are some teaching hints for your first class:

Introduce yourself, then hand out a syllabus and answer any questions. Talk about grading: what counts most, what counts least and how tough you are going to be on deadlines. Talk about consultation hours, when and where you will be available for help.

Once everybody’s questions are answered, start at one end of the room and go around having everyone introduce himself or herself. Besides the usual name-major-year, try asking students to say where they are from (“It always gets a response from other students,” one TF noted, “and is a way to get them talking to each other on the first day.”).

If you have difficulty with names (a common shortcoming), then you may want to have each student put his or her vital information on a 3x5 card to which you then refer to until you learn everyone’s name. During the first few sessions, some TFs find it useful to have students state their names before they make a comment in class; others actually have students write their names on pieces of folded paper and put the paper in front of them so that the TF and the other students can learn everyone’s name quickly.

You can foster a good relationship with your students by letting them know that a short time ago you were sitting where they are now. You might then introduce an interesting example of the course material to illustrate the kinds of things they can expect in class.

Try to cover some substantive intellectual material during the first class. Many TFs feel it is important to get beyond mundane administrative details and at least briefly discuss some exciting problems or issues germane to the course. This will immediately get students engaged in the material and speaking to each other.

Some TFs bring in copies of a very brief article or document to provide a basis for discussion. Others like to devote their first session to a general introduction of and discussion about the nature of the course and of the academic discipline in general: What is sociology? Why study economics? What is historical methodology?

It is vital that you include as many students as possible in class discussion so that all students from the very first day will feel comfortable speaking in front of the class. Get them talking to each other.

To help facilitate discussion, you can break the class into smaller groups. This allows students to get to know their classmates. Small groups also help shy students since it is usually less intimidating to speak in this setting than to address the entire class.

## **Adopting Realistic Expectations**

New TFs should not expect too much out of their first classes. Just as it is difficult to induce strangers to speak to each other in social settings, TFs may find it hard to provoke lively discussions in the first class.

Remember, too, that many students may not be as interested as you in making your first class an exciting educational experience; they may have other concerns on their minds—like whether your assignment list is too heavy to be compatible with the other work they have to do this semester.

Give yourself and your students at least a few weeks before you jump to any conclusions about the quality of the discussion or the success of the course.

## **Motivating Students**

The ability to motivate students is one of the most important skills in effective teaching. If students are excited by both the course content and by the process of learning, then your instructional work will be a gratifying experience. All instructors should carefully consider ways to encourage students to take an active role in their own educational development.

Perhaps the most important means of maintaining an open and vivacious classroom atmosphere is positive reinforcement. When students answer your questions correctly, praise them. This encourages them to continue participating actively in class or lab.

When you are summing up information presented in class, try to refer by name to the students who made good comments in class--e.g., “As Joe pointed out...” or “As Jane contended...”

Do not embarrass students who volunteer incorrect answers to your questions during class. Try as diplomatically as possible to show that the student’s error is not totally unreasonable, that it is a good guess, but that it isn’t right.

## Grading

TFs should also be aware that grading policies might affect the motivation of students in class. If it does not conflict with department policy, you might want to figure attendance and class participation into the final grade. This helps promote class discussion.

You might also consider grading on improvement. This may help prevent students who do poorly on the first class assignments from getting despondent and giving up on the class.

Emphasize that grades are not a measure of innate intelligence but simply a gauge of their educational progress. Let them know that with hard work there is always room for improvement. Strive to convince students to divorce their egos from their grades. Point out, also, in cases where it is appropriate, that even though the student ended with a grade of, say B-, this may actually be a sign of substantial improvement if the student began the class getting grades in the D range. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

Tell even your best students that there is still room for improvement. An A grade is simply a means of comparing their work with that of other students in the class. Even an A exam or assignment may be improved upon. Convince them to strive for excellence and self-improvement.

## Providing an Outline

Even the best students will occasionally lose the thread of a lesson or forget the original objective of a discussion. An outline, on the marker board or projected on a screen, can help students keep up with the lesson. Here are some hints for using outlines in class:

- Use headings that list the major points to be covered in the class. This is an invaluable aid to students in putting their notes in perspective and providing better sets of notes for study.
- Use underlining, capitals, and boxes to emphasize key statements, ideas, terms, or formulas.
- Be selective. Stick to the basic ideas. Writing down everything usually obscures rather than clarifies what you are doing.
- If you are projecting your outline with an overhead projector or data projector, reveal the points as you discuss them, so that students will listen to the discussion instead of simply copying the whole outline.
- Make sure that your outline is visible to all in the room.

## Consultation Hours

During the first week of the semester, tell your students the location of your office and the times during which you will be available for consultation. Ask for your students'

opinions on possible consultation hours. Try to schedule for their convenience, leaving open time “by appointment”.

You should also post these hours on your office door. It is advisable as well to announce any change in your consultation hours or any emergency cancellation.

Consultation hours can be an important part of the learning process or a completely wasted opportunity. The difference depends on your ability to encourage students to come to your office to clarify material presented in class, ask questions about assignments, or get suggestions for further readings.

Early in the semester you can encourage the habit of using consultation hours by scheduling a short interview with each student in your class. In this interview you can find out the reasons they are taking the course, any particular problems they anticipate, and generally develop rapport.

### ***Address Individual Problems***

As the semester progresses and you become more familiar with your students, consultation hours can be used with increasing effectiveness to address individual learning problems.

For instance, almost every semester you will teach a few shy students who consistently do well on written assignments but who are initially reticent in class discussions. In consultation hours you can meet individually with these students and encourage them to participate in class by expressing your enthusiasm for their work and urging them to share their good ideas with the rest of the section.

In addition to advising and answering questions from individual students, consultation hours can also be used in a number of ways to supplement lectures and discussions. For example, special consultation hours can be scheduled to deal with particularly difficult material, or issues related to accommodating students with disabilities. Any student needing more work on that material can report to the section review. Group consultation hours can also be held for review sessions at the end of the semester.

### ***Fairness and Respect***

In meeting with students during the semester, aim at creating the sense that you will treat them fairly and without favoritism.

### ***Students with Personal Problems***

If a student with serious personal problems approaches you, refer the student to the Counseling and Testing Center. The center is described in more detail in the chapter on university services. You may offer to call and help the student make an appointment, but



do not allow yourself to be put in the position of surrogate parent or psychotherapist. Creating a dependent relationship could be harmful to you and the student.

## **Using E-Mail to Communicate With Students**

You may find it helpful to communicate with your students by using e-mail. Many students already have e-mail accounts before coming to UNT. All students are also expected to activate their Eaglemail account that is provided by the university. You may need to encourage them to take that step. An Eaglemail account can be activated on the web at [my.unt.edu](http://my.unt.edu) then click on Activate my EUID. This widely available resource offers two important means of communicating with students.

