

## English Department Guidelines for Mentoring GTAs in Teaching Composition

M.A. and Ph.D. students who are graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) may, as part of their responsibilities as a GTA, be mentored by an experienced professor who is teaching an ENGL 1010 or ENGL 1020 course. The GTA Mentoring experience for the GTAs entails attending each class meeting of the course being taught by the mentoring professor; participating in discussion of teaching methods with the professor; *limited* evaluation of homework, quizzes, and papers; teaching three to five class sessions; developing a complete syllabus for their own course; developing lesson plans for their own course. At the end of the mentoring semester, each GTA will present to the mentoring professor a portfolio comprised of a complete syllabus, five to ten detailed lesson plans, and a statement of teaching philosophy. The mentoring professor will sign off on the Mentoring Form attesting to the readiness of the GTA to teach a solo course in the specified area. All portfolios should be submitted electronically to the department's Director of Graduate Studies.

While each individual faculty mentor may vary some of what s/he requires from the mentored GTA, the following guidelines should serve as a general structure for the mentoring.

- The GTA should read the assignments and sit in on the mentor's class in order to observe how the class progresses and to maintain a clear perception of the development of ideas and demands upon the students and the professor over the course of the semester.
- The mentoring professor should meet regularly with the GTA being mentored to reflect upon the class meetings and answer any questions.
- The GTA should be given the opportunity to teach at least three, but no more than five, classes in the course during the semester.
- The GTA should be actively involved on a *limited* basis in evaluating or responding to essays and any other work over the course of the semester. For instance, the GTA might evaluate a duplicate set of papers and compare notes with those of the mentoring professor. If the GTA is a seasoned and experienced teacher, then s/he might be entrusted with evaluating a set of papers, particularly if the papers cover a unit taught by the GTA. The mentoring professor will need to review and approve the GTA's evaluations in order to insure that consistent standards are being applied.
- By the end of the semester, the GTA should produce a detailed working syllabus, including outlines of five to ten lesson plans for her/his own course.
- Also by the end of the semester, the GTA should produce a statement of teaching philosophy deriving from what was observed in light of the GTA's perception of effectiveness and the effect of the observation semester on his/her own teaching philosophy and style.

### Required Portfolio Components:

- Complete syllabus
- Five to ten lesson plans for the syllabus
- Statement of Teaching Philosophy
- Signed Mentoring Form on preparedness to teach in the specialized area

### Qualifications of Ph.D. Graduate Teaching Assistants for Mentoring:

- Admitted to the M.A. or Ph.D. program in English at MTSU

**Benefit to the GTA:**

- Preparedness to teach the subject matter of the course
- Insight, ideas, and perspective on teaching a college level course
- Development of syllabi that may be used when applying for jobs
- Development of a teaching philosophy
- Opportunity to work closely with a professor
- Cultivation of a potential reference for grant and job applications

**Benefit to the Mentoring Faculty**

- Fulfillment of mentoring activity that may be listed in Digital Measures
- Preparing students to enter the Composition classroom
- Assistance in teaching and evaluating of the course
- Gaining insight, ideas, and perspective through discussion with the GTA being mentored
- Opportunity to participate in an activity of mutual benefit to the pedagogical practices of GTA and mentor

## Mentoring Form

Name of GTA: \_\_\_\_\_ M-number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mentoring Professor: \_\_\_\_\_

Course: \_\_\_\_\_ Course title: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester: \_\_\_\_\_

### Mentor's Evaluation

|                            |              |                |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| <b>Class attendance:</b>   | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| <b>Grading:</b>            | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| <b>Teaching:</b>           | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| <b>Syllabus:</b>           | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| <b>Lesson plans:</b>       | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |
| <b>Teaching Philosophy</b> | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory |

### Comments (Optional)

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**Mentor**

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**Date**