

Graduate Teaching Fellowship Program

The Graduate School and University Center
The City University of New York

Handbook

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**Graduate Teaching Fellowship Program
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Program History and Rationale

The Graduate Teaching Fellowship (GTF) program began in August 1992 at The Graduate School and University Center based on a plan developed by the Chancellor's Office of The City University of New York, which provided funding for the program. The GTF program began as a modest initiative, but by 1994-95 all 17 CUNY undergraduate colleges were included in the program. In Fall 2002, approximately 220 GTFs will be teaching at the undergraduate colleges.

The intent of the Graduate Teaching Fellowship program is threefold:

- (1) to give CUNY doctoral students the opportunity to develop instructional skills and enhance their future employment prospects;
- (2) to provide needed instructors for undergraduate classes at the CUNY colleges;
- (3) to broaden financial support for CUNY doctoral students.

Program Structure and Funding

Graduate Teaching Fellowships are funded by the City University's Central Office. The program's budget, allocated to The Graduate Center annually, determines how many Graduate Teaching Fellowships are available each year. The program is administered in the Office of the Provost by the GTF Program Coordinator. Each CUNY college has an appointed contact person to oversee its GTF allocation and appointment process. In most cases the college provost, vice president, or dean for academic affairs is the designee. The individual college administration determines which departments receive GTFs at the college.

Department chairs, working in partnership with the Executive Officer of the relevant doctoral program, **select** doctoral students to serve as GTFs. All Graduate Teaching Fellows, however, whether assigned to teach at a senior college or at a community college, are officially appointed to the fellowship by the Office of the Provost of The Graduate Center. ***The individual colleges do not award Graduate Teaching Fellowships.***

A GTF assigned to a CUNY **senior college** will complete personnel forms at The Graduate Center and be placed on The Graduate Center's payroll; a GTF assigned to a **community college**, once approved by the doctoral program's Executive Officer and appointed by The Graduate Center, will complete personnel forms at the individual community college and be placed on the community college's payroll.

Fellowship Appointment Process

Chief academic officers (or the college GTF liaison) on each campus inform the GTF Program Coordinator at The Graduate Center as to which departments at their respective campuses will be assigned GTFs. The GTF Program Coordinator then coordinates with the department chairs at the colleges and the Executive Officers of the doctoral programs, who identify qualified doctoral students to be interviewed for the available fellowships. After the interviews, the department chairs communicate their selections to the college GTF liaison at their campus and to the GTF Program Coordinator at The Graduate Center.

The GTF Program Coordinator verifies the student's eligibility for appointment and confirms that the student has been approved for the fellowship by the Executive Officer of his/her doctoral program. The GTF Program Coordinator then generates an official offer letter for the GTF appointment and contacts the student to explain the procedures for being processed and put on payroll. No GTF will be appointed until he or she reviews, signs, and returns the offer letter to the Office of Human Resources at The Graduate Center.

Special Notes for College Department Chairs

- ! Departments that desire GTFs should make the request to their provost, academic vice president, or dean.
- ! Departments with GTFs assigned to them should be aware that when a GTF position becomes vacant (because the student has come to the end of his/her three-year eligibility to participate in the program, has resigned, or otherwise left the program), the department ***does not automatically*** retain the GTF position.
- ! The Graduate Center's Office of Human Resources will contact department chairs supervising the GTFs regarding the teaching observation process. We rely on the chairs to return completed observations to The Graduate Center's Office of Human Resources in a timely manner to ensure the continued service of their GTFs.
- ! Department chairs must inform the GTF Program Coordinator of any expected or actual changes to appointments of GTFs in their department.

GTF Eligibility

GTFs must be full-time registered doctoral students in good standing who have ***completed one year of doctoral study*** at The Graduate Center and show interest as well as competency in teaching the undergraduate courses proposed by the colleges. To teach at a community college, a GTF must also possess a master's degree.

Students with certain major awards from within CUNY, such as Gilleece, MAGNET, Humana, or CUNY Writing or Technology Fellowships, are not eligible for GTF positions.

GTF Compensation and Workload Requirements

All GTFs are appointed to the title of *Graduate Assistant C* under the terms of the CUNY-PSC/CUNY collective bargaining agreement. The Graduate Assistant C title is intended only for teaching positions. Under the collective bargaining agreement in effect from August 1, 2000 through October 31 2002, new GTFs receive a salary of \$13,477 for a 12-month appointment. To review a copy of the official GTF offer/appointment letter, please see the GC Provost's Office web-site: <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/provost/gtf.htm>

The Graduate Assistant C title does not provide health insurance or other employee benefits.

