

To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Alan N. Clark entitled "Recent Doctoral Graduates' Perceptions of Adequacy of the Graduate Teaching Assistantship Experience as Preparation for College Classroom Teaching." I have examined the final copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education, with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision.

Mary Jane Connolly
Dr. Mary Jane Connolly
Major Professor

We have read this dissertation
and recommend its acceptance.

Robert K. Roney
[Signature]
Jan R. Juarez

Accepted for the Council:

Clemmink
Associate Vice Chancellor
and Dean of The Graduate School

RECENT DOCTORAL GRADUATES' PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY
OF THE GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP EXPERIENCE
AS PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE CLASSROOM TEACHING

A Dissertation
Presented for the
Doctor of Education
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Alan N. Clark

December 1992

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to the many graduate assistants who are instructing and learning, researching and writing, laughing and crying, sharing and caring, and, hopefully, serving as an apprentice to master the craft of teaching.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation was made possible by the support of many very important and special people. Dr. Dan Quarles, former director of the UTK Graduate Center at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, provided the inspiration to get it started and see it through. He and my committee members, Dr. Mary Jane Connelly, Dr. Robert Roney, and Dr. Lee Humphreys, were very helpful and patient as I fought through deadlines, revisions, and war in the Persian Gulf to finish. Roberta Crum provided valuable typing, and editorial services, as well as guidance to keep me on task. Dr. Lloyd Davis of UTC taught a mathematics-illiterate graduate student the art and science of statistics (no mean effort), and all of the UTK teachers proved they had mastered the craft of college teaching. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Hammer made it possible for a professional military person to also become a doctoral student. My special thanks go to my wife, Shirley Clark, whose sacrifice, motivation, and inspiration provided the impetus to see this through to completion.

ABSTRACT

A concern about the type of training doctoral students receive to prepare them for classroom teaching in higher education led to a national survey. The purpose of the study was to assess the perceptions of a cross-section of academic faculty with terminal degrees to determine if their pre-doctoral graduate teaching assistant experiences provided them with an adequate level of competence necessary for college teaching. A secondary purpose was to probe the nature of graduate teaching assistant experiences to determine the assistants' perceptions regarding the development of graduate students as higher education classroom teachers.

A pilot study surveyed the perceptions of doctoral level faculty currently employed as classroom teachers for not less than two nor more than five years who had a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA) experience prior to receiving their doctorate. The intent was to assess the perception of adequacy of a group who could look back upon their GTA experiences from the perspective of the higher education classroom. A survey questionnaire was mailed to 468 faculty members at eight institutions nationwide. Usable questionnaires were returned by 182 faculty, representing a 39 percent response rate. A total of 74

different GTA institutions were represented by the faculty respondents. Of the 74, 65 (88 percent) were rated as large institutions, 57 (77 percent) were research-oriented, and 59 (80 percent) were public universities, defined by the 1987 Carnegie Classification of Higher Education.

The results of the pilot study indicated that 69.2 percent of the respondents perceived their GTA experience to be adequate preparation for teaching in the higher education classroom. In large part the respondents felt as they did because of their interaction with other GTAs and with faculty supervisors, but not because of participation in training programs. Further, the majority of respondents pursued their terminal degree at large, public, research-oriented institutions (1987 Carnegie Classification), and taught in a liberal arts setting at their current institution of employment.

These findings were construed to be preliminary and somewhat inconclusive in nature, given the unknown size of the population, the small number of respondents, and certain non-discernable responses to questions concerning length of GTA experience and number of years since that GTA experience, requiring that further study be made probing the nature of training which doctoral students receive as preparation for classroom teaching.

The original survey questionnaire was edited to streamline its scope and expand upon the responses as to the nature of the activities of those seeking the terminal degree. Most references to graduate teaching assistantship, graduate assistantship, and graduate research assistantship were eliminated to reduce confusion. For purposes of this study, the term "graduate teaching assistant" or GTA referred to graduate students with teaching responsibility, regardless of whether they worked as graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, or graduate research assistants.

Liberal arts faculties at universities within the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools with an enrollment of at least 12,500 full-time equivalent credit students were mailed the new survey questionnaire through the office of the dean of liberal arts, who identified the members of the faculty who "fit the window" of the target population.

In all, 386 faculty members were identified as meeting the requirements of the population, 309 of which responded to the survey, for an 80 percent return rate, but only 298 questionnaires were usable, for an actual return rate of 77 percent. Findings included:

1. Seventy-two and two-tenths percent of the survey respondents perceived their graduate teaching

assistantship experience as adequate for preparation for teaching in the college classroom.

2. There was no correlation between the perception of adequacy and the number of years since completion of the doctoral degree.

3. There was a statistically significant relationship between the overall perception of adequacy and three graduate teaching assistant experiences:

a. sharing an office with other graduate teaching assistants.

b. the opportunity for feedback about teaching with other graduate teaching assistants.

c. the number of times per term certain teaching activities were performed as a graduate teaching assistant.

4. There was a statistically significant relationship between the number of times per term certain teaching activities were performed as a graduate teaching assistant and the perception of adequacy of those activities.

5. There was no statistically significant relationship between participation in instructional training programs and the overall perception of adequacy.

The researcher found that new faculty perceived their experiences as a graduate teaching assistant to be adequate preparation for teaching in the college classroom,

especially those teacher tasks which are repeated frequently while actually engaged in the teaching role. There is also great value placed upon interacting with other graduate teaching assistants, talking about teaching, sharing ideas, and discussing feedback in an office environment shared with peers.

Even though the conventional, traditional view of graduate teaching assistants as overworked, underpaid trainees runs through the literature, the faculty member which emerges from that experience appears to have benefited from it in terms of the individual perception of adequacy for being prepared to teach.

The researcher further found that neither instructional training programs nor faculty observation/ supervision of teaching enhanced the perceptions of adequacy on the part of the respondents.

PREFACE

Based upon a survey of the literature and the results of recent studies, doctoral students are very often given classroom teaching responsibilities at the university level for which they are probably not prepared. The dual role of graduate student and classroom teacher makes demands upon the candidate which often result in a situation in which the graduate teaching assistant must go "cold" into the college classroom with no prior preparation as a teacher.

The adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience as a training ground for future college classroom teachers from the perspective of those who are now on the job as college classroom teachers is addressed in this research. As new training programs for graduate teaching assistants are developed at various institutions, it is important to assimilate the lessons learned by those who have previously experienced the various methods used to prepare new initiates for teaching in a higher education setting.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background	1
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study and Research	
Questions	2
Significance of the Study	4
Assumptions	5
Limitations and Delimitations	6
Definitions	7
Organization of the Study	10
II. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE	12
Introduction	12
Traditional View of Graduate Assistants	13
Problems Associated with Graduate	
Assistant Programs	15
The Evolution of Training Programs	16
Summary	19
III. METHODS AND PROCEDURES	22
Pilot Study	22
Establishing the Population	27
The Survey Instrument	34
Method of Data Collection	37

CHAPTER	PAGE
III. (Continued)	
Computerization of Data	39
Statistical Analysis	39
IV. FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF	
THE DATA	41
Findings	41
Summary of Findings	76
Analysis and Interpretation of the Data . .	80
Summary of Important Findings	88
V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS . .	91
Summary	91
Conclusions	93
Recommendations	95
REFERENCES	101
APPENDICES	108
APPENDIX A. DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT BACKGROUND	
INSTITUTIONS BY LOCATION AND TYPE	109
APPENDIX B. SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE	114
APPENDIX C. LETTER OF INQUIRY	119
APPENDIX D. REPRESENTATIVE COMMENTS	121
VITA	144

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
1. Pilot Study Survey Results	24
2. Represented Institutions by 1991 FTE and the Number of Faculty Participating	29
3. Time Since Employed to September 1991 (In Years)	32
4. Comparison of Academic Disciplines of Respondents During Graduate Teaching Assistantship and in Current Position	33
5. Length of Graduate Teaching Assistantship	35
6. Participation in Training Programs	44
7. Type Office Accommodations During Graduate Teaching Assistantship	45
8. Opportunity to Share Feedback with Other Doctoral Candidates During Graduate Teaching Assistantship	46
9. Number of Classes for Which Respondents Had Instructional Responsibility During Their Tenure as a Graduate Teaching Assistant	49
10. Percent of Student Grade for Which Respondents Were Responsible as Graduate Teaching Assistant	50
11. Percent of Time Devoted to Teaching as a Graduate Teaching Assistant	52
12. Frequency of Teaching Activities Per Term While Serving as GTA	53
13. Perceptions of Adequacy for GTA Experiences as Preparation for College Classroom Teaching	59
14. Crosstabulation of Overall Evaluation with Length of Graduate Teaching Assistantship	67

TABLE	PAGE
15. Crosstabulation of Overall Evaluation with Participation in Instructional Training Programs	68
16. Crosstabulation of Overall Evaluation with Office Availability	70
17. Crosstabulation of Overall Evaluation with Private or Shared Office	71
18. Crosstabulation of Overall Evaluation with Feedback Opportunities	72
19. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) of Overall Perception of Adequacy, Type Office Accommodation, and Opportunity for Feedback	74
20. Spearman's Correlation Coefficient: Teaching Activities and Perceptions of Adequacy	75
21. Spearman's Correlation Test for Significance Between Overall Perceptions of Adequacy of GTA Experience and Non-Teaching Activities .	77

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

In a survey of almost 1,400 teaching assistants, Diamond and Gray (1987) of Syracuse University found that more than one-half of the respondents desired additional training in teaching-related areas, such as evaluation, instructional technology, lecturing, leading discussion, and preparing examinations. Seventy-five percent of the teaching assistants planned to teach in a college or university. Nearly 20 percent recognized a need for improved supervision of teaching from the department or college in which they taught.

In a report sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts, a panel of educators noted that "the art of college teaching is not valued enough on the nation's campuses," and "too many college teachers are poorly trained to teach" (Berger, 1989). The report called for an apprenticeship program for prospective teachers, to replace the current practice of assigning doctoral candidates as teaching assistants, "cannon fodder, really, in a process that devalues teaching by expecting the least experienced to be full substitutes for the most accomplished" (Berger,

1989). The concern was that it was not appropriate to use unprepared graduate teaching assistants as a substitute for poorly trained college teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Many graduate teaching assistants are not only pursuing a doctoral degree, they are also preparing for a role as teachers in higher education. It is necessary to investigate the adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience in preparing individuals for the higher education classroom, since the literature suggests graduate teaching assistants need more preparation than they are getting now. Additionally, a comparison of graduate teaching assistant activities and training programs at various institutions is needed to determine program effectiveness.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purposes of the study were:

1. To assess the perceptions of a cross-section of recent doctoral graduates to determine if they perceived their graduate teaching assistant experiences provided them with an adequate level of competence necessary for college classroom teaching.

2. To probe the nature of graduate teaching assistant experiences to determine the assistants' perceptions regarding the development of graduate students as higher education classroom teachers.

The following research questions were addressed by this study:

1. Did the graduate teaching assistantship experience provide the new faculty member with a perception of adequacy required for teaching in the college classroom?

2. What graduate teaching assistant experiences were perceived as statistically significant in preparing the new college faculty member for teaching in the classroom?

3. Were there any statistically significant relationships between the perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience and the length of time of the graduate teaching assistantship?

4. Was there a statistically significant relationship between the perception of adequacy required for teaching in the college classroom and participation in graduate teaching assistant training programs?

5. Were there any statistically significant relationships between the number of times per term a teaching activity was performed and the perception of adequacy of that activity in preparing graduate teaching assistants for the college classroom?

6. Were there any statistically significant relationships between the number of times per term a teaching activity was performed and the overall perception of adequacy in preparing graduate teaching assistants for the college classroom?

Significance of the Study

There exists a traditional view of the graduate teaching assistant as a beleaguered graduate student, almost as if it is recognized that the experience must include this overworked, underpaid, untrained scenario as a part of an initiation rite. If graduate teaching assistants, as potential doctoral graduates, are to pursue teaching in the college classroom after graduation, then the graduate experience is the de facto training ground for teacher skills. Thus, the perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience in providing such teacher training must be assessed to determine if the appropriate levels of competence as a classroom instructor are being attained. While previous studies have surveyed the perceptions of graduate teaching assistants, there has been no effort to ascertain the perceptions of new faculty, asking that they reflect upon their graduate teaching assistant experience to determine what was adequate and

inadequate, what worked and what did not, in terms of preparation for teaching in the college classroom.

The central issue is whether or not, in the perceptions of graduate teaching assistants the graduate teaching assistant experience, helped to prepare the potential college classroom teacher. The perceptions of those trained by the graduate teaching assistant experience who now have college classroom responsibilities would provide a perspective different from that of those involved in a graduate program. It is necessary to extend current knowledge by examining the problem from the perspective of those with the opportunity to compare and by contributing added meaning to existing information.

Assumptions

This study was based on the following assumptions:

1. Doctoral graduates with one to five years of college faculty experience can evaluate the adequacy of their previous graduate teaching assistant training based on how well they perceived that training helped prepare them for classroom teaching, thus providing an important perception.
2. Specific graduate teaching assistant experiences can be identified and evaluated in terms of adequacy in developing an individual for college classroom teaching.

3. Universities with graduate teaching assistant programs routinely assign undergraduate teaching responsibilities to graduate teaching assistants.

4. The institutional backgrounds of faculty at any one university are normally distributed, thus providing a valid cross-section for the purpose of randomization of respondents.

5. Liberal arts faculties at four-year public institutions offer the largest population from which to gather questionnaires, as this area was identified by the pilot study to contain the greatest number of faculty with graduate teaching assistant backgrounds.

Limitations and Delimitations

The following limitations of the study were identified:

1. The study was limited by the degree to which respondents accurately and thoroughly completed the questionnaire.

2. The study was limited by the willingness of selected university officials to identify the target population of the study within their faculty.

This study was delimited to:

1. A sample of the liberal arts faculty at 23 of the 37 four-year institutions with a Fall 1991 full-time

equivalent credit enrollment of 12,500 or more students as listed in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges 1991 Member List.

2. The use of a mailed survey instrument questionnaire.

3. Responses of faculty members identified by the office of the dean of liberal arts as meeting the target population criteria.

4. The faculty members surveyed were delimited to graduates of doctoral programs employed as full-time faculty for not less than one nor more than five years in a liberal arts setting.

Definitions

Adequacy is defined as being equal to the requirements for a job, or sufficiently prepared for a task.

Asking questions in class refers to guiding students toward a teaching point by asking leading questions.

Assigning grades is defined as assigning a course grade to students based upon their performance during the term.

Audio-visual enhancement refers to using audio-visual equipment, also known as instructional technology, as a part of classroom presentation to enhance lecture.

Background institution is the university at which the respondent served as a graduate teaching assistant.

Conducting discussion is defined as the conduct of informal classroom discussions with students in which feedback from students is solicited concerning the course topic under consideration.

Conducting field exercises is defined as accompanying students on visits to sites external to the classroom which enhances achievement of course goals.

Crosstabulation is a function of the SPSS-X computer program which statistically computes the chi square application of statistical significance between two variables.

Defining course objectives means focusing upon the goal of a course and what is to be learned.

Evaluating and grading papers is defined as evaluating written assignments from students, providing effective feedback, and awarding a letter grade.

Graduate teaching assistant (GTA) is a graduate student pursuing a doctoral degree at a university who has classroom teaching responsibilities in addition to other duties expected of a graduate teaching assistant. For purposes of this study, "graduate teaching assistant" refers to graduate assistants with teaching responsibility, regardless of whether or not they worked as graduate assistants, graduate teaching assistants, or graduate research assistants.

Interacting with students refers to answering student questions about the topics in the classroom to assist in the complete understanding of the material presented.

Large university is a four-year university with a full-time equivalent credit enrollment of at least 12,500 students as of the Fall 1991 term.

Lecturing refers to making oral presentations to a class or group with little or no opportunity for student feedback.

New faculty refers to doctoral-level faculty members with not less than one year nor more than five years experience teaching in the college classroom.

Research is defined as investigating or experimenting to discover/interpret facts, revise accepted theories in light of new facts, or practical application of new/revised theories.

Summarizing refers to restating the main points of a lecture or seminar.

Training program is defined as an organized, formal event or series of events which focuses upon preparing graduate teaching assistants for their roles as undergraduate classroom teachers.

Using library resources refers to coordinating with the university library for materials which enhance the course for students.

Writing questions for tests refers to selecting test types and test questions which would accurately reflect students' knowledge of course material.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized according to the following chapters:

Chapter I contained an introduction, which consisted of background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and significance of the study. It included research assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and definitions of terms applicable to the study.

Chapter II presents a review of related literature on graduate teaching assistant programs and problems, to include research which has been conducted with graduate teaching assistants.

Chapter III provides a description of the process by which the sample was selected, the survey instrument, and how the data were collected, coded, and statistically analyzed.

Chapter IV contains the study findings, analysis, and interpretation of the data, and a summary of significant findings.

Chapter V summarizes the research and survey findings, draws conclusions from the findings, and makes

recommendations for graduate teaching assistant training programs.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Many doctoral graduate students basically function in a dual role: that of graduate student and teaching assistant, i.e. learner and teacher. While the framework of requirements for the graduate student to obtain the degree is normally very specific, the tasks associated with performance as a graduate teaching assistant are seldom adequately delineated. A large percentage of graduate teaching assistants enter the college classroom as teachers once the degree is obtained. The literature on the subject of graduate teaching assistants abounds with analyses of teaching assistant duties and problems, mostly from the perspective of graduate students serving in that role, but does not generally address the preparation of graduate teaching assistants as future college classroom teacher.

This review is organized into three areas of literature related to the study: (1) the traditional view of graduate teaching assistants; (2) a recognition of teaching problems associated with graduate teaching assistant

programs; and (3) the evolution of graduate teaching assistant training programs.

Traditional View of Graduate Assistants

The literature suggests that there is a general tendency, traditional in nature, to utilize the graduate teaching assistant as a means to relieve senior faculty members from the burdens of the undergraduate classroom. The Association of American Colleges (1985) reported that, "unfortunately for the development of a responsible profession of college teaching," the preparation of most college faculty members involves "the development of substantive knowledge and research skills" leading to the doctoral degree. "Any introduction to teaching comes only incidentally through service as a teaching assistant, with only occasional supervision by experienced senior faculty" (Association of American Colleges, 1985).