First, e-mail opens up the possibility for individual communication with students. Students can use e-mail to pose questions to you, and you can provide quick feedback. Using this approach requires that you make a commitment to reading your e-mail regularly and responding quickly to your students. This opportunity for communication may be especially valuable to the shy or reticent student who would be embarrassed to ask a question in class. Such students can use e-mail to ask the questions they would not ask otherwise.

A second resource email offers to instructors is the opportunity to send “bulk” e-mail. Through this service an instructor can send a message to all the students in a class by sending only one message. This makes it easy to send assignments, study sheets, or reminders to all members of the class. Make sure you tell them, if important class information is to be distributed this way.

## **Choosing Teaching Techniques**

Several teaching techniques are available. The approach used will depend, to some extent, on the nature of the course and the topics to be covered. The approach may be dictated by the nature of the section, if it is a lab or a discussion section. In other cases, you may be free to choose the approach that seems most appropriate to the subject matter and works best for you. Varying methods of instruction are often desirable, because different students learn in different ways, and because some material is more amenable to one approach than another.

### ***Lecturing***

One venerable form of instruction in universities is the lecture. While it is still one of the most widely used teaching techniques, many experts doubt that lecturing is the most effective technique. It can be a useful way of conveying new information or of explaining difficult concepts and analytical techniques. Successful lecturing depends on good organizational skills and good public speaking skills. It may even demand an amount of showmanship to be effective.

### ***Leading Discussion***

Discussion can be an effective technique of instruction when students need opportunities to learn to apply concepts that have been learned from reading or lecture or when they need practice in critically evaluating arguments made in reading or in other material. The important skill to be developed in this teaching technique is the art of asking good questions. It is important to ask questions that will get students to think, analyze, and apply. Students should not be put in the position of trying to guess what the instructor is thinking. It is also important to create an environment in which students feel free to participate without fear of ridicule.

### ***Problem-Solving Activities***

Sometimes it may be appropriate to divide the class into groups and let each group work on solving a problem or question that is posed for them. By listening to the solutions devised by various groups, students can learn more about thinking critically and how to synthesize material.

### ***Audio-Visual Materials***

It is also appropriate to use audio or video tapes as a part of instruction, so long as they are not depended upon excessively to avoid the necessity of preparation for class. The Media Library (see the section on University Services) has a large collection of materials. The catalog of these materials can be searched online. A good video followed by probing discussion can be a very effective teaching technique.

### ***Writing Assignments***

Writing assignments are an important means of determining whether students understand material and can practice critical thinking. Understanding is demonstrated when students can explain things in their own words. Critical thinking is demonstrated when they can evaluate alternative arguments effectively. Instructors who use writing assignments must be willing to make the commitment to effective grading. These assignments will not have much value to the student unless instructors provide meaningful feedback that can lead to improvement.

## Chapter Six: Advice to International TFs

### Chapter Contents

- Language Difficulties
- Cultural Problems
- Body Language
- University International Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow Program

The trials and tribulations of international TFs do not differ substantially from those of their American counterparts. Yet in one crucial area, that of student-teacher communication, they have a set of problems all their own.

### Language Difficulties

The best possible practice is to confront your students immediately with the problems arising from language barriers. Advise your students to speak clearly and to avoid excessive or incomprehensible slang, and request them never to ignore any dense or incomprehensible sentence that you may utter.

Encourage your students not to be shy. This point is best conveyed to your students in a humorous, light-hearted fashion to encourage students to request language clarification freely (“Oh, I realize that sometimes I’m difficult to understand!”).

No matter how hard you try, there will always be a small group of students who will attempt to shirk their responsibilities by laying the blame on your language difficulties (“I didn’t understand you correctly. I thought you said NEXT week.”) The following points will help you avoid this problem.

- Flood your students with written instruction. All course requirements, the method used in computing the final grade, exam dates, and a thorough reading list should be presented in writing at the first possible opportunity.
- During the first few weeks, hand out written study questions to familiarize students with the mode of questioning that you will use during the semester.
- Be attentive to students’ facial expressions. Blank looks are a sure sign that something is going wrong. At times you may even request some of your more able students to paraphrase crucial thoughts in their own language.
- The use of audio-visual material is invaluable. Slides, photographs, movies, or music are often extremely effective ways to illustrate hard to explain points.

- Make personal use of audio-visual techniques. Record yourself on a video camera or on an ordinary tape recorder. You will be surprised how many problems you can identify by watching or listening to yourself carefully.

## **Cultural Problems**

Communication is not always a language problem—it has definite cultural dimensions. One common solution lies in the realm of intensive observation. Try observing some undergraduate classes before taking on the burden of a teaching fellowship. This will familiarize you with the interaction between student and instructor. If possible, you should be a grader or TA for at least one semester. This way you will know what level of preparation to expect from the average student.

The most fruitful way of overcoming the cultural barrier is to show your students that you care. At the earliest possible opportunity, get to know their names, where they come from, and the subjects that interest them. A few minutes of small talk before each class can make a world of difference.

Be flexible with your office hours, if students cannot make the times you set. You might even require a mandatory one-on-one meeting with each of your students, provided they do not number in the hundreds and thousands. It goes without saying that your willingness to accommodate students should not compromise your firm demands for punctual assignments, nor should it erode your strict, but fair, grading standards.

Cultural obstacles may be overcome by showing your enthusiasm and by being attentive to the actions and reactions of your students.

## **Body Language**

Here are a few tips on body language. American students expect you to look them straight in the eye when addressing them. Facial expressions convey a sense of receptiveness, while a moderate use of hands and arms serves to emphasize crucial features of your discourse. Touching, a common feature in many cultures, should be avoided.

## **University International Teaching Assistant/Teaching Fellow Program**

The International TA/TF Program at North Texas is jointly sponsored by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI). Its purpose is to train, evaluate and assist current and prospective international teaching assistants or teaching fellows (ITAs).

The program consists of three phases:

1. an initial English language competency screening
2. a formal course designed to improve the International TAs communication skills
3. an extensive evaluation of the course participants that includes recommendations for future teaching responsibilities

The communication skills course is a free, non-credit course offered for a twelve-week period during each long semester. It includes a weekly lecture, a weekly workshop session, and recommended work in the IELI language laboratory. The objectives of the course are as follows:

- to improve language skills, such as pronunciation and intonation
- to improve non-verbal skills, such as eye contact, gestures and cross-cultural awareness
- to improve basic teaching skills, such as lecturing and answering questions

**All international teaching fellows and assistants must be reviewed by the ITA program before any UNT department can hire them.**

The final evaluation is based on a short (ten to fifteen minutes) lecture. A panel evaluates this presentation, and recommendations are made in the following categories:

- CERTIFIED - The ITA demonstrates teaching and language skills adequate for full teaching responsibility in the classroom.
- CONDITIONALLY CERTIFIED - The ITA exhibits some problems in speaking skills, non-verbal skills, or basic teaching skills and should be given teaching responsibility only in a class or lab where a senior teacher is present. An ITA in this category should work closely with the departmental TA supervisor, observe experienced teachers' classes, and/or take the communication skills courses again.
- NOT CERTIFIED - The ITA exhibits serious problems in communication and should be given no speaking responsibility in class or lab. An ITA in this category could, at the department's discretion, assume tutorial or grading responsibilities, take the communication skills course again, and/or enroll in an optional pronunciation course at the IELI.



