

Policies Concerning Assistantships  
Department of English  
Ball State University  
Revised and approved, March 6, 2007

1. **Objective:** Graduate assistantships will enhance the academic and professional development of the recipients in relationship to their area of study.
2. **Responsibilities:** Graduate assistants will normally teach introductory writing courses in the department or language courses in the Intensive English Institute. All new students who have graduate assistantships and are not in the Intensive English Institute will be assigned for the assistantship to the Teacher Preparation Program (TPrep). They will also take the Composition section of ENG 605. At the end of the first semester, each student's readiness to teach in the Writing Program will be evaluated by the Director of TPrep and instructor of ENG 605, the Director of the Writing Program, and the Director of Graduate Programs. In the case of international students, the Director of the Intensive English Institute will also participate.

If a student is found not to be sufficiently prepared for the writing classroom at the end of the first semester, the group named above will indicate the areas that need to be strengthened. The student will be assigned as a teaching assistant to an experienced composition instructor and will continue to work on the areas needing improvement. The student will then be evaluated again at the end of the second semester.

Students still not deemed ready for the writing classroom will be reviewed for other possible assignments. If they have been performing at a satisfactory level academically, they will be assigned to other assistantships.

3. **Work Load:** Full-time Graduate Assistants will work twenty hours per week. Assistants assigned to the Writing Program and/or the Intensive English Institute will typically teach two sections. Assistants will participate fully in all required activities related to their responsibilities, such as Freshman Connections meetings, and scheduled meetings with the regular faculty for whom they are teaching/research assistants.
4. **Selection:** Assistantships are awarded by the regular faculty of the English Graduate Studies Committee in consultation with the relevant area committees. New assistantships will be awarded to the most highly qualified applicants on the basis of grade point average, GRE and/or TOEFL scores, transcripts, personal writing statements, writing samples, letters of recommendation, and relevant past experience. Current students as well as newly admitted students must apply to be considered.
5. **Selection of Research Assistants:** Faculty desiring a graduate research assistant will submit a one-page proposal specifying the role the RA will play as a member of a research team, the specific skills and other qualifications the RA must have, the educational and professional benefit to the RA, and, if possible, identification of a qualified student. Such selective and competitive awarding of research assistantships will be handled by the Director of Graduate Programs. Research assignments will be equivalent in rigor and time commitment to teaching assignments.

6. **Supervision:** The Director of Graduate Programs in English in consultation with the appropriate departmental administration (Chair, Assistant Chair, Director of the Writing Program, and Director of the Intensive English Institute) and/or faculty will have the responsibility of determining if the assistants are fulfilling their assigned duties.
7. **Taking coursework outside the Department of English:** It is at times necessary and useful for graduate assistants to take courses outside the area of their major, including courses in other departments. Courses in statistics and experimental design are excellent examples. Any courses outside the department must be included in the student's Program of Study. Courses that are not in the Program of Study must be approved by the student's advisor during the regular course registration period for the semester in which the course will be taken. Only in exceptional cases will a student be permitted to take more coursework in any given semester outside the department than in the major. Students who violate this policy risk not having their assistantships renewed.
8. **Evaluation/Renewal/Termination:** by January 31 each year, assistants shall file the annual Assistant Application Form, on which they shall indicate their progress toward the completion of the degree. To be eligible for renewal, assistants should receive a favorable determination in Item 5 above and successfully complete six hours each Fall, Spring, and Summer (if applicable) semester, or three each Summer Session (if applicable), or satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation. Assistants should maintain at least a 3.5 grade point average. Assistantships for those earning master's degrees will normally be renewable once. Assistantships for those earning a master's degree with a double major will normally be renewable twice. Assistantships for those earning doctoral degrees will normally be renewable four times. Assistantships for those earning doctoral degrees in English with a concentration in applied linguistics will normally be renewable five times. All decisions will be announced in writing by May 15.
9. **Individual Absence Report** (yellow ½ sheet of paper, also known as your pay voucher): Pay vouchers will generally be placed in your mailbox approximately one week before they are due. If you don't receive a pay voucher come to RB 295 and pick one up. Pay vouchers must be completed and returned to the secretary in RB 295 or deposited in secretary's mailbox, no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the current month. If your pay voucher is not returned, you will not be paid.