The reliance upon untrained teaching assistants in the nation's colleges was highlighted in a summary of a report sponsored by the Pew Charitable Trusts (Berger, 1989), in which it was noted that universities use doctoral candidates in the classroom as teaching assistants, "cannon fodder . . . in a process that devalues teaching by expecting the least experienced to be full substitutes for the most accomplished" (Berger, 1989).

In terms of teaching at major universities, it is generally accepted that graduate teaching assistants are "responsible for a major portion of undergraduate lower division instruction," and "there is a general perception that the teaching performance of many teaching assistants is poor" (Diamond & Gray, 1987).

At the first national conference on teaching assistants, hosted by the Center for Teaching Excellence at the Ohio State University in 1986, a common thread ran through all the presentations by the various authors: "inadequate preparation of TAs for teaching and insufficient feedback for improvement" (Chism, 1987).

This traditional view of the teaching assistant as a beleaguered graduate student is found throughout the literature, almost as if it is recognized that the graduate teaching assistant experience must include this overworked, unprepared, untrained scenario as a part of an initiation rite. Indeed, the problem is an old one, as was discovered by Milton (1969), who studied various reports concerning the performance of graduate teaching assistants in the 1950s and 1960s and concluded that "most TAs receive little formal guidance for the many duties they perform in assisting undergraduates to learn" (Milton, 1973, p. 3).

Problems Associated with Graduate Assistant Programs

The graduate teaching assistant experience does not seem to be adequate preparation for potential university faculty members to be good college teachers because the graduate teaching assistant is almost never exposed "to any of the ingredients that make up the art, the science, and the special responsibilities of teaching. Yet, the major career option for most holders of the Ph.D. degree is full-time teaching in a college or university" (Association of American Colleges, 1985).

When it is realized that the population of graduate teaching assistants will provide the college faculty of tomorrow, the lack of attention given to the support and training of teaching assistants is even more important (Diamond & Gray, 1987). The problems associated with graduate teaching assistant programs revolve generally around the requirement to teach undergraduate classes with little or no training in the methods of teaching.

Teaching assistants at Northwestern University were asked in a survey about the problems encountered in discharging their teaching responsibilities. The problems were found to fall into five classifications: (1) lack of departmental support and supervising teachers; (2) student-related problems; (3) course-related problems; (4)

professional development; and (5) lack of time and heavy workload (Brinko, 1985).

Similarly, the 1987 Diamond and Gray national study of 1,400 teaching assistant respondents found that nearly 20 percent needed more supervision from the college or department for which they taught, while greater than 50 percent expressed a need for more preparation in such areas as new developments in instructional technology (71 percent), counseling and advising (78 percent), and lecturing (53 percent). Of the comments and suggestions offered by respondents, 20 percent asked for more support, 16 percent wanted more time, and 14 percent expressed a desire for formal training programs.

Throughout the literature, there was little difference in the types of problems experienced by teaching assistants from different disciplines or levels of experience. Problems with course design, student/teaching assistant relationships, and competence in discipline were present in all academic departments with teaching assistants, regardless of the previous level of teaching experience (Shaeffer, McGill, & Menges, 1984).

The Evolution of Training Programs

In response to the perceived lack of training support, many higher education institutions have initiated

training programs specifically designed to develop the potential of graduate teaching assistants. Reforms in the training of graduate teaching assistants have resulted in creative solutions (Chism, 1987; Diamond & Gray, 1987).

"In many colleges and universities, the quality of teaching guidance available to TAs is largely a result of fortuitous and unplanned association with members of the faculty who view teaching as an important activity. A growing number of institutions, however, recognize the importance of formal programs of assistance to apprentice teachers" (Habel, Pendleton-Parker, & Brinko, 1988).

It is the concept of "apprenticeship" which is at the heart of these various training programs. Universities adopting formal instruction in teaching for their graduate teaching assistants see them as apprentices learning the craft of the classroom teacher over the course of their assistantship. They take a nurturing, mentoring approach to these future teachers and pay attention to their desires to become good teachers, not just researchers.

It is also recognized that graduate teaching assistants can learn about teaching from each other, which is, indeed, one method informally developed over the years out of necessity in lieu of any formal training program, "but they can learn even more when candidates from various disciplines share their teaching experiences in a formal seminar directed by a veteran teacher. The same seminar

could be a vehicle for leading apprentice teachers into an understanding of the ethical imperatives and responsibilities of teaching . . ." (Association of American Colleges, 1985, p. 36).

Two of the leading institutions which have developed programs to assist teaching assistants are Northwestern University and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Both have instituted peer consultation for teaching assistants, the goals of which are "(1) to nurture the interest in teaching that many TAs bring to their graduate study, and (2) to encourage TAs to think about teaching as a craft with component skills that can be learned and refined. At both institutions, these consultation programs are part of comprehensive, university-wide systems of training and support for TAs" (Habel, Pendleton-Parker, & Brinko, 1988, p. 4). Other universities may require teaching assistants to attend departmental or college level training programs, the lengths of which may vary from a single session to programs presented over a number of days on a required basis. The important part is that institutions are beginning to recognize the need for teacher training at the graduate teaching assistant level and have begun to address that need in various ways.

While there is no agreement on the definition of the term "mentoring", this concept is also used by various institutions to assist graduate students. "In a

university setting, the relationship typically consists of an accomplished faculty member and a graduate student" (Sands, 1991). These relationships are considered very important by students and often benefit the mentors, as well (Wilde & Schau, 1991). In fact, a large percentage of faculty in one study were mentored when serving as a graduate student (Sands, 1991).

"As invaluable as quality mentoring can be, not all such relationships fulfill their potential. Some are simply more helpful than others; some are detrimental" (Johnsrud, 1990). Again, institutions have begun to recognize this method of graduate teaching assistant training as a means to an end, even though there are flaws in the implementation of the concept.

Summary

Since no literature dealing with the perceptions of doctoral graduates concerning the adequacy of their preparation for teaching in the college classroom was located, this review of literature focused on three important issues related to the main topic: (1) the traditional view of doctoral graduate students as teaching assistants; (2) the problems associated with graduate teaching assistant programs; and (3) the evolution of graduate teaching assistant training programs.

The literature suggested a crisis of confidence existed within the minds of graduate teaching assistants, who resented being "thrown into" classroom situations with little or no preparation for teaching. While there is general familiarity with the traditional view of the graduate teaching assistant, based upon the experiences of former assistants and those currently working as graduate teaching assistants, the impact of the doctoral graduate student as a teaching assistant has just recently begun to be recognized and appreciated (Pickering, 1983). There is disagreement about how much time should be spent in preparing teaching assistants for eventual classroom assignments, but institutions are slowly developing programs to improve the role of the graduate teaching assistant as teacher, thus indirectly preparing them for future higher education classroom work once they have received their doctoral degrees. The concern was that it was not appropriate to use unprepared graduate teaching assistants as a substitute for poorly trained college teachers.

Diamond and Gray (1987) identified the need for more training in their national survey, as did studies by Rodriguez (1982) of Washington State University, Alford (1982) at Florida State University, McNally (1966) at Michigan State University, and Ansah (1979) at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale; however, these findings were based upon the perception of graduate teaching

assistants frustrated by the teaching assistant endeavor. As stated, an analysis of the perceptions of former graduate teaching assistants now involved in the higher education classroom since completing their degree program has not been attempted.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The pilot study, sample determination procedure, instrument development, data collection procedures, and analysis of data by computer-assisted methods are described herein.

Pilot Study

The actual size of the population to be surveyed was not known. Although a plethora of data about faculty members are normally stored in university personnel management computer centers, statistics as to which liberal arts doctoral faculty participated in teaching assistantships prior to receiving the degree are not routinely captured.

A pilot study was conducted, using as a target population current doctoral level college classroom teachers who had participated in a graduate teaching assistantship while pursuing the degree and had not less than two nor more than five years experience in the higher education classroom. The directors of institutional research at the 20 largest universities by Fall 1988 enrollment according to the 1990, Higher Education Directory (Torregrosa, 1990)

were contacted by mail and telephone to ascertain their interest in participating in the pilot study survey. Four of the 20 agreed to participate: Michigan State University, University of Arizona, University of Florida, and the University of Indiana at Bloomington.

Additionally, institutions of the Tennessee Board of Regents were similarly contacted, with the following agreeing to participate: Austin Peay State University, Tennessee Technological University, and Middle Tennessee State University.

Since Syracuse University was the host to the Diamond and Gray (1987) study, that institution was invited to participate as well, which it did, making a total of eight institutions involved. The questionnaires were mailed to the eight directors of institutional research, who coordinated the participation of the target population.

Of the 468 questionnaires mailed, 182 (39 percent) were returned, but of that number only 133 (28 percent) indicated previous GTA experience. Using the data provided by the 133 respondents, the following population profile was developed. The data are illustrated in Table 1.

Respondent Perceptions from the Pilot Study

Sixty-nine percent perceived the graduate teaching assistant experience adequately prepared them for teaching in the higher education classroom. Fifty-seven percent

TABLE 1
PILOT STUDY SURVEY RESULTS

Category	Percentage of Respondents
GTA Experience Adequate	69
Training Programs Inadequate	57
Interaction with GTAs Adequate	60
Faculty Supervision Adequate	54
Opportunities to Share Feedback	77
GTAs with Office	88
Office Shared with Other GTAs	77
No Department-Sponsored Training Program	60
No College-Sponsored Training Program	74
No Institution-Sponsored Training Program	70
GTA in Liberal Arts	78
GTA in Business	12
GTA in Engineering	6
GTA in Education	2
Length of GTA Experience	
Less than one year	24
1-2 years	20
2-3 years	10
3-4 years	15
4 or more years	30

rated graduate teaching assistant training programs as inadequate. Sixty percent felt interacting with other GTAs was adequate preparation. Fifty-four percent felt faculty supervision was adequate preparation.

Background Institutions of the Pilot Study

Seventy-four background institutions were represented by the respondents. Sixty-five (88 percent) of these institutions were rated large. Fifty-nine (80 percent) of these institutions were public universities. Fifty-seven (77 percent) of these institutions were research-oriented (Carnegie Classification of Higher Education, 1987).

Feedback Opportunities of the Pilot Study

Seventy-seven percent had opportunities to share experiences with other GTAs. Eighty-eight percent had an office. Seventy-seven percent shared that office with other GTAs.

Training Programs of the Pilot Study

Sixty percent did not have a department-sponsored GTA training program. Seventy-four percent did not have a college-sponsored GTA training program. Seventy percent did not have an institution-sponsored GTA training program.

Respondent Background of the Pilot Study

Seventy-eight percent taught as a GTA in a liberal arts subject area. Twelve percent taught as a GTA in a business subject area. Six percent taught as a GTA in an engineering subject area. Two percent taught as a GTA in an education subject area.

Length of GTA Experience of the Pilot Study

Twenty-four percent had less than one year experience as a GTA. Twenty percent had 1-2 years. Ten percent had 2-3 years. Fifteen percent had 3-4 years. Thirty percent had 4-5 years experience.

The results of the pilot survey indicated that 69.2 percent of the respondents perceived their GTA experience to be adequate preparation for teaching in the higher education classroom, due in large part to interaction with other GTAs and with faculty supervisors, rather than to training programs. Further, the majority (almost 80 percent) of respondents had pursued their doctoral degree at large, public, research-oriented institutions and had taught in a liberal arts setting while a GTA.

The findings of the pilot study were construed to be inconclusive, given the unknown size of the population, the small number of respondents (28 percent), and some non-discernible responses to queries concerning length of

GTA experience and number of years since the GTA experience.

Establishing the Population

For the follow-up study which was the basis of this dissertation, lessons learned from the pilot study were applied to take advantage of a representative sampling of faculty which would best fit the description of the population prototype, namely, current doctoral liberal arts faculty members at large four-year institutions who had been teaching in the college classroom from one to five years following the receipt of their doctoral degree. The parameters were enlarged to include respondents with one to five years' experience due to the tendency for these individuals to respond in the pilot study as "new faculty." The tendency for universities to employ faculty members from varied institutional backgrounds provided an adequate cross-section of graduate teaching assistant experiences and enhanced the study's reliability. It was the graduate teaching assistant's university setting which was important to the study, not the institution of current employment.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools was selected to provide a grouping of institutions within a geographical area from which to select participating

universities (Commission on Colleges, 1991). Liberal arts faculty members who fit the target population description were selected by the office of the dean of liberal arts from those identified institutions. Although 700 potential faculty members were initially identified from within the various institutions based upon time employed, that number was narrowed to 386 when the complete parameters for the target population were applied. Of that number, 309 responded to the survey for a total rate of return equal to 80 percent; however, only 298 (77 percent) of the questionnaires were usable for purposes of the study.

As stated previously, the exact size of the population was not known; therefore, any method used to determine a "sample size" would not necessarily be valid. As shown in Table 2, the 386 respondents were employed by 23 large, four-year institutions in liberal arts teaching positions with membership in the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The researcher defined "large" institutions as having full-time equivalent credit enrollment of at least 12,500 students as of the Fall 1991 term, as distinguished from the total full-time equivalent which includes both credit and non-credit enrollment.

Fourteen institutions (Florida State University, Georgia State University, University of Georgia, Eastern Kentucky University, Louisiana State University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina at

TABLE 2
REPRESENTED INSTITUTIONS BY 1991 FTE AND THE NUMBER
OF FACULTY PARTICIPATING

Institution	Fall 1991 FTE	New Faculty	Respondents	% of Returns	Percentage of Total
Auburn University	19,862	12	9	75	3.0
University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa	18,037	51	44	86	14.8
University of Alabama, Birmingham	12,534	2	1	50	.3
University of Florida	30,451	14	9	64	3.0
University of South Florida	28,909	7	5	71	1.7
Western Kentucky University	14,359	3	3	100	1.0
University of Kentucky	18,336	24	20	83	6.7
University of Louisville	17,847	28	20	71	6.7
University of Southwestern Louisiana	13,518	6	5	83	1.7
University of Southern Mississippi	13,050	20	17	85	5.7
East Carolina University	15,527	30	18	60	6.0
Clemson Univ.	14,382	15	12	80	4.0
University of South Carolina Columbia	20,307	17	14	82	4.7
Memphis State University	15,607	20	17	85	5.7
Middle Tennessee State Univ.	12,915	14	13	93	4.4
University of Tennessee Knoxville	22,707	6	6	100	2.0

Table 2 (continued)

Institution	Fall 1991 FTE	New Faculty	Respondents	% of Returns	Percentage of Total
Southwest Texas State Univ.	18,541	8	8	100	2.7
Texas A & M Univ.	38,978	21	17	81	5.7
University of Houston	28,117	11	8	73	2.7
University of Texas at Arlington	19,721	5	4	80	1.3
George Mason University	15,553	15	12	80	4.0
Virginia Commonwealth University	17,350	22	14	64	4.7
Virginia Polytechnic Institute	23,467	35	22	63	7.4
TOTAL		386	298	77	99.9

Chapel Hill, Tennessee Technological University, University of Texas at El Paso, Texas Technological University, University of North Texas, University of Texas at Austin, Old Dominion University, and the University of Virginia) were excluded from the study due to an inability to identify the target population within the faculty or to a decision by the liberal arts dean not to participate in the survey.

A total of 99 background institutions were represented by the respondents, including 7 foreign universities, 67 public institutions and 25 private institutions in the United States. The cumulative data on background institutions are presented in Appendix A (p. 109).

Using September 1991 as the cut-off date for employment in the current institution, 56 respondents (18 percent) indicated they had been teaching at their current institution for less than one year, 69 (22 percent) one to two years, 82 (27 percent) two to three years, 41 (13 percent) three to four years, and 50 (16 percent) four or more years. The mean for length of time employed was 2.017 years. The standard deviation for this distribution was 1.454. Eleven respondents did not complete this portion of the survey. (See Table 3).

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of the respondents by current teaching discipline within the college of liberal arts and the same data for the disciplines in

TABLE 3
TIME SINCE EMPLOYED TO SEPTEMBER 1991
(IN YEARS)

Period	Respondents	Percentage
Less than one year	56	18
1 to 1.9 years	69	22
2 to 2.9 years	82	27
3 to 3.9 years	41	13
4 or more years	50	16
TOTAL	298	96

11 cases missing
Mean = 2.017
STD DEV = 1.454

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES OF RESPONDENTS
DURING GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP
AND IN CURRENT POSITION

Discipline	Percentage As GTA	Percentage Current Position
Psychology, Behavior, Family Studies	6.7	6.4
Languages, Language Development	10.1	9.1
English, Audiology, Composition/ Linguistics, Rhetoric	15.4	17.1
Political Science, International Relations, Politics, Government	6.7	6.7
Business, Banking, Economics	3.7	3.7
Communications, Journalism, Public Relations, Mass Media, Advertising	5.4	6.0
Sciences, Anthropology, Health	15.8	16.4
Philosophy, Ethics	4.7	4.7
Sociology, Criminology, World Civilization	5.0	6.0
History	8.4	8.7
Math, Statistics, Computer Science	10.7	10.4
Art, Music, Voice, Drama, Instruments	4.0	4.0
No Response	3.4	0.7

which the respondents were involved during their doctoral program. The disciplines most represented in the current teaching area were English (17.1 percent), science (16.4 percent), and mathematics (10.4 percent) for a combined total of 43.9 percent of all respondents. The disciplines most represented in the graduate teaching assistant area were science (15.8 percent), English (15.4 percent), mathematics (10.7 percent), and language (10.1 percent) for a combined total of 52 percent of all respondents.

Table 5 illustrates the length of time the respondents held their graduate teaching assistantships prior to receiving the doctoral degree. The majority, 118 (40 percent) held their assistantships from three years to four years and eleven months. The median length for this group was three years and nine months.

The Survey Instrument

A 42-item questionnaire was developed by the researcher in order to gather the necessary data from the target population. Specifically, the information obtainable through the questionnaire by item number was:

1. Current institution of employment;
2. length of time at the current institution;
3. current academic discipline (teaching area);

TABLE 5
LENGTH OF GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP

Period	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Less than one year	27	9
One year to two years, 11 months	86	29
Three years to four years, 11 months	118	40
Five years or more	67	22
TOTAL	298	100

Median = 3.9 years

4. background institution where graduate teaching assistantship was held;

5. length of time as a graduate teaching assistant;

6. academic discipline as a graduate teaching assistant;

7. whether or not the graduate teaching assistant participated in a training program for teaching and, if so, a description of the experience;

8. whether or not an office was available and, if so, was it private or shared;

9. feedback opportunities with other doctoral candidates;

10. the total number of classes for which the graduate teaching assistant had instructional responsibility during the assistantship;

11. the percent of a student's grade for which the graduate teaching assistant was responsible, on the average;

12. the percentage of time devoted to teaching during the graduate teaching assistantship;

13-25. how often within a term the graduate teaching assistant participated in 13 activities or experiences identified by previous studies generally associated with teaching;

26-41. the adequacy of 16 experiences identified by previous studies that the graduate teaching assistant

could have had which would impact on current college teaching; and

42. an assessment of perceived overall adequacy of the assistantship experience regarding preparation for college teaching.