# Chapter Seven: UNT Facilities and Services

## Chapter Contents

- Center for Media Production
- Classroom Support Services
- Central Computing Services
- Counseling and Testing Services
- Division of Equity and Diversity
- International Studies and Programs
- Learning Center
- Libraries
- Office of Disability Accommodation
- Scholarship Office
- Student Legal Advisor
- University Police
- University Writing Center

This chapter lists several important campus services that can help TFs and TAs in their teaching. Check with your departmental secretary or academic dean's office for additional university information and resource publications.

## Center for Media Production

The Center for Media Production (CMP) is the university's official full-service media production center. CMP features professional quality multimedia/web development and design, graphics, photography, audio, and video production. Consulting, development, and design are available for all types of presentation projects.

CMP is fee-based and its products and services are available to the entire campus community.

CMP is located in 211 Chilton Hall. Telephone: 940-565-2180. Web Page:  
<http://WWW.CMP.UNT.EDU>

## Classroom Support Services

Classroom Support Services (CSS) is funded by the student Technology Use Fee to provide and maintain audio-visual equipment in UNT's general-use (type "110" and "210") classrooms. All "110" classrooms are equipped with the following: data/video

projector, networked computer (with DVD/CD-ROM, floppy, Zip drives, USB ports), VCR and closed-caption converter, screen, overhead transparency projector, and connections for auxiliary computer and video. Microsoft Office (including Word, Excel, and PowerPoint) is installed on the standard classroom computer; please refer to departmental/college computer support staff for assistance in using other software. Please remember to turn off the data projector (using the “remote” on the computer) at the end of your class.

Projectors and video players can be delivered to "210" classrooms as needed. Computers and cameras are not available from CSS. Requests for equipment should be made at least 24 hours in advance of the time when equipment is needed. Requests for equipment or services on weekends require a week's advance notice.

CSS staff members are available to explain how to use classroom equipment and to provide emergency assistance when classes are in session. Classroom equipment demonstrations are available in CSS in Chilton 243. Please refer to the CSS website, [www.css.unt.edu](http://www.css.unt.edu), for additional information

To request classroom equipment or report equipment problems, call CSS at 565-2691. CSS is located in Chilton Hall 243.

## **Central Computing Services**

Central computing services in support of instruction and research are provided through Academic Computer Services. The Computer Center is located in ISB 119. Telephone: 565-2324.

### ***General Access Labs***

General access computer labs, located throughout the Denton campus and at the Dallas Campus, provide access to hundreds of microcomputers for use by UNT students. The general access labs contain both Windows and Macintosh personal computers with laser printing capabilities. A special adaptive computing lab is available for persons with disabilities.

### ***Internet Services***

Academic Computing Services provides a suite of Internet Services available to all students. EagleMail is the official student E-mail system of the University of North Texas and University policy requires that students activate and read their EagleMail. A Bulkmail service allows faculty to send EagleMail to their students simply by entering their course and section number. In addition to E-mail services, personal web publishing and dialup Internet access are available as part of UNT Internet Services. For more



information see:

<http://eaglemail.unt.edu/>

<http://bulkmail.unt.edu/>

## **Help Desk**

The Computing Center Support Services Information Desk provides a centralized referral service to advise students on a wide variety of computing subjects and assist them in trouble-shooting problems. The helpdesk can be contacted by phone at (940) 565-2324 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu). For more information see:

<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/>

A series of short courses on effective use of campus computing technology is available each semester. Computer-based training on a number of computing resources is also available. To see course offerings visit:

<http://www.unt.edu/training/>

## **Central Web Support Services**

The Central Web Support office provides

- free space for course-related web sites,
- free consulting services on design and construction of web sites, and
- a course management system for delivering instruction through web sites.

For more information about web services see these web sites:

- <http://www.unt.edu/webinfo>
- <http://courses.unt.edu/>

## **Test Grading**

The Data Entry Office of the Computing Center provides test-grading services for tests using the appropriate optical scanner answer sheets. Check with Data Entry to determine the correct type of answer sheet. A test analysis can also be run that provides such useful statistics as the mean test score, the standard deviation, and the percent getting each question correct.

## **Counseling and Testing Services**

The Counseling and Testing Service (CTS) provides a wide range of psychological services to assist students with social/family/relationship difficulties; psychological problems such as loneliness or depression; crisis counseling and referral, and career counseling and testing. Consultation and outreach programming are also available for faculty/staff and students.

CTS administers computer based testing for GRE, GMAT, TOEFL, and CLEP. CTS also administers most national tests including THEA, MCAT, SAT, and ACT. Information and application forms are available at the center. You may also visit their website:

<http://www.unt.edu/cat/>

The Counseling and Testing Service is located in Union Building 321. Telephone: 565-2741

Computer Based Testing is located in the Gateway Center in room 140. Telephone: 369-7617

## **Division of Equity and Diversity**

The Division of Equity and Diversity is committed to executing the mission of the University as it relates to the recruitment and retention of faculty, staff and students. The primary goal of the DED is to develop a supportive environment for a culturally diverse faculty, staff and student body. The Division of Equity and Diversity provides a safe zone for all. Please refer to the University policy on diversity, UNT Policies Manual, vol. 2, Human Resources Department (policy 10.12.11) – [http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT\\_Policy/volume2/10\\_12\\_11.html](http://www.unt.edu/policy/UNT_Policy/volume2/10_12_11.html) .

The phrase “equity and diversity” implies that a society of individuals exists in an environment where fairness, justice, civility and diversity are its primary goals. “Diversity” in this context, means “variety,” and it goes beyond race and ethnicity, to include class, gender, age, sexual orientation, religion, political affiliation, socio-economic background, educational level, profession and other qualities. “Equity” means “equality of opportunity” for all individuals, regardless of race, color, religion, gender, age, national origin, disability, or sexual orientation. The University of North Texas advocates a campus that promotes inclusiveness and is committed to maintaining an unpretentious and accepting atmosphere, welcoming individuals who strive for excellence.

The Division of Equity and Diversity is under the direction of the Associate Vice President for Equity and Diversity. It includes three primary areas: Community Development and Outreach, Diversity Education and the Multicultural Center.

## ***Multicultural Center***

The Multicultural Center, a student services department, was established to address the needs of the diverse campus population with the goal that it would be a place where the entire community and region could experience the cultural wealth of the University. Its central purpose is to “teach the culture” by increasing the involvement and knowledge base of all members through communication across cultures. Programs and activities sponsored by the Multicultural Center are developed with the intention of increasing the level of awareness, understanding, and consciousness regarding the underrepresented culture and history of people of African, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native American/American Indian descent.