Graduate Teaching Fellows are required to teach the maximum workload allowed under the Graduate Assistant C title: ***a total of 180 contact hours in the combined Fall and Spring assignments.*** The workload requirement is usually met by having the GTF teach two 3-credit courses each semester (each equivalent to 45 hours, for a total of 90 contact hours). If a GTF's assignment requires him/her to teach courses that carry 60 contact hours, the GTF usually teaches two courses in the Fall and one course in the following Spring to satisfy the 180-contact-hour requirement.

GTFs are required to satisfy their annual workload requirement by the end of the Spring semester.

Special Notes

- ! If a college department assigns a GTF a combined Fall and Spring teaching assignment in excess of the 12-credit (180-contact-hour) fellowship requirement, ***the department must pay the GTF for the excess credits from the department's own adjunct budget.*** The Graduate Assistant C pay rate is comparable to the highest adjunct hourly rate. Therefore, GTFs are customarily paid at this same rate in instances where the department must pay them for teaching excess credits.

- ! Under the CUNY-PSC/CUNY collective bargaining agreement, if a person appointed to the Graduate Assistant C title also accepts separate adjunct teaching assignments, the ***combined assignment*** may not exceed 270 contact hours during the total annual appointment from September 1 of any given year to August 31 of the following year. Therefore, GTFs are eligible to teach up to 90 contact hours under a separate adjunct assignment over the annual appointment year. If a GTF is assigned to teach additional courses, the department must be prepared to compensate the GTF from the department's adjunct budget for these extra courses. Note that except in special circumstances GTFs may accept teaching assignments only (for details, contact the Office of Human Resources.)

Note that for Summers 2000, 2001, and 2002, CUNY's Office of Faculty and Staff Relations and the Professional Staff Congress/CUNY signed agreements to interpret the term "work year" in Article 15.3 of the current PSC/CUNY contract to mean the period from the beginning of the Fall semester to the day after commencement at each college. Under this interpretation, Graduate Assistant Cs (as well as Graduate Assistant As and Bs) were eligible for summer teaching assignments in addition to the maximum workload (270 contact hours for Graduate Assistant Cs) provided in Article 15.3. The status of such an agreement for Summer 2003 is uncertain.

- ! It is the responsibility of the GTF to complete a CUNY workload reporting form (WRF) each semester and submit it to the Office of Human Resources at The Graduate Center by the deadline indicated. The report must be updated if changes occur after the initial submission. It is the GTF's responsibility to report to the college department and The Graduate Center's Office of Human Resources any additional adjunct or other assignments he/she may have accepted in a particular semester by submitting a separate WRF. Questions regarding workload or additional assignments must be addressed promptly so that GTFs can maintain good standing in the GTF program.

- ! GTFs cannot act independently to negotiate adjustments to the GTF teaching workload. *GTFs must obtain permission* from the Office of the Associate Provost at The Graduate Center, in consultation with the office of Human Resources, for any desired or necessary change to the usual semester-by-semester workload set forth in the GTF appointment contract.

- ! *It is imperative to consult the office of Human Resources or the GTF Program Coordinator at The Graduate Center prior to accepting an offer to teach additional credits as an adjunct.* This rule is designed to help GTFs guard against being in violation of the contractual workload. Violations of contract workload provisions may subject the GTF to removal from an assignment and/or the GTF program.

- ! The appointment period for a GTF appointed for the full year is from the first day of classes through August 31 of the following year. In some instances, GTFs are hired beginning in the Spring semester. Spring semester appointments have the end date of July 31.

Department Chairs and GTF Workload Issues

- ! If a college department assigns a GTF a combined Fall and Spring teaching assignment in excess of the 12-credit (180-contact-hour) fellowship requirement, *the department* must pay the GTF for the excess credits from the department's own adjunct budget. The Graduate Assistant C pay rate is comparable to the highest available adjunct hourly rate. Therefore, GTFs are customarily paid at this same rate in instances where the department must pay them for teaching excess credits.

- ! A department chair may not act independently to adjust a GTF's teaching workload. ***Any need to do so should be brought to the immediate attention of the GTF Program Coordinator at The Graduate Center.*** For example, a GTF assigned to teach 45-contact-hour courses would usually be expected to teach two such courses in both the Fall and Spring semesters of the annual contract. If there is a justifiable need for the GTF to teach three courses in the Fall semester and only one course the following Spring, the chair would need to secure approval from the Office of the Associate Provost at The Graduate Center before implementing this planned teaching assignment.