The survey instrument was field tested during the pilot study and comments gleaned from the returned questionnaires were incorporated into the final design of the instrument. Additionally, the activities and experiences contained in questions 13-25 and 26-41 were highlighted in the Diamond and Gray (1987) survey and other surveys of graduate teaching assistants as specific activities about which the assistants expressed concern. A facsimile of the survey instrument is reproduced in Appendix B (p. 114).

Method of Data Collection

The deans of liberal arts at the 37 institutions selected were mailed an introductory letter and a copy of the survey instrument (see Appendix C, p. 119). Recipients were queried regarding their willingness to participate in the study and, if willing, asked to identify faculty members who fit the window of the target population. Several institutions used different terminology for their liberal arts colleges, such as arts and sciences,

arts and humanities, humanities and social science, and humanities and fine arts. Follow-up telephone calls were made to the deans' offices to discuss the survey. The deans were asked to advise the researcher as to the number of faculty questionnaires required for the survey once they were identified. The required number of questionnaires were mailed directly to the dean's office, usually in care of an associate dean or other subordinate, and then distributed to the faculty.

Once the questionnaire survey was completed, the respondent returned the questionnaire to the dean's office and, once collected, the questionnaires were returned to the researcher in a self-addressed mailer. The intent was to improve the survey response rate by using the dean's office as an incentive for faculty members to respond. In three cases, faculty members were instructed by the dean's office to return the questionnaire directly to the researcher, and one dean requested that questionnaires be mailed by the researcher, using a list provided by the dean's office.

Follow-up telephone calls were made to the offices of the deans who did not respond and, in several cases, the original letter and questionnaire had to be mailed a second time. Fourteen institutions did not participate in the study, due largely to the process required to identify the intended respondents. These data are not normally

maintained in university personnel management data bases, so it required some willingness on the part of the dean to expend the time of a staffer to participate in the survey; however, the use of the dean's office proved valuable in that 80 percent of the questionnaires were returned out of the 386 distributed to the appropriate faculty. Eleven of the 309 returned questionnaires were not complete, leaving 298 totally usable questionnaire surveys, still a respectable 77 percent of the original population identified.

Computerization of Data

The 298 returned questionnaires were coded using 42 variables. After the coding was checked for accuracy, verified, and entered on magnetic media, the coded data were analyzed, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS-X).

Statistical Analysis

Frequency distributions were prepared for all data and were used in display of survey data.

The chi square, analysis of variance, and Spearman Correlation Coefficient statistical techniques were used in the statistical analysis of certain data. The overall evaluation of graduate teaching assistant experience

(question 42) was compared to length of assistantship (question 5), participation in training programs (question 7), availability of office (question 8), and feedback opportunities (question 9). The purpose was to determine if there was any statistically significant relationships between respondents' perception of adequacy of their assistantship experience and any of the other variables listed.

An analysis of variance was used to further test for statistical significance of the relationship between type of office accommodations and opportunity for feedback and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience. In order to test for significant relationships between the frequency of teaching activities (items 13-25) and perceptions of adequacy (items 26-42), the Spearman Correlation Coefficient was used.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Findings

The purposes of this study were (1) to assess the perceptions of a cross-section of recent doctoral graduates to determine if they perceived their graduate teaching assistant experiences provided them with an adequate level of competence necessary for college classroom teaching, and (2) to probe the nature of graduate teaching assistant experiences to determine the assistants' perceptions regarding the development of graduate students as higher education classroom teachers. Chapter IV contains the findings of the study, an analysis of the data and interpretation of the findings, and a summary of the important findings.

Items 1 through 7 on the survey questionnaire dealt with background information on each of the respondents and are summarized in the "establishing the population" section of this study (pp. 27-34). Briefly, the findings included:

1. Twenty-three institutions from within the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools were represented as their current employers.

2. The mean time on the job as a classroom teacher of the respondent population was 2.017 years, and ranged from 56 respondents employed for less than one year to 61 respondents employed for four to five years. Forty percent of the population (123) had been employed from one to three years.

3. A number of disciplines in the liberal arts were represented by current teaching areas, with 12 different subject areas. The largest of these was English with 51 respondents (17.1 percent) while the smallest was business with 11 respondents (3.7 percent).

4. Ninety-nine background institutions were represented by the respondents, providing a cross-section of public, private, large, small, and even foreign graduate teaching assistantship experiences, as well as representative institutions from most geographic areas of the United States.

5. The mean length of respondents' assistantship experiences was approximately three years, with 27 (9 percent) having less than one year, 67 (22 percent) having five years, and the remaining 204 (69 percent) having from one to four years experience.

6. Generally, the representative percentages of academic discipline as a graduate teaching assistant were the same as that found in the current teaching disciplines.

Item 7 requested respondents to indicate their participation in teacher training programs for graduate teaching assistants. Of the 298 valid responses to this question, 196 (65.8 percent) indicated they had not participated in any such training program, while 98 (32.9 percent) responded in the affirmative. Table 6 displays these figures.

Item 8A asked the respondents if they had an office during their tenure as graduate teaching assistants and, if so, item 8B asked, was it private or shared with other graduate teaching assistants? The large majority (89.3 percent) indicated that they did have an office and, of that number, 87 percent responded that they shared an office, while only 11 percent had a private accommodation. Table 7 illustrates this data.

Item 9 asked the respondents to indicate whether or not they had the opportunity to share/discuss/receive feedback about their teaching experiences with other doctoral candidates who also had teaching responsibilities. Again, a large majority (79.5 percent) responded that they did have this opportunity. Table 8 displays these findings.

TABLE 6
PARTICIPATION IN TRAINING PROGRAMS

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	98	32.9
No	196	65.8
No Response	4	1.3
TOTAL	298	100.0

TABLE 7
TYPE OFFICE ACCOMMODATIONS DURING
GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP

Item 8A Number and Percentage of Respondents with an Office During Assistantship

Office	Number	Percent
Yes	266	89.3
No	30	10.1
No Response	2	0.6
	—	—
TOTAL	298	100.0

Item 8B Shared Offices with Other Graduate Assistants

Office	Number	Percentage of Those Responding "Yes" in 8A
Private	29	11
Shared	232	87
No Response	5	2
	—	—
TOTAL	266	100

TABLE 8

OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE FEEDBACK WITH OTHER DOCTORAL
CANDIDATES DURING GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP

Opportunity	Number	Percentage
Yes	237	79.5
No	52	17.4
No Response	9	3.0
TOTAL	298	99.9

Item 10 on the questionnaire focused upon the total number of classes for which the respondent as a graduate teaching assistant had instructional responsibility during the assistantship experience. The purpose of this question was to get at the actual amount of time that graduate teaching assistants spent in a classroom setting. Although this question was confusing to some, based on written comments received in the survey, the mean for this response was 8.257 classes for which graduate teaching assistants had instructional responsibility, ranging from a high of 42 from one respondent to a low of 0 for 12 respondents. The median for the distribution was 6 while the mode was 2.

Over half (64 percent) of the respondents indicated responsibility for from 0-9 classes as a graduate teaching assistant. What seemed to puzzle respondents was whether this question referred to the quantity of distinctly different classes regardless of the number of times taught, or if it asked for an accounting for each time a class was taught. In other words, if an assistant had responsibility for one class taught each of his terms over a three year period, should the appropriate response be 1 or 6?

Since the intent of the question was to measure time in the classroom during the assistantship, not per term,

the correct answer to the above question would be 6.

Table 9 captures the data for this item.

Item 11 asked respondents to indicate, on the average, what percent of a student's grade the graduate teaching assistant was responsible for assigning. This question focused upon the impact the assistant had on the undergraduate's final grade for a course and the attendant responsibility thrust upon the assistant as a classroom teacher.

One hundred eighty-three respondents (59.2 percent) indicated they were responsible for 100 percent of the student's grade. Only 15 respondents (5.0 percent) said they had no responsibility at all. The mean response for this question was 77.320, and both the median and mode were 100.000. Table 10 is an illustration of these findings.

A critical question in assessing the activity of graduate teaching assistants was what percent of time was devoted to teaching during the assistantship, as contained in item 12 of the survey. Respondents were asked to approximate the time they spent in teaching activities during the graduate teaching assistantship and the mean response (36.463) indicated they spent almost forty percent of their time as a graduate teaching assistant at this activity. The most frequent response (66, or 22.1 percent) was in the 50 percent category, while 10

TABLE 9
NUMBER OF CLASSES FOR WHICH RESPONDENTS HAD INSTRUCTIONAL
RESPONSIBILITY DURING THEIR TENURE AS A GRADUATE
TEACHING ASSISTANT

Number of Classes	Number	Percentage
0	12	4.0
1-9	180	60.4
10-20	74	24.8
21-30	18	6.0
31-42	4	1.3
No Response	10	3.4
TOTAL	298	99.9

Mean = 8.257
Median = 6.000
Mode = 2.000
STD DEV = 18.004

TABLE 10
PERCENT OF STUDENT GRADE FOR WHICH RESPONDENTS WERE
RESPONSIBLE AS GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Percent	Number	Percentage
0	15	5.0
1-50	63	21.1
51-99	30	10.1
100	183	61.4
No Response	7	2.3
TOTAL	298	99.9

Mean = 77.491
Median = 100.000
Mode = 100.00
STD DEV = 34.168

respondents claimed they taught 100 percent of the time during their assistantships. Table 11 illustrates the findings.

Questions 13-25 referred to the activities of teaching--those tasks which are commonly performed by classroom teachers and which were identified as items of concern by previously surveyed graduate teaching assistants, many of whom felt they needed more experience or training in these areas. Respondents were asked to indicate the number of times per term they participated in each of the 13 activities. The results are tabulated in Table 12.

Item 13 focused on lecturing, or making oral presentations to a class or group with little or no opportunity for student feedback. The result was that 140 (47 percent) of the respondents said they never lectured or only lectured one to five times, while 102 (33 percent) lectured 16 or more times per term.

The use of audio-visual equipment to enhance classroom presentations was the subject of item 14. The overwhelming majority of respondents rarely used audio-visual enhancement, as 207 (69.4 percent) said they never used the equipment or used it only one to five times per term.

Item 15 concerned the number of times per term the respondents as graduate teaching assistants were involved in evaluating written assignments from students, providing effective feedback, and awarding a letter grade.

TABLE 11
PERCENT OF TIME DEVOTED TO TEACHING AS A
GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Percent of Time	Number	Percentage
0	9	3.0
1-10	18	6.0
11-20	51	17.1
21-40	110	37.0
41-60	72	24.2
61-80	16	5.3
81-100	11	3.7
No Response	11	3.7
TOTAL	298	100.0

Mean = 36.463
Median = 30.000
Mode = 50.000
STD DEV = 21.248

TABLE 12

FREQUENCY OF TEACHING ACTIVITIES PER TERM
WHILE SERVING AS GTA

Item/Activity	Never #(%)	Frequency Per Term with Percentage					21+ #(%)	No Response #(%)
		1-5 #(%)	6-10 #(%)	11-15 #(%)	16-20 #(%)			
13/Lecturing	53(17.8)	87(29.2)	26(8.7)	22(7.4)	18(6.0)	84(28.2)	8(2.7)	
14/Audio-Visual	105(35.2)	102(34.2)	39(13.1)	18(6.0)	9(3.0)	17(5.7)	8(2.7)	
15/Evaluating/ Grading	14(4.7)	76(25.5)	72(24.2)	38(12.8)	14(4.7)	76(25.5)	8(2.7)	
16/Research	72(24.2)	52(17.4)	36(12.1)	22(7.4)	8(2.7)	79(25.6)	29(9.7)	
17/Interacting	2(0.7)	20(6.7)	16(5.4)	44(14.8)	34(11.4)	177(59.4)	5(1.7)	
18/Discussion	23(7.7)	47(15.8)	34(11.4)	37(12.4)	26(8.7)	124(41.6)	7(2.3)	
19/Asking Questions	24(8.1)	26(8.7)	31(10.4)	31(10.4)	29(9.7)	150(50.3)	7(2.3)	
20/Summarizing	20(6.7)	37(12.4)	30(10.1)	43(14.4)	42(14.1)	116(38.9)	10(3.4)	
21/Writing Test Questions	36(12.1)	118(39.6)	50(16.8)	28(9.4)	21(7.0)	37(12.4)	8(2.7)	
22/Assigning Grades	28(9.4)	141(47.3)	33(11.1)	23(7.7)	11(3.7)	54(18.1)	8(2.7)	
23/Defining Objectives	65(21.8)	162(54.4)	33(11.1)	13(4.4)	4(1.3)	13(4.4)	8(2.7)	
24/Library	111(37.2)	110(36.9)	41(13.8)	19(6.4)	2(0.7)	8(2.7)	7(2.3)	
25/Field Exercises	201(67.4)	71(23.8)	14(4.7)	4(1.3)	1(0.3)	1(0.3)	6(2.0)	

Approximately one-half (49.7 percent) responded that they were involved in evaluating and grading papers from one to five or six to ten times per term. Once again, the pattern flattens out until the category of 21 or more times per term, where one-fourth of the respondents (25.5 percent) were involved at this level.

Item 16 on the survey questionnaire addressed the research activities associated with assistantship experiences, not necessarily linked as a teaching activity, but a traditional function of graduate teaching assistants nevertheless. The same general pattern emerged among respondents as in previous questions except that a larger percentage (9.7 percent) gave no response at all to the survey item. One-hundred sixty respondents (53.7 percent) indicated they were involved in research fewer than ten times per term as a graduate teaching assistant, while the same 26.5 percent were conducting research activities 21 or more times per term.

Item 17 of the survey questionnaire focused upon the interaction between the graduate teaching assistant as a teacher and the undergraduate students, asking respondents to indicate how often per term they answered questions from the students about topics in the classroom to assist in the complete understanding of the material presented. This question broke the pattern of previous questions as

almost 60 percent indicated they were involved in this activity 21 or more times per term.

Conducting informal classroom discussions with students in which feedback was solicited concerning the course topic under consideration is the topic of item 18 on the questionnaire. Forty-one percent of the respondents indicated this occurred 21 or more times per term. Seven respondents (2.3 percent) did not respond to this question.

Asking leading questions in class to guide students toward a teaching point is a common teacher task and was the focus of item 19 of the survey. Again, 150 (50 percent) of the respondents indicated this occurred more than 21 times per term as they served as graduate teaching assistants. Seven (2.3 percent) respondents gave no response to this question.

Item 20 on the survey questionnaire dealt with summarizing the main points of a lecture or seminar. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents indicated this was an activity they conducted 21 or more times per term. The median response was 16 to 20 times and the mode was 21 or more times. Ten respondents (3.4 percent) gave no response to this question.

Writing questions for tests included selecting test types and test questions which accurately reflect students' knowledge of course material. This was the

topic of item 21 on the survey questionnaire. It received a relatively low response rate among respondents as 154 (51.7 percent) indicated they did this less than five times per term. Eight respondents (2.7 percent) did not respond to this item on the survey.

Item 22 on the survey questionnaire referred to the number of times per term respondents assigned a grade to students based upon their performance during the term. This would necessarily be tied to the number of courses per term which the graduate teaching assistant actually taught and is linked to item 10. This is discussed in the analysis and interpretation of data section of this study.

As expected, 169 (56.7 percent) of the respondents indicated this task was accomplished less than five times per term. There were 8 respondents (2.7 percent) who did not give a response to this question.

Item 23 addressed how often per term the respondents as graduate teaching assistants focused upon the goal of a course and what is to be taught as they defined course objectives. Two hundred and twenty-seven (76 percent) of the respondents indicated this was done less than five times per term, with 65 (21.8 percent) never having done it. There were 8 respondents (2.7 percent) who did not address this question.

Another resource to enhance instruction normally available to classroom teachers is the library. Item 24

of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate how often per term they coordinated with the university library for resources as a graduate teaching assistant to enhance the course for students. Almost three-fourths (74.2 percent) of them said they used the library as a resource less than five times per term. Seven respondents (2.3 percent) did not respond to this question.

The final item, 25, in this section of the questionnaire asked respondents how often they accompanied students on visits to sites external to the classroom to enhance achievement of the course goal. This question produced the most lopsided result as 275 (91.3 percent) of the respondents said they took part in this less than five times per term, with 201 (67.4 percent) indicating this never happened with them. There were 6 respondents who did not answer.

Questions 26-41 of the questionnaire focused on experiences of the graduate teaching assistant, 13 of which were the same items as had previously been considered: lecturing, audio-visual enhancement, evaluating and grading papers, research, interacting with students, conducting discussion, asking questions in class, summarizing, writing questions for tests, assigning grades, defining course objectives, using library resources, and conducting field exercises. Three factors were added by Diamond and Gray (1987) and other studies as being

influential to the development of graduate teaching assistants as teachers: faculty observation and supervision, interaction with other graduate teaching assistants, and instructional training programs.

Respondents were asked to indicate how adequate they perceived the experiences were while a graduate teaching assistant considering the impact the experiences may have had upon their current college teaching. The scale ranged from a 1 for Totally Inadequate up to 6 for Totally Adequate. An even-numbered scale was decided upon by the researcher to disallow "straddling the fence" by respondents in expressing their perception of adequacy. The individual question findings are reported and illustrated in Table 13 and summarized as a group at the end of the findings section.

Item 26, faculty observation/supervision of teaching, was not generally considered adequate by the respondents. The mean response fell between inadequate and adequate as 51.7 percent rated this experience from 1-3 on the adequacy scale, while 43.3 percent considered faculty supervision to be adequate. Fifteen respondents did not respond to this item (5.0 percent).