The Multicultural Center is responsible for planning university-wide activities during Hispanic Heritage Month, Native American Month, Black History Month, Asian History Month, and assist in the planning of Women’s History Month, and International Week as well as other cultural programs.

In addition to working with a number of organizations geared towards students of color in advisory roles, the Multicultural Center also has established the Alton and Renay Scales Ethnic Studies Library, which maintains a basic collection of works relevant to the experiences of African, Hispanic/Latino, Asian, and Native American people. These resources are available to all university students, faculty, and staff for research or general information purposes.

The Multicultural Center is currently located on the fourth floor of the University Union, Room 422. For more information, visit or call (940) 565-3424, Fax: (940) 369-7262. Also visit their website: <http://www.unt.edu/edo/multicultural.htm>

## ***Division of Equity and Diversity Offices***

Administration Building, Room 175

University Union, Room 422

Telephone: (940) 565-2456

FAX: (940) 369-7577

<http://www.unt.edu/edo>

Our office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, or other times by appointment. We invite you to visit us and experience equity and diversity at work.

- Cassandra Berry, Associate Vice President
- Dan Emenheiser, Director, Diversity Education
- Patrick Vasquez, Director, Community Development and Outreach
- Cheylon Brown, Director, Multicultural Center

## **International Studies and Programs**

International Studies and Programs at the University of North Texas assists all students, faculty, staff and all departments and colleges in administering, participating and developing programs with an international emphasis. ISP is committed to fostering an international perspective that amplifies the university's mission to excellence in teaching and the discovery and application of knowledge through research and creative activities.

ISP's programs and services are administered out of five offices located in Kendall Hall. Rebecca Smith-Murdock, interim director, telephone: 565-2197.

Web site: <http://www.international.unt.edu>

### ***International Welcome Center***

The IWC is a place for students to meet, to relax and feel at home; IWC formally coordinates year-round orientation programs and activities on campus and in the Denton community for international students.

Olga Grieco, UNT program coordinator  
[Olga@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:Olga@isp.admin.unt.edu)  
369-8625

Dale Hamilton, IELI program coordinator  
[dale@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:dale@isp.admin.unt.edu)

### ***Intensive English Language Institute***

Eva Bowman, EILI director  
[eva@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:eva@isp.admin.unt.edu) 565-2003

The IELI provides seven levels of English language academic preparatory classes for students from beginning to advanced levels. A "Gateway" to the university, the IELI provides conditional admission (NO TOEFL required) for international students who successfully complete the IELI. The IELI offers specialized courses, including the Graduate Preparation Course (GPC) which, upon successful completion, waives the GRE verbal requirement for many graduate degree programs. IELI also offers a GRE/GMAT preparatory course

**ITA Training Program** - The IELI conducts the International Teaching Assistant (ITA) program, which provides training for teaching/research assistants and fellows at UNT. This program offers workshops for developing language and teaching skills, as well as an awareness of the roles and expectation of international teaching assistants and fellows in the classroom environment.

Michael Liroy, ITA Program coordinator  
[Michael@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:Michael@isp.admin.unt.edu)

### ***International Admissions***

The International Admissions office processes all international student applications for the Intensive English Language Institute and UNT undergraduate and graduate programs. Advisors work closely with students for speedy document evaluation and processing as well as the transfer of appropriate academic credit when necessary.

Ann Rahmat; Director  
[Annr@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:Annr@isp.admin.unt.edu)

### ***International Advising***

The International Advising office assists international students and scholars at UNT, Dallas Systems Center, and the Health Sciences Center at Fort Worth in the process of obtaining visas, maintaining status, extending stays in the U.S., authorizing employment, and all other immigration matters.

Dotty Horton, director  
[dotty@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:dotty@isp.admin.unt.edu)  
565-2195

### ***Sponsored Student Programs Center***

The SSPC offers specialized services to students who are sponsored by their government or other sponsoring agency. SSPC offers tailor-made academic programs for special groups, orientation, academic advising, personal counseling, cultural excursions and other services. SSPC also provides third-party billing, and timely reporting to sponsors.

Aleka Myre, director  
[aleka@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:aleka@isp.admin.unt.edu)  
565-4128

### ***Study Abroad Center***

All students at UNT, including international students, who meet academic requirements, are eligible to study abroad in many countries. SAC advisors help plan appropriate semester or year exchange programs and short-term or summer programs led by UNT faculty. Scholarships and financial aid, if applicable, are available to all students who participate in SAC programs.

Mary Beth Butler  
[Marybeth@isp.admin.unt.edu](mailto:Marybeth@isp.admin.unt.edu)  
545-2207

## Learning Center

The **Learning Center (TLC)** was created as a dynamic network of academic and student support partners whose goal is to assist students in achieving academic success. These programs and partnerships include RASSL (Reading and Study Skills Laboratories), Supplemental Instruction (SI), Contracting for Success, the Volunteer Tutors and the Learning Resource Center.

- **RASSL** is a non-credit course and/or workshop aimed at developing academic skills in areas such as textbook reading, studying, note taking, test taking, goal setting and time management.
- **Speed Reading** courses help students improve their reading rate while maintaining or improving their comprehension.
- **Supplemental Instruction and Supplemental Tutoring** place peer tutors in difficult courses. These instructors then meet with students in small groups to discuss and clarify class material.
- **Volunteer Tutors** are outstanding UNT students who volunteer to help other students with lower level course work.
- **The Learning Resource Library** has information about universities, colleges and other institutions of higher learning. It also provides books and computer programs to assist students with preparation for graduate school admissions exams.
- **Contracting for Success** is a program that provides comprehensive linkages to other academic support throughout the university. Students can contract to contact those resources that might be most helpful to them.

The Learning Center is located in the Student Union, Suite 323.

Telephone (940) 369-7006. Visit their website at: <http://www.unt.edu/lc/>

## Libraries – <http://www.library.unt.edu>

The Libraries of the University of North Texas contain over 1,800,000 cataloged materials including printed books, periodicals, documents, microforms, microcomputer software and audio-visual media. These materials are located in four separate facilities: the A.M. Willis, Jr. Library, the Science and Technology Library, Media Library, and the Research Park Library (Engineering Library). Each facility houses a unique collection and offers professional service to assist students in meeting their information needs. The Libraries web site provides access to one of the most comprehensive collections of electronic journals, books, and databases in the state. These e-resources are available 24/7 to UNT students, faculty and staff. Reference consultation is available in person, via online chat or via electronic reference forms - [http://www.library.unt.edu/genref/ref\\_help.htm](http://www.library.unt.edu/genref/ref_help.htm)

In addition to these individualized services, research assistance is provided through numerous “Resources for Research” guides published on the Libraries web site. The

Libraries' Graduate Student Handbook lists services of special interested to TFs and TAs.

### ***Willis Library***

Willis Library houses one of the country's largest music collections, with over 147,000 books, periodicals, scores, sheet music, extensive disc and tape collections, and an audio center. Additional collections and offices include the humanities and social sciences collections, the University Archives, the Rare Book and Texana Collections, and the Libraries' Administrative Offices.