- ! When devising teaching assignments for GTFs, department chairs should follow the same standards applied at their college to full-time faculty with respect to class size (enrollment). If the college recognizes a jumbo or mega-course as a two-for-one load for full-time faculty, the GTF at that college should receive the same consideration. Therefore, a GTF would teach ONE mega-course in a given semester to satisfy the 6-credit (90-contact-hour) teaching requirement. In this type of situation, the class size should be noted clearly on the GTF's Workload Reporting Form.

Department-Based Mentoring

GTF program administrators at The Graduate Center request that Executive Officers and GTF campus liaisons ask department chairs to assign teaching mentors to each Graduate Teaching Fellow. Often new GTFs, while being well-versed in the material to be taught, have had little experience in presenting the material to undergraduates. Learning how to negotiate the multitude of responsibilities that go hand in hand with teaching can be overwhelming. The teaching mentor is an on-site resource to help GTFs meet these challenges.

Teaching Observations and Evaluations

In accordance with Article 18 of the CUNY-PSC/CUNY collective bargaining agreement, the GTF program requires that each semester all GTFs must be observed in the classroom and evaluated. By means of this evaluation process, the college department informs both the individual GTF and the administrators of the GTF program of the quality of classroom performance. The evaluation process serves as the basis for each GTF's annual reappointment to the fellowship. Timely submissions are critical to the continuation of GTFs in the program.

Section 18.1 stipulates: "The evaluation of the professional activities of all employees in a public institution of higher education is essential to the maintenance of academic and professional standards of excellence. The purpose of professional evaluations shall be to encourage the improvement of individual professional performance and provide a basis for decisions on reappointment, tenure and promotions. An evaluation of professional activities shall be based on total professional performance. Written evaluations shall be on file for all employees."

GTFs may learn more about the performance elements to be evaluated in the observation by consulting section 18.2 of the CUNY-PSC/CUNY agreement or by calling The Graduate Center's Office of Human Resources.

Any concerns regarding a GTF's performance must be brought to the attention of the GTF Program Coordinator as well as to the Executive Officer of the GTF's doctoral program as soon as possible. The Assistant Vice President for Human Resources at The Graduate Center, who also serves as the college's labor designee, may also be able to offer advice on performance problems. Department chairs should not wait for the evaluation process to address problems that may have been arisen. Problems can be resolved most easily with early intervention.

GTF Orientation and Training

During the 2001/02 academic year, Associate Provost Linda N. Edwards convened a GTF workshop advisory committee to review the training received by GTFs and make recommendations. The advisory committee determined that the role of the workshops should be narrowed and focused clearly on issues related to classroom teaching. Career planning and preparation in areas other than teaching are more appropriately handled by individual doctoral programs and the Office of Student Affairs. Copies of the report of the GTF workshop Advisory Committee may be requested by contacting Ms. Anne Ellis, GTF Program Coordinator at the Graduate Center, at aellis@gc.cuny.edu

The advisory committee recommended the following plan for the orientation and teacher training of GTFs. This plan, put into effect in Fall 2001, has three components: a student component; an Executive Officer component; and a college-based department component.

The Student Component

The purposes of the student component is to: (1) orient new GTFs to the procedures that govern the GTF program; (2) acquaint them with the responsibilities and challenges associated with college teaching and joining an undergraduate department; and (3) help new and continuing GTFs handle problems that arise in the classroom and in mentoring students.

A. GTF Orientation and Training Session

A day of orientation is required of all GTFs. The orientation will be offered two times for GTFs who begin in the Fall semester, once approximately one week before classes begin, and once the day or so before classes begin. The orientation lasts from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., with lunch provided.

Topics to be addressed include:

- ! Introduction and overview of the GTF program
- ! Issues of communication among the constituent groups: the Office of the Provost at the GC, the Office of Human Resources at the GC, the GTF campus liaisons, the Executive Officers, the college department chairs, and the GTFs themselves
- ! Human Resources issues: workload, teaching observations, payroll
- ! “Getting the Most From Your GTF”-a faculty perspective
- ! Affirmative action
- ! Sexual harassment
- ! Teaching issues across the disciplines: (including topics such as integrating into a college department, collegiality, grading and testing, cheating, teaching the underprepared student, diversity at CUNY)

A similar orientation is offered in January for those GTFs beginning in the Spring semester.