Item 27 focused upon interaction with other graduate teaching assistants, asking respondents to express their perceptions of adequacy of this experience as preparation for college classroom teaching. Seventy percent of the

TABLE 13

PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY FOR GTA EXPERIENCES AS PREPARATION
FOR COLLEGE CLASSROOM TEACHING

Item/GA Experience	1 Totally	Adequacy Rating With Percentage				Totally	No Response	Mean
		Inadequate 2	3	4	Adequate 5			
26/Faculty Supervision	42(14.1)	60(20.1)	52(17.4)	59(19.8)	37(12.4)	33(11.1)	15(5.0)	3.311
27/GA Interaction	14(4.7)	14(4.7)	47(15.8)	57(19.1)	69(23.2)	91(30.5)	6(2.0)	4.459
28/Training Programs	92(30.9)	46(15.4)	40(13.4)	39(13.1)	28(9.4)	19(6.4)	34(11.4)	2.705
29/Lecturing	32(10.7)	28(9.4)	35(11.7)	56(18.8)	78(26.2)	46(15.4)	23(7.7)	3.938
30/Audio/ Visual	58(19.5)	40(13.4)	49(16.4)	47(15.8)	29(9.7)	31(10.4)	44(14.8)	3.165
31/Evaluation/ Grading	8(2.7)	8(2.7)	27(9.1)	53(17.8)	91(30.5)	88(29.5)	23(7.7)	4.727
32/Research	37(12.4)	19(6.4)	31(10.4)	35(11.7)	43(14.4)	90(30.2)	43(14.4)	4.169
33/Student Interaction	4(1.3)	10(3.4)	27(9.1)	44(14.8)	92(30.9)	107(35.9)	14(4.7)	4.870
34/Conducting Discussions	15(5.0)	21(7.0)	31(10.4)	47(15.8)	77(25.8)	89(29.9)	18(6.0)	4.489
35/Asking Questions	17(5.7)	21(7.0)	27(9.1)	51(17.1)	67(22.5)	94(31.5)	21(7.0)	4.487
36/Summarizing	15(5.0)	18(6.0)	32(10.7)	47(15.8)	85(28.5)	71(23.8)	30(10.1)	4.425
37/Course Grading	15(5.0)	8(2.7)	32(10.7)	42(14.1)	88(29.5)	92(30.9)	21(7.0)	4.646

TABLE 13 (cont.)

Item/GA Experience	1 Totally	Adequacy Rating With Percentage				Totally	No Response	Mean
		Inadequate 2	3	4	Adequate 5	6		
38/Writing Test								
Questions	19(6.4)	20(6.7)	30(10.1)	51(17.1)	82(27.5)	69(23.2)	27(9.1)	4.343
39/Defining Course								
Objectives	49(16.4)	31(10.4)	31(10.4)	59(19.8)	49(16.4)	50(16.8)	29(9.7)	3.662
40/Library	50(16.8)	36(12.1)	31(10.4)	43(14.4)	46(15.4)	48(16.1)	44(14.8)	3.563
41/Field								
Exercises	92(30.9)	37(12.4)	26(8.7)	29(9.7)	21(7.0)	17(5.7)	76(25.5)	2.554
42/Overall	14(4.7)	26(8.7)	29(9.7)	64(21.5)	82(27.5)	69(23.2)	14(4.7)	4.342

respondents rated this experience in the adequate range. Six respondents (2 percent) did not address this item.

The value of instructional training programs was one of the key questions within this study. Respondents were asked in item 28 to express their perceptions of adequacy concerning training programs in instruction while they served as graduate teaching assistants. Fifty-nine percent felt that this experience was inadequate in varying degrees. Thirty-four respondents (11.4 percent) did not respond to this question.

The next 13 items on the questionnaire referred to those experiences treated in items 13-25 as teaching activities performed during each term. Here, respondents were asked to evaluate their perceptions of the adequacy of those experiences in terms of preparation for college classroom teaching. Their responses were linked to the responses in items 13-25 and these comparisons are discussed in the analysis section.

Item 29, lecturing, was generally perceived as an adequate experience by 60.4 percent of the respondents. Twenty-three respondents (7.7 percent) did not rate this item.

Audio-visual enhancement was the subject for item 30 on the survey questionnaire. Respondents were asked to evaluate the adequacy of their experience with audio-visual enhancement as it applied to preparation for

teaching in the college classroom. Almost half (49.3 percent) of the respondents felt this item was inadequate and a large number (44) did not respond at all to this item.

Item 31 dealt with evaluating and grading papers and respondents were again asked to score their perceptions of adequacy of this experience. Two hundred and thirty-two (77 percent) of the responses rated this as an adequate experience to some degree. There were 23 respondents who did not rate this area.

Conducting research was evaluated for adequacy by the respondents in item 32. Over half (56.3 percent) perceived this as an adequate experience for preparation for the college classroom, even though 53.7 percent indicated in item 16 that they conducted research fewer than five times per term as a graduate teaching assistant. This is discussed further in the analysis section of this study. Again, there were 43 respondents who did not respond to this item on the survey questionnaire.

Interaction with students was the focus of item 33 of the survey questionnaire and 78.6 percent of all respondents perceived this as adequate preparation for college classroom teaching. There were 14 respondents who did not provide data for this item.

Item 34, conducting discussions, was perceived as adequate preparation for college classroom teaching by

71.5 percent of the respondents, while 18 respondents gave no response to this item on the survey questionnaire.

Item 35 dealt with the asking of questions in class by the graduate teaching assistant which led to the understanding of course goals among the students. Seventy-one percent of respondents perceived this experience to be adequate preparation for teaching in the college classroom. There were 21 respondents (7.0 percent) who did not respond to this question.

Item 36, summarizing, was perceived by 68.1 percent of the respondents as adequate preparation for teaching in the college classroom. Thirty (10 percent) respondents did not respond to this item.

Assigning grades based on student performance is a traditional teacher task addressed in item 37 of the survey questionnaire. Respondents generally perceived this was adequate preparation for the graduate teaching assistant as future college classroom teachers, as almost three-fourths (74.5 percent) rated this task as adequate. There were 21 respondents (7.0 percent) who gave no response to this item.

Writing questions for tests was another item perceived by respondents to be an adequate experience to prepare graduate teaching assistants for college classroom teaching as 202 (67.8 percent) rated item 38 of the survey

questionnaire in the adequate category. Twenty-seven respondents did not respond to this question.

Item 39 asked respondents to rate their perceptions of adequacy for defining course objectives as preparation for teaching in the college classroom. The result was a barely adequate rating for this experience as 111 (37.2 percent) respondents rated it as inadequate while 158 (53.0 percent) rated it as adequate. Twenty-nine respondents did not respond to item 39.

Using library resources and conducting field exercises as teaching activities were addressed by the survey questionnaire in items 40 and 41, respectively. Neither of these activities was popular enough among respondents to warrant a solid adequate rating. Using library resources was perceived as adequate by 45.9 percent of respondents and 44 (14.8 percent) did not respond to the question. One hundred and fifty-five (52 percent) perceived field exercises as inadequate while 76 (25.5 percent) of the respondents did not provide data.

The keynote of this section of the survey questionnaire and one of the most important ratings was item 42, the perceived overall evaluation of the graduate teaching assistantship experience regarding preparation for college teaching. Only 69 (23.2 percent) of all respondents perceived the experience as inadequate, while 215 (72.2 percent) of them perceived their graduate teaching

assistantship experience as adequate preparation for college classroom teaching. There were 14 respondents (4.7 percent) who did not give a rating.

The researcher conducted a second analysis using the CROSSTABS command on the SPSS-X program. Since the pivotal question of perceived overall adequacy of the graduate teaching assistantship experience regarding preparation for college teaching had resulted in a perception by graduate teaching assistants of adequacy, it was deemed necessary to compare this variable to others to determine if there were any statistically significant relationships.

Item 42, overall evaluation of the graduate teaching assistantship experience regarding preparation for college teaching, was crosstabulated with 5 other variables: length of the graduate teaching assistantship (item 5), participation in training program (item 7), availability of office (item 8A), private or shared office (item 8B), and chance for feedback with other teaching assistants (item 9).

In most cases, due to the large number of responses and categories, cells were collapsed in order to provide a more accurate representation of the data. In addition, the no response categories were eliminated from the cross-tabulation. The .05 level of significance was selected by the researcher to test each research question.

The first crosstabulation involved the overall evaluation (item 42) and length of assistantship (item 5) to test if there was any significant relationship between the ratings and the length of time the respondent served as a graduate teaching assistant. The ratings were collapsed as follows: Ratings of 1-2-3 in item 42 were collapsed into a rating of 1=Inadequate. Ratings of 4-5-6 in item 42 were collapsed into a rating of 2=Adequate.

This crosstabulation resulted in a chi square of 6.66169 with 3 degrees of freedom for a .0835 level of probability, indicating no statistical significance. Table 14 illustrates this crosstabulation.

The second crosstabulation compared the overall evaluation (item 42) with participation in training programs (item 7) by the respondents as graduate teaching assistants to determine if there was any significance, or if participation in a traditional training program resulted in significantly higher or lower perceptions of adequacy.

This crosstabulation resulted in no significant findings. The chi square was .49974 with 1 degree of freedom and a .4796 level of probability with the Yates correction. These data are illustrated in Table 15.

The third crosstabulation was performed between the overall evaluation and availability of an office, as item 42 was crosstabulated against item 8A. The chi square was

TABLE 14
CROSSTABULATION OF OVERALL EVALUATION WITH
LENGTH OF GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP

Ratings	Length of Assistantship				Row Total
	1 Less Than One Year	2 1-2.9 Years	3 3-4.9 Years	4 5+ Years	
Inadequate	10	20	24	8	62
1	16.1	32.3	38.7	12.9	22.4
	38.5	24.1	22.0	13.6	
Adequate	16	63	85	51	215
2	7.4	29.3	39.5	23.7	77.6
	61.5	75.9	78.0	86.4	
COLUMN	26	83	109	59	277
TOTAL	9.4	30.0	39.4	21.3	100.0

Chi square = 6.66169

DF = 3

Probability = .0835

TABLE 15

CROSSTABULATION OF OVERALL EVALUATION WITH PARTICIPATION
IN INSTRUCTIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS

Rating	Participation		Row Total
	1 Yes	2 No	
Inadequate	18	44	62
1	29.0	71.0	22.4
	19.4	23.9	
Adequate	75	140	215
2	34.9	65.1	77.6
	80.6	76.1	
COLUMN	93	184	277
TOTAL	33.6	66.4	100.0

Chi square = .49974 (Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .4796

Chi square = .73882 (Before Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .3900

1.75548 with 1 degree of freedom for a .1852 probability level with the Yates correction, as illustrated in Table 16, indicating no statistical significance.

The fourth crosstabulation produced a finding of statistical significance as item 42, overall evaluation, was compared to item 8B, private or shared office. When the cells were collapsed into two cells for adequate and inadequate, the chi square was calculated at 4.49424 with 1 degree of freedom for a .0340 level of significance with the Yates correction. These findings are illustrated in Table 17.

The fifth and final crosstabulation produced the most significant results of the survey as item 42, overall evaluation, was compared to item 9, the opportunity for feedback between graduate teaching assistants. This crosstabulation resulted in a .0013 level of significance for chi square with the Yates correction, indicating a strong relationship between these two variables, and is illustrated in Table 18.

Continuing the analysis of the overall evaluation of the graduate teaching assistantship experience by the respondents, the researcher conducted a third statistical test of item 42 and the two variables which had produced statistically significant results in the chi square test: type office accommodations (private or shared) and opportunity for feedback with other graduate teaching

TABLE 16
CROSSTABULATION OF OVERALL EVALUATION WITH
OFFICE AVAILABILITY

Rating	Office Availability		Row Total
	Yes 1	No 2	
Inadequate 1	53 85.5 21.1	9 14.5 34.6	62 22.4
Adequate 2	198 92.1 78.9	17 7.9 65.4	215 77.6
COLUMN TOTAL	251 90.6	26 9.4	277 100

Chi square = 1.75548 (Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .1852

Chi square = 2.47146 (Before Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .1159

TABLE 17
CROSSTABULATION OF OVERALL EVALUATION WITH
PRIVATE OR SHARED OFFICE

Ratings	Type Office Accommodations		Row Total
	Private 1	Shared 2	
Inadequate	1	51	52
1	1.9	98.1	21.3
	3.7	23.5	
Adequate	26	166	192
2	13.5	86.5	78.7
	96.3	76.5	
COLUMN	27	217	244
TOTAL	11.1	88.9	100.0

Chi square = 4.49424 (Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .0340

Chi square = 5.61278 (Before Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .0178

TABLE 18
CROSSTABULATION OF OVERALL EVALUATION WITH
FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITIES

Ratings	Feedback Opportunities		Row Total
	Yes 1	No 2	
Inadequate	42	20	62
1	67.7	32.3	22.4
	18.4	40.8	
Adequate	186	29	215
2	86.5	13.5	77.6
	81.6	59.2	
COLUMN	228	49	277
TOTAL	82.3	17.7	100.0

Chi square = 10.39034 (Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .0013

Chi square = 11.64376 (Before Yates Correction)

DF = 1

Probability = .0006

assistants. The statistical test used was the analysis of variance (ANOVA), with one-way and two-way interactions being performed. The results are illustrated in Table 19.

Using this two-way analysis, the comparison produced a statistically significant relationship of .003 between the overall perception of adequacy and type office accommodations, and a highly significant statistical relationship of .000 between the overall perception of adequacy and the opportunity for feedback with other graduate teaching assistants.

The final statistical tests involved the use of the Spearman Correlation Coefficient in order to detect any probable correlation between the frequency of performing teaching activities per term as a graduate teaching assistant and the perception of adequacy of those experiences as well as of the overall graduate teaching assistant experience. The results indicated probability in all categories, except for use of audio-visuals, assigning grades, use of the library, and conducting field exercises. The results are contained in Table 20.

The Spearman test was also applied to the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience and the three measures of adequacy for faculty observation/supervision, interaction with other graduate teaching assistants, and instructional training programs,

TABLE 19
ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE (ANOVA) OF OVERALL PERCEPTION OF
ADEQUACY, TYPE OFFICE ACCOMMODATION,
AND OPPORTUNITY FOR FEEDBACK

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Probability
Type Office Accommodation	2.094	2	1.047	6.014	.003
Residual	49.961	287	.174		
Total	52.055	289	.190		
Opportunity for Feedback	2.109	1	2.109	12.687	.000
Residual	47.718	287	.166		
Total	49.827	288	.173		
Opportunity for Feedback	1.792	1	1.792	10.855	.001
Type Office Accommodation	1.134	2	.567	3.434	.034
2-Way Interactions	.276	2	.138	.836	.435
Residual	45.406	275	.165		
Total	48.875	280	.175		

TABLE 20

SPEARMAN'S CORRELATION COEFFICIENT: TEACHING ACTIVITIES
AND PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY

Teaching Activity	Teaching Activity Adequacy (N)	(R)	Overall GTA Adequacy (N)	(R)
Lecturing	268	.4708	290	.1862
Audio/Visual	250	.4659	290	.0014*
Evaluating/Grading Papers	270	.1923	290	.1042
Research	238	.5290	269	.1322
Interacting with Students	280	.4421	293	.1847
Discussions	274	.4709	291	.1615
Asking Questions	271	.5328	291	.3109
Summarizing	262	.5112	288	.2236
Writing Questions	265	.3593	290	.1599
Assigning Grades	272	.2280	290	.0924*
Defining Objectives	264	.4705	290	.1962
Library Usage	249	.4139	291	.0774*
Conducting Field Exercises	219	.4339	292	.0012*

*Not Significant
All other R's significant at the .05 level

all of which resulted in statistically significant relationships, as shown in Table 21.

It must be noted that the findings of significance, or probability, in this analysis are subject to an interpretation made by Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1972), based on sample size, in which it was pointed out that findings of statistical significance do not necessarily point to practical significance. Although a statistical probability may exist, there may not be a very high correlation, based on the coefficient stated. The finding that the Spearman's Rho is both positive and significant leads one to conclude that the ratings of adequacy are based upon the frequency with which the teaching activities were performed (Ary, Jacobs, & Razevieh, 1972, p. 301).

Summary of Findings

Research Question Number One

Did the graduate teaching assistantship experience provide the new faculty member with a perception of adequacy required for teaching in the college classroom? Seventy-two percent of the respondents felt that their graduate teaching assistant experience was adequate in terms of preparing them for the college classroom, as indicated in the response to item 42 on the questionnaire.

TABLE 21
SPEARMAN CORRELATION TEST FOR SIGNIFICANCE BETWEEN
OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ADEQUACY OF GTA
EXPERIENCE AND NON-TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Activity	Coefficient	Number	Significance
Faculty Observation/ Supervision	.3810	283	.000
Interaction with GTAs	.4167	292	.000
Training Programs	.2960	264	.000

Research Question Number Two

What graduate teaching assistant experiences were perceived as statistically significant in preparing the new college faculty member for teaching in the classroom? Statistically significant relationships were found to exist between the overall perception of adequacy and the type of office accommodations (private or shared) and the opportunity for feedback with other graduate teaching assistants.

Research Question Number Three

Were there any statistically significant relationships between the perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience and the length of the graduate teaching assistantship? No statistically significant relationship was found to exist between these two variables.

Research Question Number Four

Was there a statistically significant relationship between the perception of adequacy required for teaching in the college classroom and participation in graduate teaching assistant training programs? No statistically significant relationship was found to exist between these two variables.

Research Question Number Five

Were there any statistically significant relationships between the number of times per term which a teaching activity was performed and the perception of adequacy of that activity in preparing graduate teaching assistants for the college classroom? Statistically significant relationships were found to exist between the number of times per term all thirteen activities considered by the survey were performed by the respondents and the corresponding perception of adequacy.

Research Question Number Six

Were there any statistically significant relationships between the number of times per term which a teaching activity was performed and the overall perception of adequacy in preparing graduate teaching assistants for the college classroom? Statistically significant relationships were found to exist between the number of times per term the activities of lecturing, discussions, asking questions in class, summarizing, writing questions for tests, and defining course objectives were performed and the overall perception of adequacy, but not between the activities of audio-visual enhancement, assigning grades, using library resources, and conducting field exercises and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

Response to this survey was 80 percent, although 11 questionnaires were not usable, resulting in a 77 percent return rate for most items. The high rate of return was probably due to the involvement of the deans' offices at the 23 institutions which participated in the survey, especially if the dean took an active role in monitoring the return rate of the faculty.