Willis Library is both a federal and state depository for government documents with specialized reference services offered through the *Government Information Connection*<sup>SM</sup> web site – <http://www.library.unt.edu/govinfo>.

### ***Science and Technology Library***

The Information Sciences Building houses the Science and Technology Library, which contains books, periodicals, and reference materials in the library and information sciences, natural and physical sciences, mathematics, behavior analysis, and psychology.

### ***Media Library***

The Media Library's collection includes non-book materials such as audio-and video-recordings, films, slides, and transparencies. For detailed information on the Media Library visit <http://www.library.unt.edu/media/>.

Librarians welcome the opportunity to work with classes at the beginning of assignments involving library use. To request an instruction session, contact the appropriate library department (General Reference, Documents, Music, Rare Books, User Education, Science and Technology, or the Media Library) two weeks before the desired session.

### ***Research Park Library (Engineering Library)***

The Research Park Library is still growing and undergoing some exciting changes. During the fall 2004 semester, we completed the move of all Engineering Technology and Materials Sciences books from the Science and Technology Library. The Engineering Library is located in the Research Park. Please visit their website for more information: <http://www.library.unt.edu/rpark/index.htm>

## Office of Disability Accommodation

Location: University Union, Suite 322

Telephone: (940) 565-4323/TTY (940) 369-8652

Web site: <http://www.unt.edu/oda/>

The Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) is the central referral agency and resource clearinghouse for students who qualify for disability accommodations as defined by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and, since 1990, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The mission of ODA is to provide reasonable accommodations to students and to apply appropriate adjustments to the classroom environment. In order to facilitate this process, ODA maintains all student disability-related medical and psychological documentation and the corresponding accommodation request records. Students who qualify for accommodations are responsible for presenting to their instructor an Accommodation Request Form, which is generated in ODA letterhead and signed by a department official. This form verifies that the student has a disability and summarizes the recommended accommodations.

### ***Examples of ODA Services***

- Provide location and proctoring for classroom test accommodation.
- Arrange classroom “service providers” such as Sign Language Interpreters and CARTs (Computer Assisted Real-time Transcriptionists).
- Screen and hire readers for in-class and textbook reading for students with visual and reading impairments.
- Facilitate provision of materials in alternative formats, such as in electronic format, in audio format, in Braille, etc.
- Assist in providing textbooks and other required reading materials in alternative formats (e.g., audio tape, electronic file)
- Assist in arranging adaptive furniture in classrooms as requested.
- Serve as referral source to campus services such as tutoring programs and other community support services.
- Provide ADA and Disability Accommodation training to faculty and staff groups
- Provide consultation to faculty and student when classroom accommodation agreement is not reached.

### ***Functions outside scope of ODA***

- ODA does not serve as an academic advisor; rather, we serve as an academic facilitator. ODA will provide assistance with student registration as it relates to disability.
- ODA does not determine degree plans or determine course substitutions. ODA only provides documentation and recommendations to the appropriate Academic Deans for a student request for course substitutions.
- ODA does not provide direct accommodation services to faculty and staff but does serve in a consulting role regarding faculty and staff accommodation issues.



- ODA does not perform psychological, medical, or other diagnostic evaluations; all disability documentation must come from a qualified source outside the department.

### ***Testing Procedures***

- The ODA Testing Center is centrally located in the Union, Suite 322. All examinations are administered in the Union and are monitored by staff proctors. The main testing room is equipped with security cameras.
- Students requesting to take their exams in the ODA must present the Professor, TA/TF with two items: 1) A Letter of Accommodation; 2) An Alternative Test Request Form. Both of these are provided by the ODA office.
- The Professor/TA/TF should fill out the bottom portion of the Alternative Test Request Form indicating the date & time of exam, any aids that are permissible to use (examples: calculator, formula sheet, open textbook or notes), the time limit of the exam, and how the test will be delivered to the ODA.
- The Alternative Test Request Form comes in Quadruplicate format. The Pink copy is to be detached by the Professor/TA/TF and retained for the student records. The rest of the form is returned to the student, at which time the student returns the white and yellow copy of the form to the ODA Testing Coordinator.
- The Professor/TA/TF should deliver the test to the ODA before the exam time by one of three ways: 1) Hand deliver the test to ODA at Union 322; 2) Fax the test to 940-369-7969; or 3) Email the exam to the ODA Testing Coordinator at [\*\*odatesting@dsa.admin.unt.edu\*\*](mailto:odatesting@dsa.admin.unt.edu).
- Upon completion of the exam, tests will be delivered back to the main department by ODA personnel
- Test Irregularities/Academic Dishonesty: ODA staff proctors monitor all exams and report any irregularities to the Testing Coordinator. In addition, test security is supplemented with analog and digital surveillance cameras. If an irregularity is observed, a report will be written and sent to the professor. Copies of the report will be sent to the Director of ODA and the Dean of Students, and a copy will be placed in the student's ODA file. Actions taken for academic dishonesty or other misconduct are determined by the professor and/or appropriate academic department.

For more information regarding the University's policy on accommodating students with disabilities, please view the UNT Policy Manual at Volume III, Classification Numbers 18.1.10 and 18.1.14.

### ***ODA Staff***

Ron Venable Director  
[venable@unt.edu](mailto:venable@unt.edu)

Jane Jones, Assistant Director  
[Jane@unt.edu](mailto:Jane@unt.edu)

Vicki Graham, Student Services Coordinator/Deaf Services Specialist  
[Vgraham@unt.edu](mailto:Vgraham@unt.edu)

Eric Breland, Interim, Testing Coordinator  
[breland@unt.edu](mailto:breland@unt.edu)

Eric Breland, Sign Language Interpreter  
[breland@unt.edu](mailto:breland@unt.edu)

Randi Johnson, Sign Language Interpreter  
[hand@unt.edu](mailto:hand@unt.edu)

Laverne Roberts, Administrative Assistant  
[Laverne@unt.edu](mailto:Laverne@unt.edu)

## Scholarship Office

### ***General Academic Scholarship Program***

The University of North Texas is committed to excellence in all its academic programs. In keeping with this commitment, the university offers a variety of competitive undergraduate academic scholarships to outstanding continuing undergraduates and to exceptional entering freshmen and transfer students.

The University has two categories of competitive academic scholarships: general and departmental. General Academic Scholarship applications may be obtained by qualified applicants from the Student Financial Aid and Scholarship Office, ESSC 228 or by calling (940) 565-2302.

Applications received by March 31 will be given first consideration for the upcoming academic year (fall/spring). Applications received after March 31 will be considered for the upcoming academic year (fall/spring) if funds remain available. Most awards are announced in April.

Contingent on funding, some scholarships may or may not be awarded each year. Most UNT academic scholarship awards range in dollar amount from \$200 to \$1,000.

Financial need is not considered when the University Scholarship Committee selects the recipients of general academic scholarships.