B. Follow-up Training Session for Continuing GTFs

A workshop is offered in January for all continuing GTFs. New GTFs hired to begin teaching in the Spring semester may also attend (if the session does not conflict with the orientation workshop that they are required to attend). This workshop runs from 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Topics to be addressed in this follow-up session are similar to those covered in the “Teaching Issues” presentation at the August workshop or may focus on using technology in the classroom. GTFs also have the opportunity to raise particular issues related to current problems or concerns they are experiencing with their teaching.

Executive Officer and College-Based Department Chair Components

The Graduate Center’s Associate Provost meets each Fall with the Executive Officers and, if requested, schedules meetings at the colleges with department chairs who supervise GTFs (with the assistance of the GTF campus liaisons) to discuss the GTF program in general as well as key specific issues such as mentoring and teaching training/faculty development for the GTFs at the Ph.D. program and campus levels.

Frequently Asked Questions About Graduate Teaching Fellowships

(1) *How does an interested doctoral student apply for a GTF?*

There is no mechanism by which students directly apply to receive a GTF. If students are interested in securing a GTF, their first step is to make an appointment to speak to the Executive Officer of their doctoral program. In most cases, the Executive Officer serves as the doctoral

program's liaison to the GTF coordinator. Some programs have assigned this responsibility to a Deputy EO or faculty adviser. The Assistant Program Officer should be able to direct students to the appropriate GTF liaison for individual programs. The Executive Officer or designee maintains a list of qualified, interested candidates for future GTF placement.

General information about the fellowships can be obtained from the GTF Program Coordinator in Room 8113.09 in the Office of the Provost (telephone: 212-817-7284). Please remember, however, that a fellowship cannot be awarded without the approval of the Executive Officer, so it is essential that interested students make the initial contact at the program level.

- (2) *What should a GTF do if he/she is encountering difficulty at the college where he/she is teaching?*

GTFs should first consult with their college department chair regarding any difficulties or concerns they may have with their teaching. For further assistance, GTFs should contact the GTF Program Coordinator as soon as possible. The GTF Program Coordinator can often act to mediate a conflict and prevent a situation from escalating into a larger problem. GTFs may also seek advice from their Executive Officer, faculty adviser, or any faculty member with whom they have rapport about teaching strategy and/or the basic skills needed to negotiate the challenges of being a part-time member of an academic department at a CUNY college.

- (3) *Can a GTF request a leave of absence from the fellowship?*

Under normal circumstances, leaves of absence are not permitted. If a GTF becomes ineligible to receive the GTF award (e.g., if the student falls below good standing academically or is not registered full-time) or if the GTF decides not to teach in a given semester, he/she must resign from the fellowship. ***The individual is eligible to compete for another fellowship at a later date.*** The Graduate Center's GTF Program Coordinator will keep a record of the length of service at the time of the resignation. For example, if a GTF has already served for one year of a fellowship, then he/she is eligible to serve for two years in the "new" fellowship.

The GTF program has instituted a GTF **emergency leave policy**. Under special circumstances, such as a personal or family medical emergency, GTFs who have completed at least ONE year as a GTF/Graduate Assistant C may apply for a GTF emergency leave. The emergency leave is for ***one semester only and is unpaid.*** The request for this leave must be approved by the Associate Provost and Dean for Academic Affairs of The Graduate Center, the Executive Officer of the GTF's doctoral program, the department chair at the CUNY college where the GTF is assigned to teach, and the GTF program liaison at that campus. Please contact the GTF Program Coordinator for further details.

- (4) *Can a GTF also teach as an adjunct?*

See Special Notes under GTF workload requirements on page 3.

GTF Program College Liaisons

Senior Colleges

Baruch College: Associate Provost Barbara Lawrence
Brooklyn College: Dean Kathleen Gover
City College: Ms. Leslie Galman
Hunter College: Acting Associate Provost Michael Griffel
John Jay College: Provost Basil Wilson
Lehman College: Provost Anthony Garro
Medgar Evers College: Dean Thomas Edwards
New York City Technical College: Dean Annette Schaefer
Queens College: Interim Provost Evangelos Gizis
College of Staten Island: Dean David Podell
York College: Provost Edward Weil
The Graduate Center: Ms. Anne Ellis

Community Colleges

Borough of Manhattan Community College: Vice President Sadie Bragg
Bronx Community College: Dean Alice Fuller
Hostos Community College: Vice President Daisy Cocco DiFilippis
Kingsborough Community College: Provost Stuart Suss
LaGuardia Community College: Vice President John P. Bihn
Queensborough Community College: Dean Karen Steele

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