Question 10, "What was the total number of classes for which you had instructional responsibility during your assistantship experience?" was evidently not clear to some respondents, since answers ranged from 0 to 42. The mean response of 8.257 classes seems credible for a 2-3 year assistantship, but 29 responses indicating only 2 classes might mean that respondents taught the same 2 classes per term but actually were responsible for a total of 8-12 classes during their assistantship. This potential discrepancy did not arise during the pilot study.

A second incidence of possible confusion arose in items 26-41, in which respondents rated their perception of adequacy of experiences while working as a graduate teaching assistant. The large number of "no response" for item 28 (34) instructional training programs, item 29 (23) lecturing, item 30 (44) audio-visual enhancement, item 32 (43) research, item 36 (30) summarizing, item 40 (44)

using library resources, and item 41 (76) conducting field exercises, possibly resulted from respondents who had not been exposed to those particular experiences. The researcher had assumed that respondents would consider non-applicable experiences to be totally inadequate and would rate them as such. A specific remark to that effect should have been included in the instructions for rating those items on the survey questionnaire, or a non-applicable response used.

The remainder of this analysis and interpretation focuses upon the findings as they relate to the research questions. As stated, the purpose of the study was to assess the perception of a cross-section of new academic faculty with terminal degrees to determine if their pre-doctoral graduate teaching assistant experiences provided them with a perception of an adequate level of competence necessary for college teaching. A secondary purpose was to probe the nature of these experiences to determine what impact they were perceived to have on the development of graduate students as higher education classroom teachers.

As to the question of whether or not the graduate teaching assistantship experiences provided respondents with an overall perception of adequacy for college classroom teaching (research question number one), the answer was "yes" in both the pilot study and this study. The perception of adequacy increased from 69.2 percent of the

pilot study respondents to 72.2 percent of the survey respondents in this study. The statistical analysis showing a mean response of 4.342 revealed that respondents believed their graduate teaching assistantship experiences to be adequate in preparing them for the classroom. (See Table 13, Item 42, p. 59).

These findings are based on the perspectives of recent doctoral graduates with only a few years' experience in the classroom who are still close enough to graduate teaching assistant experiences to evaluate the impact of them upon their performance in the classroom. It was not an evaluation of how well the classroom teachers are doing now, but a measure of individual perceptions of how adequate their preparation was.

If respondents believed their experiences were adequate overall, which of these experiences provided significantly greater value than the others (research question number two)? The respondents indicated two experiences were in this category--(1) sharing an office with other graduate teaching assistants, and (2) the opportunity for feedback about teaching with other graduate teaching assistants. The ideal graduate teaching assistantships then, in terms of preparation for college classroom teaching, in the eyes of the new faculty, would seem to be one during which the assistant would share an office with

other graduate teaching assistants and engage in conversations about teaching at every opportunity.

Although it may be logical to assume that the more time spent as a graduate teaching assistant, the greater the impact that experience would have on preparation for the classroom, the findings of research question number three showed no statistically significant relationship between the perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistantship experience and the length of the assistantship. As seen in Table 4 (p. 33), the length of respondents' assistantships ranged from less than one year to five years or more.

The researcher specifically attempted to determine the nature of individual training programs for graduate teaching assistants and to determine if there was a correlation between instructional training programs and respondent perceptions of adequacy in research question number four. The discovery was that there was a broad mixture of approaches to instructional training programs for assistants, some formal, some informal, of various duration and at different institutional levels, but the participation in these programs had no significant impact upon the overall evaluation of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience in terms of perceptions of preparation for the college classroom. (See Table 15, p. 68). This is not to deny the value of existing training

programs, for the need for them is adequately documented in the literature, but their perceptions were that the impact upon preparation for college classroom teaching is not significant.

The summarized comments in Appendix D (p. 121) demonstrate the wide variety of instructional training programs offered to graduate teaching assistants.

Items 13-25 of the survey questionnaire addressed how often within a term respondents participated in thirteen teaching activities which were identified in the Diamond and Gray study and in other research as activities of teaching in which graduate teaching assistants needed more training. Research question number five sought to discover if there were any statistical relationships between the frequency per term of participating in these activities and the corresponding perceptions of adequacy for each activity in items 29-41 of the survey questionnaire, which gave respondents the opportunity to rate the adequacy of these same teaching activities. Those that received clearly adequate ratings were: (1) lecturing, (2) evaluating and grading papers, (3) research, (4) interacting with students, (5) conducting discussions, (6) asking questions in class, (7) summarizing, (8) assigning grades, and (9) writing questions for tests.

One might assume that a perception of adequacy may be linked to the number of times per term a particular

experience is repeated. Table 20 (p. 75) referred to in the Findings section illustrates that there is a statistically significant relationship between the two.

While two of the items, interacting with students and asking questions in class, are clearly tasks which would be performed more frequently per term, probably almost daily, there were two others which were also logically performed much less frequently, assigning grades and writing questions for tests. The interpretation was made that the rating of adequacy pertaining to common teaching activities was dependent upon having performed those tasks at least 6-10 times per term. This is important to note, since the mean percentage of time devoted to teaching during the graduate teaching assistantship (item 12) was 36.5 percent of their time as a graduate teaching assistant.

The final research question sought to examine the relationship between how often teaching activities were performed per term and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience. All of the teaching activities were found to be statistically significant except audio-visual enhancement, assigning grades, using library resources, and conducting field exercises.

It must be assumed that the four teaching activities which did not contribute significantly to the overall perception of adequacy were those which were perceived not

to have been performed very frequently during a term. The activity of assigning grades hovers along the borderline of frequency and adequacy, indicated by the adequate rating received with a mean rating of 4.646 in Table 13 (p. 59), a median frequency of 1-5 times per term performed in Table 12 (p. 53), and a significant Spearman Correlation Coefficient in Table 20 (p. 75).

This leads to the remaining three non-teaching experiences which were evaluated for a perception of adequacy by the respondents in items 26-28: faculty observation/supervision of teaching, interaction with other graduate teaching assistants, and instructional training programs. Each of these was found to have a significant statistical relationship with the overall perception of adequacy in item 42.

Faculty observation/supervision of teaching was perceived as inadequate by the respondents (Table 13, p. 59), which echoed the frustration of graduate teaching assistants discovered in the literature. Fifty-one percent of the respondents assigned inadequate scores to this experience, which validates the aforementioned findings of the literature.

Although this experience was a disappointment in the view of more than half of the respondents, it nevertheless was considered an important factor in the development of graduate teaching assistants as teachers, which is

reflected in the significant statistical correlation of .000 in Table 21 (p. 77) when compared to the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

Faculty observation/supervision may also be termed "mentoring," a concept mentioned several times by respondents as vital to their professional development. "One of the main objectives of the degree program," wrote one respondent, "was to prepare candidates for college teaching positions. Course work included practice teaching assignments which were critiqued by peers and the major professor. Seminar discussions centered around curriculum design. Teaching for the assistantship was carefully supervised and critiqued."

Another wrote that, "faculty and experienced graduate students read our students' work and our comments and grades and discussed those with us." One respondent noted that, "my mentor gave me a long 'pep talk' with some valuable guidance from him and from others about things I would need to know." The mentoring concept is discussed further in the recommendations portion of this study.

The significance of interaction with other graduate students has been discussed previously in this section. Not only was the opportunity for feedback with other graduate teaching assistants considered important, but the adequacy rating was statistically significant at a level

of .000 in Table 21 (p. 77) when tested with the Spearman Correlation Coefficient against the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

The adequacy of instructional training programs was rated by the respondents as inadequate, as indicated by the mean rating of 2.705 in Table 13 (p. 59). There was also no statistical significance of adequacy; however, the Spearman Correlation Coefficient produced a significance of .000 when comparing adequacy of training programs to the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience in item 42. (See Table 21, p. 77).

The finding indicates that, like faculty observation/supervision, the experience is a disappointment to most respondents, but is nevertheless considered an important factor in the development of graduate teaching assistants as teachers. Training programs were discussed previously in this section, as well.

Summary of Important Findings

There were four statistically significant findings resulting from this study.

1. There was a statistically significant relationship between sharing an office with other graduate teaching assistants during the graduate teaching assistantship

and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

2. There was a statistically significant relationship between the opportunity for feedback with peers and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

3. There was a statistically significant relationship between the number of times a teaching activity was performed by the graduate teaching assistant and the perception of adequacy of that activity in preparing graduate teaching assistants for the college classroom.

4. There was a statistically significant relationship between the number of times a teaching activity was performed by the graduate teaching assistant and the overall perception of adequacy of the graduate teaching assistant experience.

Several findings are also of practical importance to the preparation of graduate teaching assistants for eventual teaching in the college classroom and are further addressed in the recommendations of this study.

1. Of the 298 new faculty responding to the survey, 72 percent perceived that the graduate teaching assistant experience was adequate in preparing them for teaching in the college classroom.

2. Other than interacting with other graduate teaching assistants, a majority of respondents also

reported adequate experiences to be: (1) lecturing, (2) evaluating/grading papers, (3) research, (4) interaction with students, (5) conducting discussions, (6) asking questions in class, (7) summarizing, (8) assigning grades, and (9) writing questions for tests.

3. Of the total respondents, 54 percent assigned inadequate scores to faculty observation/supervision of teaching, and 59 percent perceived that instructional training programs were inadequate as preparation for teaching in the college classroom.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this final chapter of the study, a summary of the research and findings, conclusions from the findings, and recommendations for improving the preparation of graduate teaching assistants for teaching in the college classroom are presented.

Summary

Although graduate teaching assistants and various academic study groups have been concerned about the preparation of graduate teaching assistants for teaching in the college classroom for many years, no national survey of currently employed doctoral faculty had been undertaken prior to this study to determine if they perceived their graduate teaching assistant experience to be adequate preparation for college classroom teaching. This study set out to measure the perception of new faculty to determine if their graduate teaching assistant experiences provided them with an adequate level of competence for college teaching and probed the nature of those experiences to determine their impact.

Based on the findings of a pilot study, a survey questionnaire was mailed through the deans of liberal arts at 23 large, four-year institutions within the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to 386 doctoral faculty members with from one to five years' experience teaching in the college classroom. Faculty members were asked to complete this 42 item questionnaire, which was designed to assess the perceptions of adequacy of their graduate teaching assistant experiences as preparation for teaching in the college classroom. Comments regarding the survey or their graduate teaching assistant experiences were also requested. Three hundred and nine (80 percent) responses were received, of which 298 (77 percent) were completely usable for purposes of the survey.

An analysis of the data revealed that 72.2 percent of the total respondents perceived their graduate teaching assistantship experience was adequate in preparing them for teaching in the college classroom. After subjecting the data to crosstabulation to determine any potential chi square, ANOVA, or Spearman's Correlation significance, statistically significant relationships were found to exist between the overall evaluation of graduate teaching assistantship experience and the availability of an office shared with other graduate teaching assistants, the opportunity for feedback about teaching with other graduate teaching assistants, and the number of times per term that

certain teaching activities were performed. In addition, a statistically significant relationship was found to exist between the number of times per term that certain teaching activities were performed and the corresponding perception of adequacy of those experiences.

Conclusions

Based on published research in the relevant literature reviewed in Chapter II, and the findings of the survey the following conclusions and recommendations are suggested.

Perception of Adequacy of Graduate Assistantship Experience

Based upon the findings of this study, new faculty perceive their experiences as a graduate teaching assistant to be adequate preparation for teaching in the college classroom, especially those teacher tasks which are repeated frequently while actually engaged in the teaching role, such as lecturing, conducting discussions, asking questions in class, and interacting with students. Respondents placed great value upon interacting with other graduate teaching assistants, talking about teaching, sharing ideas and discussing feedback, in an office environment shared with peers.

Even though the conventional, traditional view of graduate teaching assistants as overworked and underpaid trainees runs through the literature, the new faculty member appears to perceive that they have benefited from it. Whether those same faculty will eventually perpetuate the traditional view of graduate teaching assistants by subjecting succeeding generations to similar experiences is a subject for another study.

The Impact of Instructional Training Programs

It was suggested that instructional training programs should be beneficial to graduate teaching assistants in familiarizing them with the methods of teaching, thus eliminating any sort of crisis of confidence students may have felt from never having taught. This, however, was not the case. Respondents indicated that such programs did not enhance their perceptions of adequacy. Perhaps this was due to the wide variety of programs being conducted when serving as graduate teaching assistants. Every imaginable approach at all institutional levels, from university-wide to departmental, was listed among the respondent questionnaires.

While this finding seems counter to current trends in graduate teaching assistant training, it must be remembered that respondents indicated that on the average they devoted only 36 percent of their total time to teaching.

If the instructional training programs fall short of totally preparing graduate teaching assistants for the classroom, it may be because teaching is only expected of them 36 percent of their time. Training programs can be expensive and time-consuming and current budgets may not allow more than a minimum treatment.

Related to this is the use of faculty to observe and supervise graduate teaching assistant teaching. Generally, the respondents felt this practice was inadequate, not because it is not a good idea, but because institutions appear to be lacking in the knowledge of or interest in how to go about preparing graduate teaching assistants. While the concept of mentorship is now a popular one, it appears to happen more by accident than by design. When the right mentor/apprentice relationship is struck, it becomes a memorable and valuable learning experience for the graduate teaching assistant, as well as the mentor.

Recommendations

Given the findings of this study and the literature associated with the topic, the following recommendations are offered to universities, graduate teaching assistants, and future researchers:

1. The graduate teaching assistant experience is perceived by new faculty as adequate preparation for

teaching in the college classroom, despite the literature which questions the current experience. Some aspects of the experience seem meaningless, while other aspects are perceived as meaningful. It is recommended that follow-up studies be conducted which continue to probe the nature of the graduate teaching assistant experience from the standpoint of new faculty, especially concerning their perceptions of the effectiveness of the graduate teaching assistant experiences in the areas of, (1) the current nature of graduate teaching assistant training programs and their impact upon the effectiveness of preparing future college faculty, (2) the impact of the length of the graduate teaching assistantship upon the preparation for college classroom teaching in particular and the graduate teaching assistant in general, and (3) the lessons learned as GTAs by new faculty which would enable this research to move from perceptions to reality. It would be helpful if university personnel data bases would begin to record information from personnel files dealing with graduate teaching assistantship experiences.

2. Sharing an office with peers and being exposed to opportunities for feedback about teaching from peers and supervisors are perceived by new faculty as significant graduate teaching assistant experiences in preparation for college classroom teaching. It is recommended that graduate teaching assistants be regularly involved in

feedback seminars at the college/school level led by experienced faculty members during which peers discuss classroom teaching issues and problems and the group offers solutions. These seminars should be ongoing throughout each term and be as informal as possible, with the additional recommendation that course credit be offered the graduate teaching assistant for participation in the seminar.

Further, office accommodations for graduate teaching assistants must include consideration for sharing office space with other assistants. It is in the best interest of the development of all graduate teaching assistants as potential faculty members that they be afforded the maximum opportunity to share and discuss ideas about teaching with their colleagues. Comments from new faculty indicate an informal "commons area" facilitated feedback opportunities, also.

3. Training programs for graduate teaching assistants are not generally perceived as effective, especially if they are of one or two days duration. They are not considered by new faculty to enhance the development of the graduate teaching assistant as a future faculty member, although they may be effective as introductions to the institution or department.

It is recommended that graduate teaching assistant training programs be conducted at the college/school level and afford graduate teaching assistants the opportunity to learn about teaching activities, to include use of audio-visual equipment to enhance classroom teaching, the availability of library resources to augment the course materials, and the value of accompanying students on visits to sites external to the classroom which may enrich the understanding of course goals, as well as lecturing, evaluating and grading papers, conducting research, interacting with students, conducting informal classroom discussions, asking questions in class, summarizing, writing questions for tests, assigning grades, and defining course objectives. To get the most from a training program, it should be offered for credit to graduate teaching assistants and must be led by experienced faculty, with a genuine interest in quality classroom teaching, who are examples of excellence in their profession.

4. Classroom teaching duties for graduate teaching assistants must be carefully monitored to afford the graduate teaching assistant the maximum opportunity to participate in the tasks of teaching while recognizing the graduate teaching assistant's other role as graduate student. It is recommended that a guideline of no more than 45 percent of the graduate teaching assistant's time be devoted to duties directly associated with college

classroom teaching. This amount of time is necessary in order for the graduate teaching assistant to prepare for a role as a college faculty member, but allows for the accomplishment of tasks associated with obtaining the doctoral degree.

5. Faculty observation/supervision of graduate teaching assistants is perceived to be inadequate overall. It is recommended that the following steps be taken to improve this situation:

(1) Centers of Teaching Excellence and Colleges of Education could work together to create a development program which would enable experienced faculty to become effective mentors. Some of the characteristics of good and bad mentoring relationships may be found in the study by Johnsrud (1990).

(2) Experienced faculty with a record of consistently high student evaluation scores should be singled out for involvement in the development program to train them in the tasks of effective mentorship.

(3) Once familiarized with the skills of mentorship, these faculty could be allowed to review the records of available graduate teaching assistants and select an apprentice to serve as his or her graduate teaching assistant.

6. As graduate teaching assistants learn from their experiences in the classroom about effective teaching,

their undergraduate students may be the victims of a trial and error system which undermines quality education at the undergraduate level. Although recommendation number three above gives institutions an opportunity to train graduate teaching assistants outside the classroom, there is still concern that initial efforts of graduate teaching assistants will affect the most untrained of "learners." It is recommended that follow-up studies address the impact of graduate teaching assistants as apprentice classroom teachers upon the audience of undergraduates serving as their training ground.

REFERENCES

REFERENCES

- Alford, R. L. (1982). The training and professional preparation of teaching assistants in southeastern modern language departments. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida State University.
- Ansah, S. L. (1979). The instructional activities of graduate teaching assistants at SIU-C. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.
- Ary, D., Jacobs, L., & Razavieh, A. (1972). Introduction to research in education. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston.
- Association of American Colleges. (1985). Integrity in the college classroom: A report to the academic community. Washington, DC.
- Barella, R. V. (1976). Graduate service assistants: A research report. Muncie, IN: Ball State University.
- Bennett, W. J. (1984, November). To reclaim a legacy: A report on the humanities in higher education. Washington, DC: National Endowment for the Humanities.
- Berger, J. (1989, April 28). Report criticizes state of teaching at nation's colleges. Chattanooga Times, p. F2.
- Bernstein, H. R. (1976). Manual for teaching. Ithaca, NY: The Center for Improvement of Undergraduate Education, Cornell University.
- Bloom, A. (1986). The closing of the American mind. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Boehrer, J., & Sarkisian, E. (1985, June). The teaching assistant's point of view, strengthening the teaching assistant faculty. In J. D. W. Andrews (Ed.), New directions for teaching and learning (pp. 7-20). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bok, D. (1986). Higher learning. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Boyer, E. L. (1987). The undergraduate experience in America. New York: Harper and Row.