The University Scholarship Committee will consider applications of entering freshmen who rank in the top quarter of their graduating class and who have scored at least 1100 on the Scholastic Assessment Test I (SAT I) or 24 or better on the American College Test (ACT). Continuing undergraduate students at UNT and transfer students must have a cumulative college grade point average of 3.0 or better on a 4.0 scale. Recipients of most general academic scholarships awarded by the University Scholarship Committee must enroll for and successfully complete at least twelve semester hours of course work at

UNT during each long semester they are on scholarship. Scholarships are not usually awarded for summer school.

Completing a General Academic Scholarship application will automatically place a student into the competition for any of the general academic scholarships for which the student is eligible. Students who are not U.S. citizens are eligible for all scholarships unless otherwise indicated.

Generally speaking, international students must have completed at least one semester of college course work in the U.S. before they can be considered for General Academic Scholarships.

### ***Departmental Scholarships***

Departmental scholarship applications may be secured from the college, department, for school in which the student plans to major. The application deadlines for these scholarships vary. Please contact the department you are interested in directly to find out if they offer scholarships.

For more information regarding scholarships or for a detailed listing of general and departmental scholarships, please visit our website at <http://essc.unt.edu>.

The Scholarship Office is located in the Eagle Student Service Center 228. Telephone: 565-2738.

### ***Office for Nationally Competitive Scholarships***

The university sponsors the Office for Nationally Competitive Scholarships, the mission of which is to place UNT students in contact with national scholarship and fellowship possibilities. Dr. James, Duban, Director of the Office for Nationally Competitive Scholarships, invites graduate students to investigate a large number of these awards through links available on his web page (<http://www.opgf.unt.edu>). Dr. Duban will gladly offer advice to graduate students applying for national scholarships.

## **Student Legal Advisor**

A wide range of legal advice is offered at no charge to students by the Office of the Student Legal Advisor. Students may receive assistance for legal problems such as auto accidents, landlord/tenant disputes, employment and consumer-related complaints. Legal representation may be provided at the discretion of the attorney. Pamphlets, brochures and other publications helpful to students are available through this office. Students who wish to consult with the attorney are invited to call ahead for appointments. On Friday mornings from 9 to 11, drop-ins are seen on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call ahead to verify the drop-in schedule. The Student Legal Advisor is located in the University Union, Room 322AA. Telephone: 565-2614. Visit their website: <http://www.unt.edu/legal/>

## University Police

The mission of the UNT Police Department is to protect life, property, and individual rights and freedoms. The department's purpose is to provide an environment that will aid the learning process. University police officers are commissioned and licensed by the State of Texas. They have the same police powers as municipal law enforcement officers, and enforce state statutes. The UNT Police Department has jurisdiction and authority that extends throughout Denton County, and it works closely with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies.

The department provides a full range of police services and programs on a routine or emergency basis for the university, including an emergency telephone system located throughout the campus; a security escort service; and various crime prevention programs.

Emergency number: **911**.

Non-emergency number: (940) 565-3000. Website: <http://www.unt.edu/police/>

## University Writing Center

The Writing Center serves the needs of students at the University of North Texas in all aspects of writing. Students can expect:

- friendly, competent assistance at any stage of the writing process.
- patient help in understanding sentence structure, usage, spelling, and other elements of grammar and composition through practice with workbooks and handouts.
- practical help in identifying and eliminating problem areas in a composition.

All tutoring and workshops are free. The Writing Center is located in the Auditorium Building, room 105. The Administrative Assistant is available at the Writing Center 8 a.m. - 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Call 565-2563 or drop by the office to make an appointment. Tutoring hours are from 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. Monday - Thursday and in Fall and Spring semesters 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. Friday. Walk-ins are always welcome, but making an appointment ahead of time will guarantee you a tutor for the hour. More information is available at our web site:

[http://www.unt.edu/writing\\_center/](http://www.unt.edu/writing_center/).

# Chapter Eight: University Policies

## Chapter Contents

- University Emergency Procedures
- Policy on Closing of NT Due to Extreme Weather Conditions
- Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection Teaching Fellows and Assistants
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- Guidelines for Use of Teaching Assistants in Large Classes
- University Nondiscrimination Policy
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- University Sexual Harassment Policy

## University Emergency Procedures

An Emergency Plan has been developed to provide a coordinated response to emergency situations of all types—natural disaster, fires, bomb threats, chemical accidents, etc. Task forces and individual building responsibilities have been assigned throughout the campus community. Fire and emergencies should be reported by dialing 911.

If a fire alarm is sounded or directions are issued to evacuate a building for some other reason, proceed to the nearest alternate exit.

Elevators are not considered to be exits. In some instances, exits may not be marked by a lighted sign; however, if a door leads outside the building at the ground level and it opens from the interior, it should be considered an exit.

In the event that a tornado has been sighted and is moving in the direction of campus, an emergency siren will be activated for a period of three minutes. Classes should be dismissed immediately and all persons should move to an interior hallway on the lower floor of the building.

Complete instructions on emergency situations are available from the University Police Department.

## **Policy on Closing of UNT due to Extreme Weather Conditions (See Policy #10.2)**

The University of North Texas will remain open during severe weather unless conditions are such that the majority of students, faculty and staff are unable reach the University due to severe weather or impassable road conditions. The University may also close if a critical shortage of energy occurs.

During periods of severe weather, unless there has been an official announcement of the University closing, all faculty and staff members are expected to make every reasonable effort to report to the University, while relying on their best judgment regarding hazardous conditions affecting their ability to travel to and from work.

In the event the university plans to close offices and/or suspend classes for an entire day, selected area television and radio stations, including KNTU, will be notified no later than 5 a.m. of the day in question. (If UNT is not on the news media's list of schools and business closures, the University will be open for business as usual until further notice.) In the event inclement weather develops during the class day, the University will try to announce closing before 5:00 p.m. The timing will of course depend on the conditions.

Inquiries during periods of extreme weather should be directed to the UNT Information/Campus operators at Denton phone number 565-2000, Dallas/Fort Worth metro toll-free number (940) 267-3731.

## **Guidelines for Recruitment and Selection of Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants (15.1.27)**

1. Each academic unit shall meet minimal academic criteria required for teaching fellows/teaching assistants in the department, in accordance with relevant accreditation standards for the University and the unit. These criteria shall be filed with each school/college and shall be periodically reviewed.
2. TFs who have primary responsibility for teaching a course and/or for assigning final grades for such a course must have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline. "Teaching discipline" will be determined by the Dean of the appropriate College or School within Southern Association of Colleges and Schools criteria.
3. Transcripts and other appropriate documentation of qualifications (including letters of recommendation, if required by the unit) shall be obtained for all TF/TAs who are to be employed, and shall be retained as long as the TF/TA is employed. UNT transcripts and imaged 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 School

of Graduate Studies. Each academic unit will retain unofficial copies of transcripts for all TF/TA employees in the unit.

**4.** Language competencies for all nonnative speakers of English who seek teaching assistantships or teaching fellowships must be assured. Language competency shall be given careful consideration at the time of their selection and appointment.