- Brinko, K. T. (1985, June). TA perceptions of the effectiveness of the TA program at Northwestern University. Unpublished manuscript. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University.
- Busovne, B. J. (1970). Orientation to teaching and role conflict of graduate teaching assistants. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Pennsylvania State University.
- Carnegie Foundation for Advancement of Teaching. (1987, July 8). Carnegie Foundation's classifications of more than 3,300 institutions of higher education. Chronicle of Higher Education, 33(43), 22-30.
- Cartiere, R. (1989, May 4). Graduate teaching assistants walk out to press demands. Chattanooga Times, p. A9.
- Chism, N. V. N. (Ed.). (1987). Institutional responsibilities and responses in the employment and education of teaching assistants. Columbus, OH: Center for Teaching Excellence of the Ohio State University.
- Chronicle four-year college databook. (1990). Moravia, NY: Chronicle Guidance Publications, Inc.
- Commission on Colleges. (1991). Member List. Decatur, GA: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- Daloz, L. A. (1986). Effective teaching and mentoring: realizing the transformational power of adult learning. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Davis, H., & Alexander, T. (1977). The lecture method. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Michigan State University.
- Davis, J. R. (1976). Teaching strategies for the college classroom. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Diamond, R. M., & Gray, P. J. (1987, November 21-24). A national study of teaching assistants. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Baltimore, MD.
- Diamond, R. M., & Gray, P. J. (1987). National study of teaching assistants. Syracuse: Center for Instructional Development, Syracuse University.

- Douchette, D. S. (1982). Higher education in the United States. Bucharest, Rumania: European Centre for Higher Education.
- Eble, K. E. (1976). The craft of teaching. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ericksen, S. (1984). The essence of good teaching: Helping students learn and remember what they learn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Ford, M. L. (1983). Excellence in teaching. Improving College and University Teaching, 31(3), 137-141.
- Gleason, J. F. (1973). Relationships between role perceptions and expectations of graduate teaching assistants at Arizona State University. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Arizona State University.
- Goodwin, S. S. (1982). The use of global and specific items in evaluating teaching in a teaching assistant training program. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.
- Groulund, N. E. (1978). Stating objectives for classroom instruction. New York: Macmillan.
- Gullette, M. M. (Ed.). (1984). The art and craft of teaching. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Guralnik, D. B. (Ed.). (1980). Webster's new world dictionary, second college edition. Cleveland, OH: William Collins Publishers, Inc.
- Gurbach, T. W. (1973). Graduate teaching assistant functions in industrial education programs. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University.
- Habel, J., Pendleton-Parker, B., & Brinko, K. T. (1988, Winter). Peer instructional consultation: TAs helping TAs. Teaching-Learning Issues, 61. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, The University of Tennessee.
- Havell, D. C. (1987). Statistical methods for psychology (2nd ed.). Boston: Duxbury Press.
- Heller, M., & Sindelar, N. W. (1991). Developing an effective teacher mentor program. Phi Delta Kappa Fastback, 319, 7-23.

Hite, L. M. (1985, January). Female doctoral students: Their perceptions and concerns. Journal of College Student Personnel, 26, 18-22.

Humphreys, W. L. (1985, 1986, 1987). Collected notes on teaching and learning, I, II, and III. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, UTK.

Humphreys, W. L., & Wickersham, B. (Eds.). (1987, September). A handbook of resources for new instructors at UTK from the Learning Research Center. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, University of Tennessee.

Involvement in learning: Realizing the potential of American higher education. (1984, October). Washington, DC: Study Group on the Conditions of Excellence in American Higher Education, National Institute of Education/U.S. Department of Education.

Johnsrud, L. K. (1990, Winter). Mentor relationships: Those that help and those that hinder. New Directions in Higher Education, 72, 57-66.

McNally, J. L. (1966). The instructional role of the graduate teaching assistant at Michigan State University. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University.

Milton, O. (1973). Alternatives to the traditional. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Milton, O. (1969). Teaching assistants: A beleaguered lot. Teaching Learning Issues, 10, 1-4. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, The University of Tennessee.

Nowlis, V. (1968). The graduate student as teacher. Washington: American Council on Education.

Pickering, M. (1983). Should teaching assistants be asked to play the part of Socrates? The Chronicle of Higher Education, pp. 88-89.

Redmond, M. B., & Clark, D. (1982). A practical approach to improving teaching. American Association for Higher Education Bulletin, 34, 8-10.

- Rodriguez, R. N. (1982). An evaluation of a training program to improve the teaching performance of graduate teaching assistants at Washington State University. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Washington State University.
- Sanders, N. M. (1966). Classroom questions: What kinds. New York: Harper and Row.
- Sands, R. G., et al. (1991, March/April). Faculty mentoring faculty in a public university. Journal of Higher Education, 62, 179-193.
- Science for non-specialists: The college years. (1982). Report of the National Research Council's Committee on a Study of the Federal Role in College Science Education of Non-Specialists. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Segal, R. (1979, September 24). What is good teaching and why is there so little of it? Chronicle of Higher Education, 25(65), 18-22.
- Shaeffer, J. M., McGill, L. T., & Menges, R. J. (1984). Impediments to graduate teaching assistants' effectiveness: An attributable analysis. Paper presented at the Tenth International Conference on Improving University Teaching, College Park, MD.
- Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. (1992). Graduate teaching assistants. Criteria for accreditation commission on colleges, 4.4.4., 40-41.
- The gift of teaching. (1986). Perspective, 13(3). West Lafayette, IN: Office of Publications, Purdue University.
- Torregrosa, C. H. (Ed.). (1990). The HEP higher education directory. Falls Church, VA: Higher Education Publications, Inc.
- Tubb, G. W. (1974). Heuristic questioning and problem-solving strategies in mathematics graduate teaching assistants and their students. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Texas A & M University.
- Weimer, M. G. (1988, Fall). Successful participation strategies. The GTA at UTK, 3(1), 1-2. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, UTK.
- Whitman, N. (1987, Winter). Choosing and using methods of teaching. The GTA at UTK, 1(3), 1-2, 6. Knoxville, TN: Learning Research Center, UTK.

- Wilde, J. B., & Schau, C. G. (1991, Winter). Mentoring in graduate schools of education: Mentee's perceptions. Journal of Experimental Education, 59, 165-179.
- Wise, W. M. (1967). Who teaches the teachers? In C. B. T. Lee (Ed.), Improving college teaching (pp. 77-89). Washington, DC: American Council on Education.
- Worthen, T. K. (1988). A multi-disciplinary annotated bibliography on graduate teaching assistants. Champagne-Urbana, Illinois: The University of Illinois.
- Wright, D. L. (1981, April 13-17). Integrating a GTA training program with faculty development. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Los Angeles, CA, University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Yoder, D. D., & Hugenberg, L. M. (1980, November 13-16). A survey of in-service teacher training programs for graduate teaching assistants in basic communication courses. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association, New York, Ohio State University.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONDENT BACKGROUND INSTITUTIONS
BY LOCATION AND TYPE

State	Institution	Type	# Respondents
Alabama	Univ of Alabama	Pu	4
Arizona	Univ of Arizona	Pu	3
Arkansas	Univ of Arkansas	Pu	1
California	Stanford University	Pr	4
	Univ of California -		
	Berkely	Pu	10
	Davis	Pu	2
	Irvine	Pu	1
	Los Angeles	Pu	3
	Riverside	Pu	1
	Santa Cruz	Pu	1
	Univ of Southern CA	Pr	1
Colorado	Univ of Colorado	Pu	1
	Univ of Denver	Pr	2
Connecticut	Univ of Connecticut	Pu	1
	Yale University	Pr	5
Delaware	Univ of Delaware	Pu	1
District of Columbia	Georgetown Univ	Pr	1
Florida	Florida State Univ	Pu	7
	Univ of Florida	Pu	4
	Univ of South Florida	Pu	1
Georgia	Emory University	Pr	1
	Georgia Institute of Technology	Pu	2
	Univ of Georgia	Pu	4
Hawaii	Univ of Hawaii	Pu	3
Illinois	Illinois Institute of Technology	Pr	1
	Northwestern Univ	Pr	3
	Southern Illinois Univ	Pu	2
	Univ of Chicago	Pr	3
	Univ of Illinois	Pu	9

*Pu = Public Funded

Pr = Private Funded

State	Institution	Type	# Respondents
Indiana	Indiana State Univ	Pu	1
	Indiana Univ	Pu	6
	Purdue University	Pu	6
Iowa	Univ of Iowa	Pu	6
Kansas	Kansas State Univ	Pu	1
	Univ of Kansas	Pu	5
Kentucky	Univ of Kentucky	Pu	7
Louisiana	Louisiana State Univ	Pu	3
	Tulane University	Pr	3
	Univ of Southwestern Louisiana	Pu	1
Maryland	Univ of Maryland	Pu	3
Massachusetts	Harvard University	Pr	3
	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Pr	1
	Univ of Massachusetts	Pu	5
Michigan	Michigan State Univ	Pu	2
	Univ of Michigan	Pu	10
	Western Michigan Univ	Pu	1
Minnesota	Univ of Minnesota	Pu	5
Mississippi	Univ of Southern Miss.	Pu	1
Missouri	Univ of Missouri at Columbia	Pu	3
	Washington University	Pr	1
New York	Columbia University	Pr	3
	Cornell University	Pr	5
	State Univ of New York Binghamton	Pu	1
	Buffalo	Pu	2
	Stonybrook	Pu	3
	Syracuse University	Pr	2
	Univ of Rochester	Pr	1
New Jersey	Princeton University	Pr	2
	Rutgers University	Pu	2

State	Institution	Type	# Respondents
North Carolina	Duke University	Pr	1
	Univ of NC-Chapel Hill	Pu	11
Ohio	Bowling Green State Univ	Pu	1
	Case Western Reserve Univ	Pr	3
	Kent State University	Pu	1
	Ohio State University	Pu	6
	Univ of Cincinnati	Pu	1
Oklahoma	Oklahoma State Univ	Pu	1
	Univ of Oklahoma	Pu	1
Pennsylvania	Carnegie Mellon Univ	Pr	3
	Penn State Univ	Pu	3
	Temple University	Pu	2
	Univ of Pennsylvania	Pr	9
	Univ of Pittsburgh	Pu	6
Rhode Island	Brown University	Pr	6
South Carolina	Clemson University	Pu	3
	Univ of South Carolina	Pu	2
Tennessee	Memphis State Univ	Pu	1
	Univ of TN, Knoxville	Pu	4
	Vanderbilt University	Pr	7
Texas	Rice University	Pr	3
	Sam Houston State Univ	Pu	2
	Texas A & M Univ	Pu	1
	Univ of North Texas	Pu	1
	Univ of Texas -		
	Austin	Pu	20
	Dallas	Pu	2
Utah	Univ of Utah	Pu	3
Virginia	Univ of Virginia	Pu	9
	Virginia Polytechnic and State Univ	Pu	2
Washington	Univ of Washington-Seattle	Pu	2
	Washington State Univ	Pu	2
Wisconsin	Univ of Wisconsin-Madison	Pu	5

State	Institution	Type	# Respondents
Wyoming	Univ of Wyoming	Pu	1
TOTALS 38 states; 92 institutions; 67 Pu (73%)/25 Pr (27%); 302 respondents (228 Pu [75%]; 74 Pr [25%])			

FOREIGN INSTITUTIONS

Country	Institution	# Respondents
Canada	Univ of Waterloo	1
Netherlands	Tilburg University	1
New Zealand	Univ of Canterbury	1
Switzerland	Univ of Zurich	1
United Kingdom	Leeds University	1
	Univ of Essex	1
	Univ of Warwick	1

TOTALS 5 countries; 7 foreign institutions; 7 respondents

APPENDIX B
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Survey of Teaching Experience of Recent Doctoral Graduates

PURPOSE: The purpose of this study is to assess the perceptions of a cross-section of former doctoral candidates to determine if their experience provided them with an adequate level of competence necessary for college teaching. Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return in the postage-paid envelope provided. The results of the survey, in composite form, will be available to those who return the questionnaire. Your responses will be held in strictest confidence. Thank you!

1. Institution at which you are now employed: _____
2. Employment Date ____/____/____ (Month/Date/Year) i.e. When you began teaching at the above Institution.
3. Current Teaching Area(s)? _____
4. What is the name of the institution where you were a doctoral candidate and held a graduate assistantship: _____
5. I held a graduate assistantship from ____/____ to ____/____ (Beginning Month/Year to Ending Month/Year)
6. I taught as a graduate assistant in the following area(s):
7. Some institutions have initiated training programs for college teachers. As a Graduate assistant did you participate in such a program? ____Yes ____No. If you answered yes, please describe the experience. Specifically focus on the following: required versus optional, typical format, and at what level, (departmental, college/school or institution-wide) was the program offered.
8. Did you have an Office? ____Yes ____No. If Yes, It was ____Private ____Shared.
9. Did you have the opportunity to share/discuss/receive feedback about your teaching experiences with other doctoral candidates who had teaching responsibilities? ____Yes ____No. If Yes, please briefly describe these experiences:
10. What was the total number of classes for which you had instructional responsibility during your assistantship experience? _____.
11. On the average, what percent of a student's grade were you responsible for? ____%
12. Approximately what percent of time did you devote to teaching during your graduate assistantship? ____%

While it is realized that it may be impossible to remember every detail or activity, please indicate approximately how often within a term (quarter, semester, etc.) you participated in the following activities or experiences. Please circle the appropriate number where (0 = NEVER) (1-5 = ONE TO FIVE TIMES PER TERM) (6-10 = SIX TO TEN TIMES PER TERM) (11-15 = 11 TO 15 TIMES PER TERM) (16-20 = 16 TO 20 TIMES PER TERM) AND (21+ = 21 OR MORE TIMES PER TERM).

13. LECTURING	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(Oral presentations to a class or group with little or no opportunity for student feedback)</i>						
14. AUDIO-VISUAL ENHANCEMENT.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(Using audio-visual equipment as a part of classroom presentation to enhance lecture)</i>						
15. EVALUATING AND GRADING PAPERS.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(evaluating written assignments from students,, providing effective feedback, and awarding a letter grade)</i>						
16. RESEARCH.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(investigating or experimenting to discover/interpret facts, revise accepted theories in light of new facts, or practical application of new/revised theories)</i>						
17. INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(answering student questions about the topics in the classroom to assist in the complete understanding of the material presented)</i>						
18. CONDUCTING DISCUSSIONS.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(conducting informal classroom discussions with students in which feedback is solicited concerning the course topic under consideration)</i>						
19. ASKING QUESTIONS IN CLASS	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(guiding students toward a teaching point by asking leading questions)</i>						
20. SUMMARIZING.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(re-stating the main points of a lecture or seminar)</i>						
21. WRITING QUESTIONS FOR TESTS.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(selecting test types and test questions which would accurately reflect students' knowledge of course material)</i>						
22. ASSIGNING GRADES	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(assigning a course grade to students based upon their performance during the term)</i>						
23. DEFINING COURSE OBJECTIVES.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(focusing upon the goal of a course and what is to be taught)</i>						
24. USING LIBRARY RESOURCES.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(coordinating with the university library for materials which enhance the course for students)</i>						
25. CONDUCTING FIELD EXERCISES.....	0	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21+
<i>(accompanying students on visits to sites external to the classroom which enhances achievement of course goal)</i>						

The following set of questions focus on a group of experiences that you may or may not have had during the time that you were a graduate assistant. We are interested in those that you feel in some way had or could have had an impact on your current college teaching. Please indicate how adequate these experiences were while you were a graduate assistant

	Totally Inadequate				Totally Adequate	
26. FACULTY OBSERVATION/SUPERVISION OF TEACHING.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. INTERACTION WITH OTHER GRADUATE ASSISTANTS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. INSTRUCTIONAL TRAINING PROGRAMS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. LECTURING.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. AUDIO-VISUAL ENHANCEMENT.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. EVALUATING AND GRADING PAPERS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. RESEARCH.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. INTERACTING WITH STUDENTS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. CONDUCTING DISCUSSIONS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. ASKING QUESTIONS IN CLASS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. SUMMARIZING.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. ASSIGNING GRADES.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. WRITING QUESTIONS FOR TESTS.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. DEFINING COURSE OBJECTIVES.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. USING LIBRARY RESOURCES.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. CONDUCTING FIELD EXERCISES.....	1	2	3	4	5	6
42. OVERALL EVALUATION OF ASSISTANTSHIP EXPERIENCE REGARDING PREPARATION FOR COLLEGE TEACHING.....	1	2	3	4	5	6

If you have any additional comments regarding your graduate assistantship experience or would like to comment on some other aspect(s) that we may have overlooked, please use the space provided below.

PLEASE READ AND SIGN THE STATEMENT BELOW REGARDING THE PROTECTION OF THE RIGHTS OF HUMAN SUBJECTS:

I hereby acknowledge that my completion of this survey signifies my informed consent to participate in this research project. In addition, I am assured anonymity and that data reported as a result of this survey will be presented in aggregate form and no attempt will be made to associate data provided with the specific institutions or individuals providing said data.

SIGNED: _____ DATE: _____

If you wish to receive a summary of the results of this survey please provide your name and mailing address below:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT.

MR. ALAN N. CLARK
UTK/UTC GRADUATE CENTER
105 Hunter Hall
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga
Chattanooga, TN 37403

☐ (615)755-4119

APPENDIX C
LETTER OF INQUIRY

Dean Arts and Sciences
ATTN: Dr. Richmond
University of South Florida
Tampa, FL 33620-6100

Dear Dean,

In the Fall of 1990, a pilot study was conducted by this institution to assess the perceptions of a cross-section of former Graduate Teaching Assistants to determine if their GTA experiences provided them with an adequate level of competence necessary for college teaching. The target population consisted of current doctoral level college classroom teachers with not less than two nor more than five years of experience as a teacher.

The results indicated that, despite what is discerned from current literature, 70% of the respondents regarded their GTA experience as an overall adequate preparation for teaching in the higher education setting. Since these findings run counter to the literature, it is now necessary to probe the nature of training which doctoral students receive as preparation for classroom teaching, regardless of whether or not that training is formal or informal.

We are soliciting your support and participation in the conduct of this important survey research. Enclosed is a copy of the survey instrument which would be completed by your faculty members who "fit the window" of the target audience - current classroom teachers with doctoral degrees and not less than one nor more than five years' experience in the college classroom as a teacher. Since 70% of all pilot study respondents were from the Liberal Arts, we have limited the scope of the survey to that area.

Your participation would involve: (1) identifying faculty who fit the window of the target population; (2) after receiving the appropriate number of surveys from this institution, coordinate with faculty for the completion of the survey; (3) collecting and returning the surveys in envelopes provided by this institution.

The undersigned will contact you soon to discuss your faculty's participation. It is hoped that we can work together to gather this vital data in as short a time as necessary with the least inconvenience. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Sincerely,

Alan N. Clark, Survey Researcher

APPENDIX D
COMMENTS

COMMENTS

A. Participation in Training Programs by Graduate Teaching Assistants

Required course, "Teaching History in College," for all graduate students with teaching assistantships. The course was poorly run and offered irregularly; I thus did not get to take the course until my fourth semester at a T.A.

Most professors (but not all) offered informal advice on T.A. teaching, lecturing, grading, etc.

T.A.s who taught their own course had a mandatory in-class review by a department member. Generally such reviews were of little value. (History)

I was a research assistant. My teaching experience in grad school was limited to occasional guest lectures in other's classes. I did receive some informal feedback on the lectures I gave from the faculty members in charge of the courses where I taught. (Geology)

. . . program was required. Lecture/discussion format. Offered at departmental level. We read, discussed and wrote on diverse pedagogical approaches and issues. (French)

One of the main objectives of the degree program was to prepare candidates for college teaching positions. Coursework included practice teaching assignments which were critiqued by peers and the major professor. Seminar discussions centered around curriculum design. Teaching for the assistantship was carefully supervised and critiqued. (Piano)

The university had no university-wide program for training TAs; though it did offer voluntary workshops on specific areas such as exam composition/grading, lecturing, etc.

1. French had a workshop at the beginning of the first year and required a course in phonetics and teaching methodology. Weekly meetings involved discussion of teaching strategies.

2. English had a workshop at the beginning of the year consisting of both professional and graduate student presentations. New TAs were put in groups of 4-5 and "mentored" by an experienced instructor the first term. There was a continuation of the workshop (same format) in the form of weekly meetings.

3. Great Books had no formal training program (it hired only experienced TAs). Weekly meetings were devoted to discussion of the content of the course. (French, English)

A required 2-day program of panels and speakers on teaching reading and composition, offered by the department. A very weak, ineffectual program offering only anecdotal information. (Literature)

The English department offered a 2-week seminar required for all first-time instructors in the department. The seminar met daily for two weeks and offered theory and practical training for teaching composition. It was followed by a weekly 2-hour session for two semesters. (English)

Attending pre-semester sessions on instructional practices led by experienced TAs. I think it was institution-wide. (Linguistics)

Institution-wide, three-day seminar held at beginning of each year; strongly recommended but not absolutely mandatory; were reimbursed monetarily for attendance. Departmental, quarter-long weekly meeting; mandatory for all new graduate assistants. (History)

The English department at Iowa had no program for graduate students teaching sophomore literature courses. The Rhetoric Program required participation in the Professional Development Program. Format: weekly meetings consisting of presentation to all enrollees by faculty and experienced grad students - 1 hr; small group discussions and exercises 2nd hr. led by one faculty member and one graduate student. (English)

The program was required, and, for myself, not helpful. It was offered by the English Dept. for its Intro. English courses. (Philosophy, English)

Before teaching composition we were required to take a week-long seminar taught by Writing Lab staff, employees of the English Dept. (Composition)

I participated in two such training programs, first as an M.A. candidate at the University of Kansas and then later as a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Kansas. Both programs were similar. Both were required, but grading was Pass/No Pass. Both were conceived and conducted by the English Department and focused on teaching composition effectively. (Composition)

The training program was at the departmental level, it was optional. Still, almost all assistants participated. The format consisted of various professors lecturing on various aspects of teaching with time for feedback from assistants. This worked well in that it allowed for attention to all subject areas and pedagogical methods. (History)

We did not have a program, although I recall one semester we were videotaped during a single discussion session. I believe people with difficulties in their presentation could work at it during the quarter. (History)

My experience was more informal: worked closely with professor on review of teaching sections, exam development, grading. More like an apprenticeship. (International Relations)

The Cornell Math Department had a one-day session for training teaching assistants. It consisted of a 4th year student lecturing on problems that might come up. (Mathematics)

3 day required departmental workshop. Reviewed syllabi, grading procedures, classroom techniques, sexual harassment, etc. (Communications)

The English department offered a mandatory two-semester sequence seminar in teaching composition at the university level. (English)

Required seminar for first time TAs, internal to departmental and run by senior TAs. Also, TA experience was required for graduation with PhD. (Philosophy)

The program was a brief one aimed at grading students' writing. It was an institution-wide program, and optional. (Greek)

There was a course for new teachers, semester long and concurrent with teaching, that covered theory and pedagogy. I was exempted because I had 4 years experience teaching while acquiring my MA. (Composition)

Practicum in teaching provided by the department. Participation in this weekly seminar was required of all first time TAs. (English)

Required at Departmental Level

Format: Provided basic information on procedures, guidelines, etc.; videotaping/critique of 5 minute teaching session for each participant.

Optional at Institutional Level

Format: Discussion groups, provided general information, personality surveys, limited video-taping. (Economics, Geography)

Required departmental course for one semester during which part-time assistants also taught a section of first year French, supervised by faculty coordinator. This was first year M.A. student. Teaching methodologies discussed. Course planning, etc. (French)

Program was offered by English Department for beginning TAs in composition. It was a required program, worth 1 graduate credit - and it was worthwhile. (Composition)

During the fourth of my five year training programs, first as an M.A. candidate at the University of Kansas and then later as a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Kansas. Both programs were similar. Both were required, but grading was Pass/No Pass. Both were conceived and conducted by the English Department and focused on teaching composition effectively. (Composition)

The discussions involved the difficulty in teaching labs that we generally agreed were pointless, useless, and a waste of everyone's time. (Biology)

These discussions were informal and usually would take place in the office. We would share stories or problems from class and get feedback from others who faced similar situations. (Public Speaking)

Teaching involved a few lectures but mostly involved leading tutorials and evaluation. Interaction with other assistants consisted of joint test construction. (International Relations)

Within my department I shared information with others who taught in the first year Japanese program and when I taught history, the other TA and I discussed problems we had in common upon occasion. None of this was on a formal, organized basis. (Japanese)

This was primarily casual conversation about what could be expected of students in various classes and organizational ideas to help a class run more smoothly. (Mathematics)

General discussion on lecture content, formats, supplements, etc., and how to handle difficult situations (i.e. cheating). (Audiology)

Totally ad hoc -- in practice I didn't discuss teaching very much with other doctoral candidates. (Composition)

We compared grading criteria, classroom strategies, and difficult experiences with students. (Composition)

Discussions ranged from theoretical problems of grammar and their practical consequences through testing formats and classroom problems to assaying the worth of student evaluations. (Spanish)

Just a pervasive part of grad student life; daily informal discussions of teaching strategies, etc. (Composition)

--just informal, hallway-type, discussions regarding issues such as: syllabus design, reading selection, grading, assignments, dealing with student problems, dealing with problem students. (American Studies)

We had wonderful discussions of a pedagogical nature. Always valuable. Best part of GTA! (English)

Both Russian language and Russian literature TAs would frequently get together to talk about issues of teaching, grading papers, dealing with students, etc. These were generally informal and were prompted only by the desire on the part of the students to participate and discuss these issues. (Russian Language)

This was done entirely on an informal basis as we sat around the graduate student lounge. (History)

There were 12 teaching assistants in my office (i.e., our office) and there were many discussions focused on teaching, but they were all spontaneous and informal. (Composition)

A senior TA was employed to visit classes and assist new teaching fellows. (I do not think that this program lasted long -- maybe only two years). (Mathematics)

We met weekly for a practicum to discuss ideas and the "Bullpen" set-up helped us share ideas. (Composition)

Several TAs for 1 course met weekly for 1 hr to discuss problems of the preceding week and plan for the upcoming week. (Psychology)

Very informally -- e.g., in the office or mailroom. The faculty supervising us never took an interest. (Anthropology)

We were encouraged as part of our colloquia as well as with the innovative system of grading (writing portfolio) to share/discuss/receive feedback. It was integral and expected. Our teaching was taken seriously and rewarded by the department. (Writing)

As Teaching Assistant we met regularly to assure that our grading was on par with each other. This was necessary because we were assisting in the same large lecture course. As teaching associate, we each were responsible for our own courses, but there was a great deal of informal discussion, exchange of advice, etc. (Philosophy)

We spent a lot of time (all graduate assistants) to discuss what we offer, how we offer. It was extremely useful. Graduate assistants can teach each other or can learn from each other. Should be encouraged everywhere. (Geography)

We formed our own "Teaching Fellows Association" and met monthly to discuss various aspects of our teaching experience, and invited faculty to present informal talks on teaching, publication, job hunting, etc. (Music)

We exchanged syllabi, discussed teaching strategies, and helped each other solve pedagogical problems (like how to explain difficult concepts to students). (Philosophy)

Grad students staffed a writing clinic, which enabled us to see what our colleagues were assigning in their classes. (Composition)

We used each other constantly for lecture information and teaching methods. Many of us taught our own classes (I did). In fact, I never mentored under a professor to learn how to teach. Interactions with other TAs were invaluable. (Anthropology)

High degree of comraderie, communication among full responsibility TAs. (Geography)

In our shared offices and common rooms it was typical to discuss teaching experiences. Commonly, we would guest lecture for each other (1-2 x term) and had the opportunity to observe each other. (Geography)

The practicum and the group offices provided ample opportunities for informal discussion. (English)

There were always at least 2 of us who were TAs for the course. Also, we talked with senior grad students and

with the professor we were working for. (Political Science)

We complained to each other, griped about some problems we encountered, exchanged information on how to deal with those problems, as well as exchanging exercises, information, and other instructional tools. (Communication)

Informal opportunities were frequently available in our graduate student lounge, in the office, at parties, to share experiences and methods. Faculty were willing to discuss teaching. The Writing Center (now defunct) also provided a place to discuss teaching. (Composition)

Five GAs were assigned to one large lecture class, so I could discuss my experiences with my co-GAs. (Politics)

Early teaching was in a team -- which, combined with shared office situation, provided many positive opportunities for discussion. Senior PhD students also shared info/advise with jr. ones regularly. (Communications)

In a required course taught by the director in charge of the teaching assistants, students would meet and discuss their experiences. There was also a special "composition room" where TAs could meet and where there were comp. tests and a file of ideas and syllabi, etc. (Composition)

We each conducted a lab and there was a more senior grad student who'd taught the lab previously whose explicit role was to offer us guidance and assistance. We met weekly, I believe. (Research Methods -- Undergrad)

This was informally done by graduate students. Although our campus was large and urban, graduate students often lived near one another and socialized two or three nights a week. In addition, we usually had coffee and regular lunches (again informally) where a large number of students discussed teaching, research, and other professional interests. Faculty and students presented research on a weekly basis. (History)

These were very helpful. We talked about what usually worked and what did not. We compared our experiences of work with different professors. We compared how well students were doing from class to class. (History)

These experiences were informal and self-solicited -- we would get together occasionally on our own and talk about our teaching. (Geography)

The experiences were in both formal and nonformal settings. I found the discussions reassuring and helpful. I got some good ideas for teaching from fellow strugglers. (Composition)

Informal, good environment for "community." We had four people in each office, surrounded by large lounge. The social space afforded opportunity to talk, and teaching was impt. part of what we were concerned with. (Philosophy)

We discussed the issue of students obnoxiousness in class, students not coming to class, and issues pertaining to fairness as well as higher stipends. (Politics)

At both KU and UW, a large part of the purpose of the training programs was to meet as a group to listen to presentations on various aspects of teaching composition (grading, assignments, student/teacher dialogue, etc.) with ample opportunity to discuss the contents of the presentation afterwards with respect to our own classroom experience. In an Equal Opportunity Program (EOP) all instructors met for weekly staff meetings to discuss classroom methods. (Composition)

We frequently discussed teaching problems informally. In the soph. lit. courses, we were under the direct supervision of faculty lecturers. (Composition)

These discussions were informal. But this is not to devalue them in any way. That we were teaching graduate students provided an important part of our shared sense of philosophical community. (Philosophy)

The other, more experienced, grad. students provided the best information and resources for my own teaching. (Philosophy)

Complaining and problem-solving with office mates. (French)

In the Professional Development Program, small groups provided these experiences: we shared assignments, grading strategies, discussed decorum in the classroom, plagiarism, etc. Faculty and experienced grad. students read our students' work and our comments and grades and discussed those with us. (Rhetoric)

Among my colleagues, we shared experiences of teaching and handling student questions and behaviors. Also, we shared experiences on the difficulties of test problems, topics, etc. (Calculus)

There was a great deal of informal contact among TAs (not necessarily in the doctoral programs), which was somewhat more structured in the case of English. (French)

We used to spend some time in the common room discussing what difficulties our students were having. This is a perfectly sensible way of exchanging information. (Mathematics)

There were four candidates in the doctoral program. Discussions regarding teaching experiences took place during teaching labs, regular coursework, seminars and outside of class. (Piano)

Yes, but only informal exchanges about our experiences, trials, tribulations, things that worked, things that did not work well, etc. (Political Science)

A major part of learning how to teach -- mostly informal discussion. (History)

There was no official mechanics for these, but I felt that informal discussion of techniques, successes, failures, etc. was very valuable. (French)

We discussed among ourselves and were observed once per semester by the instructor who supervised the language courses. (Italian)

Some discussions occurred, but I was usually in the position of giving advice about others' work. (Geology)

There was only one graduate teaching assistant in our department at any given time. During the period of transitioning from one TA to the next, there were opportunities to discuss responsibilities and time commitment; however, this was not done in any systematic way. (Psychology)

This would amount to simple discussions about our common problems and concerns. We would learn from each other and provide the necessary support since most of us were doing this for the first time. (Russian)

Opportunities for such discussion were common in the history department, which had about 20 assistantships (full and part-time) per semester. The discussion was informal and unorganized. One significant problem was that new graduate students (1st or 2nd year) tended to associate with each other, but have little contact with

more experienced TAs who were finished with the basic classes. (History)

Teaching assignments and duties were negotiated between individual professors and GTAs. The GTAs often discussed their "deals" with the professors, and discussed in-class experiences informally. (Political Science)

B. Miscellaneous Comments

Many GTAs in some programs never requested to lecture. I lectured only because I asked to do so. (Political Science)

I was a Peer Teacher for other graduate assistants teaching Drama. While there was not a lot of discussion between teachers, there was a pool of resources on file (essay questions, tests, quizzes, etc.) that we all shared quite usefully. (Drama)

Teaching/TAs was not a standard requirement for university assistantship holders. Some profs used me in this capacity, most did not. (Anthropology)

This questionnaire assumes that all of one's preparation for college teaching occurs as a graduate assistant. In my case, this is not true. I worked in industry for 6 years between my BS and PhD. The last year I was there, I also taught an evening class at a local college. I developed my lecturing ability and teaching style during those years. Further experience in grad school was essentially unimportant, and the faculty knew that. They intentionally did not assign me teaching duties. (Geology)

While training in teaching is certainly ad-hoc and while one learns how to teach mostly by doing it, I do not think it is possible or appropriate to institute more formal programs of instruction. I would especially resist any attempt to implement "certification" via Education Schools. (Composition)

The best part of my experience as a graduate assistant was interacting with students, leading discussions, and trying to make complex material clear. The poorest aspect was that I received no training in how to plan and organize an undergraduate course. I had to learn that on my own. At my graduate school, TAs acted primarily as graders and had no role in organizing or teaching the class. (History)

Teaching was something I did to support myself. My advisor had no funding. The purpose of teaching was to justify my stipend so that I could pursue my research. No evaluations were made on my teaching skills. There was no conception that they were training me for a career in college teaching. At major universities, research is most important. (Chemistry)

I learned to teach by attending classes, observing my professors, and by talking to professors and colleagues. There were no formal training programs regarding "how to teach." I don't know whether such programs would have been helpful or not. I think most PhDs can develop their abilities to teach and their own styles of teaching as I have. (Political Science)

My training is in working with students in piano labs where interaction with students is constant. Lecturing is a small part of this type of teaching. There are no written tests or papers to grade. Teaching pedagogy involves both lecturing and critiquing student teaching (interaction), preparing test questions and reading papers. My doctoral studies prepared me well for both types of teaching. (Class Piano)

My teaching experience was gained through a "sink or swim" approach. My approach to teaching was based on emulation of others I thought were quality teachers. (Geography)

I must emphasize the point that things are done different ways in different countries. British universities expect their students already to have a high school education, and they do not use postgraduate students to teach courses. Instead they give grants and expect a student to write a thesis in three years. This is not enough, but the general idea is feasible. It ought to have been possible to give me more practice in lecturing, which would have been useful. (Mathematics)

In foreign languages, the teaching that TAs are called on to do (elementary and intermediate language instruction) has little to do with teaching more advanced classes. This is why I appreciated the experience in teaching Great Books (an honors course involving a lecture by a professor and discussion sections headed by TAs). More interdepartmental cooperation to give TAs in fields where elementary instruction is fairly mechanical or cut-and-dried the chance to have real responsibility in courses structured more like those they will be called on to do as faculty could be very helpful (French or Spanish TAs teaching in English, World Literature, etc.) (French)

I did not have any direct faculty supervision as a PhD graduate student. Personally, I do not feel that I missed out on anything because of this. I feel that my experiences were fully adequate because they suited my needs. (Art History)

Most of my teacher training occurred as an undergraduate in secondary education. I also had taught school for several years (5) before going to graduate school. (History)

I was provided a valuable opportunity when the Rhetoric Program hired me/and other TAs to teach graduate students in the Professional Development Program. My experience in this program contributed significantly to my being hired in my present job according to my colleagues. (English)

At the time, we were not supervised at all. I do remember, however, that my class was observed once, and that there was no follow-up (to speak of). It was definitely a "sink or swim" affair; and since I was taking all graduate literature courses, I did not have my own profs as role models. Lucky for me I had been a high school teacher in my "other" life -- that experience (7 years) taught me everything that I needed in the beginning. I've learned as much since then from my colleagues here at MTSU. (French)