**a.** International students should be selected as TF/TAs only after having been in residence one long semester or both summer sessions. Exceptions may be made only after approval of the dean of the college. If exceptions are made, the following procedures should be adhered to:

**1.** Telephone contact should be made by the department (preferably with prior warning to the student) to obtain an indication of the student's ability to communicate in English.

**2.** The letter of appointment shall 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 commitment is void. English proficiency will be determined by the Intensive English Language Institute.

**3.** Close supervision shall be conducted by the faculty coordinator within the department during the first several weeks of the class to ensure that communication within the classroom situation is acceptable.

**b.** Language competencies and communication skills of all teaching fellows/teaching assistants, for whom English is a second language, shall be of primary concern to the departments and should be carefully monitored and supervised by the faculty coordinator of teaching fellows and teaching assistants within each department.

**5.** Participation in school/college-wide or academic unit orientations for TF/TAs shall be stated as a condition of employment in the letter of appointment. Individual academic units may make additional stipulations such as enrollment in special courses or attendance at special seminars for TAs and TFs.

**6.** The institutional requirement for a minimal load of academic work for TF/TAs in any long semester is 9 semester credit hours (sch's) of graduate courses (3 sch's if thesis or dissertation only and all other course requirements are met). The total combined load of course enrollment and teaching assignment may not exceed the equivalent of 18 sch's in any long semester. Each academic unit may specify higher minimal loads so long as the specified loads do not exceed Coordinating Board established standards, which specify that supported graduate students may not be required to enroll in more than 9 sch's of organized graduate coursework or more than 12 sch's total with the additional 3 sch's consisting of individualized or non-organized graduate coursework such as research, practicum, special problems, etc.

7. No fellowship or assistantship is regarded as valid until the applicant has obtained admission to the Graduate School and to the student's academic unit. This statement shall be included in the letter of appointment.

## **Guidelines for Orientation, Supervision, and Evaluation of Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants (15.1.28)**

1. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester each school/college will conduct an orientation for all TF/TAs. The school/college may elect to hold this orientation at the department or unit level. All teaching fellows and teaching assistants, including those with prior teaching experience, shall be required to attend these orientation sessions at the beginning of the year. This requirement shall be stated in the letter of appointment.

2. Each academic unit utilizing teaching fellows and teaching assistants shall identify one or more faculty (TF/TA coordinator) who will have the responsibility for supervising TF/TAs.

3. The TF/TA coordinator shall work with the faculty and administration within academic units to formulate an orientation session and a systematic plan for supervision and evaluation of TF/TAs within the unit.

4. Evaluation of TF/TAs is a departmental responsibility, shall be systematically implemented each semester, and should include scheduled conferences. Data should be collected and analyzed and shall be provided to the TF/TA coordinator, department chair/unit director, and to the Dean.

5. The TF/TAs shall be advised of the evaluation process during the academic unit's orientation session.

6. Criteria for the evaluation of TF/TAs shall be filed with the appropriate school/college, and shall be periodically reviewed.

7. The Intensive English Language Institute will continue to offer the International TA/TF (ITA) Program. This program includes screening in speaking skills and presentation skills, the lecture course on teaching effectiveness, the workshop course on improving presentation skills, and the workshop course on pronunciation improvement. The core of the program consists of the presentation and pronunciation workshops, which are free, non-credit bearing courses offered each long semester for non-native English-speaking students who seek teaching assistantships or fellowships. All non-native English speaking students must be certified or conditionally certified before they may be assigned teaching responsibilities. Lab assistants, lab monitors, and tutors must receive the minimum required score before beginning their duties. The final evaluation panel for each student consists of representatives from his/her department,



IELI and ITA program staff. Decisions regarding assignment of teaching responsibilities are made by the departments; the certification of language and communication competence through the ITA program is provided as a service to the university, the departments and the students.

8. Each academic unit shall provide regular in-service training for TF/TAs with scheduled meetings each semester.

## **Guidelines for Use of Teaching Assistants in Large Classes (15.1.30)**

Faculty require logistical support when teaching large lecture sections as well as assistance to meet specialized instructional needs. The need is particularly strong when the nature of the course requires essay tests, homework assignments, and term papers as well as normal administrative classroom assignments including test administration and grading. In addition, the use of audiovisual aids usually requires the presence of a reliable operator. Faculty also need assistance outside the lecture hall to help students with the subject matter and in solving other student-related problems. There are significantly different course needs that reflect on the pedagogy of courses as a result of increased size, advances in technology incorporated into teaching and research assignments, and the need to provide contact with students.

The following guidelines are intended to help maintain a quality learning environment in the large class format.

1. One teaching assistant (TA) is needed for approximately every 75 students. TAs who grade exams and other assignments must attend the lectures if requested by the instructor.
2. TAs should be employed for the particular needs of the course according to appropriate qualifications. Tasks (e.g. grading essay exams) requiring more sophisticated judgment should be assigned to TAs with more qualifications and experience.
3. The academic unit should supply a space where TAs and students can interact during regularly-scheduled office hours.
4. The academic unit shall establish an ongoing training and evaluation program for TAs. The training and direction of teams of TAs should be considered in faculty workload assignments. An expedient means of lessening the pressures on faculty is to designate an experienced TA as a logistical coordinator for a course of multiple sections of large classes.

## **University Policy on Nondiscrimination/Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action (See Policy #1.3.7)**

*Please refer to policy number 1.2.1 for the Policy on Age Limitations, 1.2.5 for the Policy on Employment of People with Disabilities / Workplace Accommodations , 1.3.19 for the Policy on Sexual Harassment, 1.3.24 for Information and Procedural Guidelines for Pursuing and Resolving a Complaint of Discrimination, Including Sexual Harassment, and to 10.15 for the p olicy s tatement on Diversity.*

It is the policy of the University of North Texas not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, disabled veteran status, or Veterans of the Vietnam Era status, in its educational programs, activities, admission, or employment policies.

In addition to complying with federal and state equal opportunity laws and regulations, the University through its Diversity Policy declares harassment that is based on individual differences (including sexual orientation) to be inconsistent with its mission and educational goals. The nondiscrimination and diversity policies are supported by the University's statement on diversity (detailed in 10.15) and specifically incorporate protections for qualified persons with disabilities (detailed in 1.2.5); a prohibition against sexual harassment (detailed in 1.3.19), and a prohibition against age limitations (detailed in 1.2.1).

## University Policy for Safety in Instructional Activities (See Policy #15.2.4)

All university administrators, faculty and staff are expected to be continuously and actively concerned about safety in the teaching environment. The University Safety Policy mandates compliance with federal and state laws and adherence to the National Life Safety Code with respect to the operation of the physical plant of the university, but it is the responsibility of those directly involved in academic instruction to evaluate critically specific courses and the immediate environment in which instruction occurs. Teaching faculty and administrative supervisors should routinely strive to:

1. Promote an awareness of safety considerations and develop positive attitudes toward safety among their students, the faculty and staff;
2. Fully explain applicable safety considerations to students at the beginning of each term and reiterate such considerations when appropriate throughout each term;
3. Demonstrate safety procedures and identify potential hazards before students begin their work;
4. Post and/or distribute written directions or warnings when appropriate about the safe handling of materials and equipment used in instruction;
5. Monitor the immediate teaching environment for potential safety hazards; and
6. Actively supervises students whenever possible to assure that safe procedures are followed.