Our essential problem was teaching load. We dealt with over 100 students per semester. (History)

I thought UW's TA opportunities were fine for grad. students, but not the best learning experience for a student. At least as valuable as my teaching assistantship was my experience as a research assistant. I learned quite a lot about literary scholarships and library research from that experience. (Writing Lab)

My English Department experience provided me with excellent preparation for teaching composition and introduction to literature at the freshman/sophomore level, but I am finding that teaching at the upper division (majors courses) involves skill and activities (primarily lecturing) which I had not necessarily practiced as a Teaching Assistant. While such advanced practice is probably inappropriate for most Teaching Assistants (who, after all, need to learn how to teach the basic service courses in the department), some pedagogical analysis of upper division teaching would be most valuable, perhaps conducted as discipline-specific, post-doctoral seminars. (Composition)

Excellent professors. Watching them helped a lot. Nothing teaches like example except for practicing the lessons yourself. (Philosophy)

The best thing about a teaching assistantship was that it allowed me to have a class of my own to deal with and worry about. I was treated as a professional from the beginning. Problems were minor. When they arose, I had the full support of the faculty and sound advice. I wish I could have taught linguistics (my area of specialization) with the guidance of Georgia's excellent linguistics faculty. (Composition)

There is a world of difference between teaching a lab or discussion section of a course and teaching the lecture materials. My experience with course lectures was gained in post-doc/visiting position after graduate school. To that extent, I envied the Ph.D. candidates who were hired to teach lecture courses in lieu of more ordinary TA assignments. (Mineralogy)

It was an invaluable experience. I love teaching this topic to this day! (Research Methods)

The experience I did have was well and very closely supervised and advised -- but oriented towards the needs of the class, not my future. I didn't see any particular problem with that at the time, and still don't. The TA positions weren't my only preparation for teaching. My mentor gave me a long "pep talk" with some valuable guidance from him and from others about things I would need to know. Also my 1st semester teaching I took a public speaking class designed to improve lecturing skills for new teachers. (International Relations)

I also worked as a lecturer, which was valuable. Things were handled informally, which was OK in my case, but allowed for greater variation in experiences. By the end of grad school, I was at ease in front of a class because I had many years of experience. (Politics)

Some sort of formal seminar on teaching methods/student interaction might have been helpful here. (American Civilization)

Although no direct instructional resources were provided to graduate teaching assistants, I learned by doing. Experience was the best teacher. Also, interaction with other TAs about teaching taught me a great deal as well. These two things, more than anything else, account for my answer to 42 above. (Communication)

We were allowed an extraordinary degree of autonomy in the structure, development and practice of the courses we taught as graduate assistants at the University of Virginia. And from a very early stage in our graduate careers, graduate assistant committees were involved in text selection for the language requirement courses and above. We produced our own exams, etc. Some may profit more from higher supervision and more rigorous preparation. I, for one, thrived on the UVA system. A very good experience, overall. (French)

I may be unusual. I didn't want or need much supervision. (Philosophy)

Graduate teaching at U. Mass had two levels: Graduate Assistant and Graduate Associate. Graduate Assistants were assigned to assist professors in large introductory lecture courses -- usually 2-4 grad students to each course. The Professor would lecture twice a week and the assistants would each teach a smaller section (approx 35 students) once a week. Assistants were responsible for all grading of students in their section. For the first few exams the Professor would ask to see examples of any grading (before we passed exams back), to ensure that we were in line with appropriate standards and that we were all using the same basic criteria for determining grades.

Graduate Associates were selected -- competitively -- from those who had already been Grad. Assistants and were determined -- by Professors -- to be competent to teach their own courses. Grad. Associates had full responsibility for courses, but were only allowed to teach introductory level (with a very occasional exception in logic when a grad. student was particularly advanced in the field). (Philosophy)

Even with minimal faculty guidance, my teaching experiences as a graduate student (flaws and all) was essential in preparing me for teaching after graduation. This is especially true in leading discussions and grading. I wish I had had lecturing experience (I started to learn how to lecture -- and fast -- after some early, disastrous performances on the job market). (History)

An assistantship program depends on the seriousness and respect with which it is treated in the department. Rather than see g.a. work as a necessary chore, my English Dept. gave me a sense of importance and fine training regarding teaching. (Writing)

Eventually I did receive a lot of training, but this was after I had gotten my degree. (Anthropology)

Question: How did teaching help or hurt the grad student's own course work? Grad students are faced with competing objectives: work on their own work or their teaching. Their own research must be the most important. How does a student teach well and survive his/her own course work? (Mathematics)

We did not begin teaching until our third year of graduate school. By that time we had completed a master's degree and a training program in teaching, and were called "lecturers" rather than teaching assistants, and had full responsibility for a class. (Calculus)

Although I have given a 3 in response to 42 above, I should explain that I taught predominantly non-native speakers during my assistantship. This did not adequately prepare me to teach Americans. Moreover, I taught lower level courses (i.e. freshman and sophomore) which were quite different from the upper level and graduate courses I teach now. (Composition)

There is a big difference between state universities where students are largely supported by teaching assistantships and private, elite universities where students are more likely supported by non-teaching funds. Graduate students at state universities are better prepared by the level of exposure they get to the classroom and students. While the practice helps, these state university students are no better schooled in the theories of teaching and education. Everything regarding teaching is done by trial and error. A lot of time and energy could be conserved, undergraduates could be better served as well, by offering course credit for graduate teaching methods classes. Alternatively, faculty could incorporate into regular graduate courses some discussion of teaching methods and strategies. (History)

My training was somewhat lacking in language teaching in that I was not exposed to various methods and ideas of language teaching and was exposed only to the philosophy of the supervising professor. There was a world of information out there that I did not know about. (Russian)

As a TA I did occasional lectures, helped make up tests and paper assignments, did some grading, and led discussion sections. As a Teaching Fellow (TF), I designed and taught 2 specialized seminars for which I was entirely responsible. In the latter case, there was no faculty oversight after the course proposal was approved. It was the TF experience that proved most valuable -- i.e.

learn by doing -- worked quite well for me. (American Studies)

Of primary interest to me is the fact that the teaching experience greatly enhanced my knowledge of fields of study (chemistry and biochemistry), and that I gained a great deal of confidence in my own intellectual abilities. One of the most surprising discoveries for me was to learn that virtually all students have approximately the same intellectual capabilities, but the motivation to apply these capabilities was quite varied. I needed to learn that! (Chemistry)

I have a natural talent for teaching. I think that, more than anything else, makes me good at it. Although I recognize that techniques can be taught to some extent, I don't think any amount of "training" can make a poor teacher into a good one. (Geology)

In short, very little adequate preparation for teaching was given. This was particularly true for first year students, who were often thrown into a lab without any guidance. On-the-job experience, it's called. The learning came from trial-and-error in the classroom, not from any training program. I recommend such post-grad programs as the Garnett Teaching Fellowship Workshop at U. of Indiana to give adequate training in journalism teaching. (Journalism)

I first started teaching in a M.A. program with no preparation or guidance. I think a tutorial class and a semester of assisting a full-time teacher, before full classroom responsibility is better. (Composition)

While my teaching assistantship in Japanese Language classes put me in good stead (for the job market and in terms of applied methodology), the field of literature (I now teach) was an area in which my department offered no assistantships and as a result of which I felt least prepared. My methodology in dealing with the lack of institutional preparation was to apply teaching methods which had been utilized by my professors, modifying them as I went along in a trial and error fashion. Ironically, after four years of teaching both language and literature, my method for teaching literature has become strong, while my language teaching has not changed very significantly. Perhaps it has much to do with subjective likes and dislikes with subject matter. (Japanese)

My graduate teaching experiences were wonderful, thanks to the efforts of my graduate advisor, but no thanks to the graduate training program. In general, I believe graduate

teacher training programs would be extremely valuable.
(Psychology)

I wish to clarify this data because I suspect I'm an "outlier" in the sample. I began teaching a 3/3 semester load my first semester of my Master's degree and taught with a reduced load throughout my doctoral work. Because of ballooning enrollment and limited faculty resources, I taught a large lecture class (240 enrolled) alone with full responsibility for lecturing and grading my first semester of my doctoral work. I also taught a senior-level public relations class without supervision throughout my doctoral work. While not ideal in terms of my progress as a graduate student, I gained much experience as a teacher and received excellent support from other graduate students and from the faculty. The culture demanded that you share notes, activities, visuals, etc. with "new" grad assistants. Thus, I never started from scratch. I also helped to administer a course with 150 sections. That gave me unusual experience in teaching responsibilities beyond the classroom. So, you see, mine was not a typical grad assistantship experience. (Public Speaking)

At WSU, I was given total responsibility for my class with no instruction, supervision, etc. I learned trial-by-fire. I did it and did well, I like to think. It made it easy when I got my first teaching job. However, it took time away from my classes so I don't think I was as well trained initially because I'd spend my time preparing classes I taught and not be ready for my own courses that I was taking. (Research Methods)

My experience was sufficient, though not ideal. A much bigger detriment to good teaching in my first few years as a faculty member is lack of time and a lack of professional incentive and recognition for good teaching. (Computer Science)

We did a lot of grunt work (grading, lab prep, etc.). Rarely did we have an opportunity to interact with students (nor did the professors). Our job was to act on students (e.g. shovel stuff at them) rather than to engage their thought processes. But this is a fundamental flaw of the entire American education system. (Statistics)

Most of what I learned about teaching I learned from watching my teachers teach and discussing with them the goals and methods of the courses in which I was engaged as a student. (English Literature)

Developing creative approaches to learning. My first three years of teaching took place in a stifling, oppressive environment in which creativity was to be avoided. This atmosphere greatly slowed my growth as a professor despite the last two years of my graduate teaching which was in a different part of the university and which allowed me to begin to bring my own ideas to teaching. (French)

My graduate studies emphasized research and I think that was "totally adequate" as preparation for college teaching. (Metabolic Regulation)

TAs are there to help out the professor, not to help themselves, unfortunately. Our use in discussion sections did not help us in designing courses or writing lectures. More is needed to teach teaching skills. Perhaps TAs should be required to critique lectures given by professors; to come up with other syllabi, etc. Most of us learned how to teach only when we got our first solo course. (Western Civilization)

I served as a grader for 3 classes. I never was given the chance to actually teach a class (my advisor discouraged this, since it would take away from my duties as a research assistant). Thus, as a faculty member, I started with no preparation. (Computer Science)

Because I had taught before, I neither sought nor would have welcomed observation/supervision, etc. There was none, and, for my own situation, that degree (e.g. total autonomy -- hang 'em out to dry) was fine. The students did evaluate all courses, however, so I assume that if my ratings had been poor, I would have been targeted for "remediation." (Social Psychology)

During graduate school I worked primarily as a research assistant. Before entering graduate school, however, I worked for 12 years as a public school teacher. It was this experience that best prepared me for college teaching. (Economics)

I wish someone would investigate graduate assistants' preparation for joining the profession: knowledge of publication rituals (importance of, methods for, procedures of, etc.); knowledge of professional issues (tenure, promotion, committee work, advising, etc.); and issues of collegiality, social aspects, reputation, etc. While your questionnaire does a good job of investigating our preparation to be college teachers, you might consider a related study of these other forms of (more often neglected) professional development issues. (Technical Writing)

The most significant feature of the experience was my work with my mentor/thesis director throughout the course of my program. (Composition)

--Should be involved in textbook search at least once.

--There is absolutely no preparation for the politics one encounters in foreign language departments upon employment.

--Level of some assistants is inadequate; they need further training at the graduate level before being given teaching assignments. I would not want many of the assistants I knew teaching, for example, my own children! (Spanish)

I think I had one of the heavier teaching loads as a graduate student. I had complete control over 2-3 classes each year of my graduate assistantship. (Mathematics)

After my masters, I taught classes one night/week while working full-time, and then was a full-time lecturer, while I worked on my PhD. Again, I was never trained to teach. I believe that although my training was inadequate (since there was none), my teaching is nevertheless good! (Computer Science)

I think practical work on setting up a class outline and purpose, choosing books, and doing reality checks on whether goals are being met would be helpful. (American Government)

Frankly, I am now five years away from my last GA experience. I did teach as an Instructor while doing my dissertation. You might want to widen your approach, since this is a common experience (teaching for a school other than your PhD grantor). But, in any event, I find it nearly impossible to respond to these poorly defined questions. Clarify your terms! (Composition)

My training was excellent, and my superiors at my first job did not expect this to be the case and put me under the supervision of people I should instead have been supervising. (French)

I was one of a few assistants given my own sections to teach so answering 13-25 was hard. I had other assignments, such as teaching students to use the SPSS package on the mainframe for other sections, so I can't distinguish (on those questions) between those experiences. My only complaint was that no one ever came in to observe me. On the other hand, they trusted me to select my own texts and materials, to make my own exams, etc. and

I loved the responsibility and the freedom (and I still do). It was what made me sure that this is what I wanted to do. (American Government)

I was basically a research assistant and did not receive an opportunity to teach a course in graduate school. The preparation I received (if you call it that) was just observing a variety of the professors in their classes -- then at USM I attempted to do what I thought was good and refrain from what was not good. We had some very good professors which was helpful -- but insofar as formal teaching preparation there was essentially none. (Geography)

Overall, I found the experience valuable and helpful, if not always as much as I would have liked. The training could have been better -- essentially it was a "jump into the cold water" approach -- but between discussions of fellow students, some guidance and observing others it sort of worked. The remedial comp program and the German program, however, had an excellent training program. (Linguistics)

(My assistantship) was not geared toward that objective (preparation for classroom) at all. On the other hand I had considerable teaching experience before pursuing my PhD, so it did not adversely effect me. (Computer Science Research Assistant)

I had no training as a PhD. By then, I had been teaching as an adjunct for four years at a variety of schools after two years of TAing. The year I began my PhD I also got my first college full-time position. I am a fine teacher, but I learned from trial and error, lots of experience, and the research I did as a PhD. My experience is likely atypical. (Composition)

I had a regular, small (about 35) class -- with full responsibility (not "lecture vs. discussion") except for creating the exams -- which were common exams across all sections. My experience was a good one. My only complaint is that it was a bit too short. One semester is not enough to prepare you for an academic position. We did have a one-time peer evaluation of our teaching. This was a good experience; one that I could have done with more of! (Calculus)

You didn't ask whether I am a good teacher, but whether I feel that my GTA experiences were effective. Well, I don't think it really mattered. Good teaching is 99% personality, innate ability, and mastery of the subject

(though training may make a tolerable instructor out of a poor one). The proof is all around us. (Calculus)

I have seen graduate TAs were treated differently, according to their ability in classrooms: some are teaching since their first year, some never handle any class independently. I understand the department's concerns about students' complaints, but I believe that teaching experience can only be gained through teaching. My experience as a teaching fellow at University of Pittsburgh was overall a very positive one, although we all felt we were "overloaded" in teaching. (Mathematics)

My experience as GTA was extremely positive due to the fact that I had exceptional supervisors and very good facilities to teach (overhead projectors, slides, films, videos, dittos, xerox machines, etc.). (Spanish)

I was not told as a teaching assistant that student evaluations were the only significant criteria to the institution by which I would be evaluated. I have grown much through having to concern myself much more with my students. I still question, though, whether student evaluations should be the sole criterion. I don't think that they should. We need discipline -- approved assessment, also. Teaching evaluations alone encourage a kind of "bunnyist" approach -- entertainment at the expense of rigor. American education can't afford this approach any longer. The rest of the world is too competitive. But student evals. need to be a significant factor, nonetheless. They have helped me much. (Composition)

Nobody tells you that you're going to have to teach lots of different kinds of classes, and lots that you aren't particularly prepared to teach. So the water is very cold when you get to your job and you're given a class to teach that you only dimly remember taking as an undergrad. Also, nobody tells you how absolutely different student populations can be. The urban, first generation student is quite a shock after doing grad work at a privileged residential research university. (Public Speaking)

Most of my graduate experience involved research assistantships which did not require teaching. It had the real advantage of allowing me to concentrate on my own research (developing my abilities as a researcher and as a critical theorist . . .). (Art)

It was one of the best experiences of my life, mainly because I had a great supervisor. You overlooked the impact of economic conditions on TAs teaching and achievements. (Spanish)

Most of my experiences as a doctoral student were designed to facilitate research as opposed to instruction. However, this "model" fits the expectations of higher education -- little emphasis on instruction and rewards for research, especially externally funded research. (Criminology)

I believe that it really helped me become an effective lecturer today. Unfortunately, quality teaching at the undergraduate level is not rewarded, so I do not put as much time into this responsibility as I would like (now during tenure-track time!) (Geology)

I never used and do not use now audio-visual enhancement; also, I never have "field exercises." I teach philosophy. So, I believe that my graduate experience in these areas was adequate. I have never felt however that I did enough research for my teaching. (Philosophy)

This is not entirely representative since I had occasions to teach other than my assistantship. I feel as I got very good support from my faculty in the sense that they were available to provide advice and suggestions at my request. However, we all would have benefited from some more formal instruction in education. (Anthropology)

I had another TA later in grad school working for School of Ed. teaching computers in the classroom. I was called a Teaching Assistant (and paid as one) but I was in complete charge of everything for two sections of this course. The only thing the professor did was sign the grade sheet at the end of the semester. This was a "sink or swim" training program, but I learned to swim. (Psychology)

My experience was a relatively unguided one -- lots of trial and error. However, I think I am a much better teacher for it. I was forced to discover for myself what worked for me. (Composition)

I feel that I had a valuable opportunity to gain teaching experience at UT in a supportive environment at the School of Social Work prior to acquiring a faculty position at SWTSU. (Sociology)

VITA

Alan N. Clark was born in Columbia, Tennessee, on March 6, 1947. He was educated in the public school system of that city and graduated from Central High School in June, 1965. Following two years at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, he received his Bachelor of Science degree in English in May, 1969, from Middle Tennessee State University.

While teaching in the Rutherford County School System, Murfreesboro, Tennessee, he returned to MTSU and was granted a Master of Education degree in Administration and Supervision in August, 1975.

In 1978, he became a full-time Operations and Training Officer with the Tennessee Army National Guard and has served successively in Winchester, Tennessee, and Chattanooga, Tennessee. From December, 1990 until May, 1991, he was mobilized and deployed to the Persian Gulf during Operation Desert Storm.

He entered the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, in the Doctor of Education program with a major in Educational Administration and Supervision in September, 1986 and received the degree in December, 1992.