## University Sexual Harassment Policy (1.3.19)

*Please refer to Number 1.3.7 for the Policy on Nondiscrimination/Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action and to 1.3.24 for Information and Procedural Guidelines for Pursuing and Resolving a Complaint of Discrimination, Including Sexual Harassment.*

### 1. Purpose:

To provide the University of North Texas (the "University") community (faculty, staff, administrators and students) and members of the public visiting the University a work place and educational environment free of sexual harassment and intimidation.

### 2. Policy:

It is the policy of the University of North Texas that acts of sexual harassment, as defined herein, toward guests of and visitors to the campus or any member of the University community including faculty, staff, students and candidates for positions at the University (regardless of the individual's gender) will not be tolerated. All members of the administration, faculty, staff and students will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of this policy. Members of the public doing business with the University who violate this policy may be subject to sanctions.

### **3. Sexual Harassment Defined:**

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature (regardless of gender), even if carried out under the guise of humor, constitute a violation of this policy when:

- a.) Submission to or tolerance of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or education; or
- b.) Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for academic or employment decisions (including admissions and hiring) affecting that individual; or
- c.) Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's academic or professional performance or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive employment, or educational environment.

Sexual harassment takes many forms; examples of conduct which might be considered sexual harassment under this policy include but are not limited to:

- sexual exploitation of a relationship between individuals of unequal power and authority,
- sexual exploitation of a relationship between peers and students that could affect the workplace or educational environment,
- repeated and unwanted requests for dates, sexual flirtations, or propositions of a sexual nature,
- subtle pressure for a sexual relationship,
- sexist remarks about a person's clothing, body or sexual activities,
- unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, or brushing against a person's body,
- direct or implied threats that submission to sexual advances will affect or be a condition of employment, work status, grades, or letter of recommendation,
- physical assault,
- conduct of a sexual nature that causes humiliation or discomfort, such as use of inappropriate terms of address, and
- sexually explicit or sexist comments, questions or jokes
- conduct of a sexual nature that creates a hostile work or educational environment

Conduct constituting sexual harassment, as defined herein, toward another person of the same or opposite sex is prohibited by this policy.

#### 4. Consensual Relationships:

Staff in supervisory positions and other positions of authority and faculty must be sensitive to the potential for sexual harassment as well as conflicts of interest in personal relationships with subordinate faculty and staff members or with students. Even among peers, conflicts can arise. It is the policy of the University that consensual relationships between faculty or staff members in positions of authority and their subordinates or their students are not permitted.

For details regarding Consensual Relationships see policy 1.3.23.

#### 5. Management and Supervisory Responsibilities:

**a.) Dissemination:** The President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, and Department Chairs shall take appropriate steps to disseminate this policy statement and to inform employees and students of procedures for lodging complaints.

**b.) Notification:** The President, Vice Presidents, Deans, Directors, Department Chairs, and other managers or supervisors and appropriate committees of the University are required to report as soon as possible any reported and/or suspected violations of this policy (regardless of the severity) to the next level of supervision and to the Office of Equal Opportunity. Failure to report allegations of sexual harassment as set forth herein by those vested with the responsibility to do so is a violation of this policy. Others who are not managers or supervisors are strongly encouraged to report suspected violations of this policy (See sec. 6 below)

**c.) Action:** The Department Chair/Director, in consultation with the Office of Equal Opportunity and the Office of Vice Chancellor and General Counsel (and in cases involving staff in consultation with Human Resources) may, when appropriate, take immediate action to prevent the possibility of continued sexual harassment or retaliation after he/she becomes aware of a complaint.

#### 6. Responsibilities of Those Not in Supervisory Positions, including Students:

Faculty and staff should report suspected violations of this policy and/or the Nondiscrimination Policy (1.3.7) to their immediate supervisor, the administrative director or chair of their department, Human Resources Department or the Office of Equal Opportunity. Students should report violations to the administrative director or chair of the department in which the alleged incident occurred, to the Dean of Students or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

#### 7. Complaint Procedure:

Prompt reporting of a complaint is strongly encouraged, as it allows for rapid response to and resolution of objectionable behavior. Procedures for filing a complaint are explained in 1.3.24, *Information and Procedural Guidelines for Pursuing and Resolving a*

*Complaint of Discrimination, Including Sexual Harassment and 1.7.5, Voluntary Alternative Dispute Resolution.*

## **8. Confidentiality:**

All individuals who are involved in the complaint reporting, mediation and/or investigation process are obligated to maintain confidentiality of the proceedings (see 1.3.24).

## **9. Non-Retaliation:**

Retaliation against an individual for attempting to resist sexual harassment, filing a complaint, attempting to stop sexual harassment against another individual, or for participating in any way in an investigation of a sexual harassment complaint will not be tolerated. Retaliation by faculty, staff or administrators is a violation of this policy. Employees should report suspected retaliation to their immediate supervisor, the department head or the Human Resources Department. The Office of Equal Opportunity should also be notified. Students should report suspected retaliation to the Dean of Students or the Office of Equal Opportunity. A claim of retaliation may result in a subsequent investigation.

## **10. Legal Implications and Sanctions:**

**a.) University Imposed:** University sanctions for violations of the university policy on sexual harassment may include any disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment for faculty, staff, and student employees or the dismissal of students. These activities may not be a violation of state or federal law, but such activities may be viewed as constituting moral turpitude or gross neglect of academic responsibilities under Appendix B-1 of the Faculty Handbook and a major work rule violation under the Performance Counseling and Discipline Policy.

**b.) Civil:** Sexual harassment is illegal under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Texas Commission on Human Rights Act and Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972. The statutes apply to and protect both males and females. Official governmental investigations by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Texas Commission on Human Rights, and/or the Office of Civil Rights of the Department of Education may result in civil liability against the University and any person found to have committed sexual harassment.

**c.) Criminal:** Sexual harassment by a public servant is a criminal offense under 39.02 of the Texas Penal Code. Depending on the severity of the acts, sexual harassment may also specifically include indecent exposure, public lewdness, assault, or sexual assault under Chapter 21 and 22 of the Texas Penal Code.

**11. False Charges:**

False charges may result in disciplinary action against the complainant by the University or civil action against the complainant by the accused. An unsubstantiated charge is not considered "false" unless it is made with the knowledge that it is false.

**12. Conflicts:**

To the extent this policy conflicts with the provisions of the Faculty Handbook and any other University policy or publication, this sexual harassment policy shall take precedence.

**REFERENCES:**

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended.

Title IX of the Education Amendments