

Section Five: GTFs

GRADUATE TEACHING FELLOWSHIPS

General. Each Graduate Teaching Fellowship, or GTF, provides a full tuition waiver and a yearly stipend. GTFs are the primary manner in which the department funds its graduate students.

The exact stipend amount varies according to the level the student has reached in the program and is determined by negotiation between the University administration and the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation.

Award. GTFs are awarded on the basis of academic merit to both M.A. and Ph.D. students. Selection is highly competitive. It is the goal of the History Department to fund all graduate students, budget permitting.

Eligibility. All History graduate students are eligible to apply for a GTF. Generally, the awards are given at the time of admission. M.A. students may be eligible for as many as two years (6 quarters) of funding. Ph.D. students who enter with an M.A. degree may be eligible for as many as four years (12 quarters) of funding, but in the fourth year, if a GTF is awarded, it will typically be for 0.25 FTE, rather than 0.40 FTE as in the first three years (see below for details of fourth-year funding.) Students admitted to the B.A.-Ph.D. program may be eligible for as many as five years (15 quarters) of funding. If students go on leave during their GTF eligibility, the remaining quarters of eligibility will still be available for them when they return. GTFs returning from leave do not need to re-apply for a GTF.

Ph.D. students seeking a fourth year of funding must have advanced to candidacy, have fulfilled the prospectus requirement, and must apply during their third year. The application must contain a letter discussing degree progress, dissertation plans, and a preliminary schedule for degree completion. The letter must be accompanied by a letter of support from the student's advisor addressing the same issues, a current transcript, and copies of all GTF evaluations from the last three quarters.

Unfunded Students. Sometimes students will begin the program without History GTF funding. Unfunded students will be encouraged to apply for a GTF during the academic year for the following academic year. The application should include an updated statement of purpose describing their academic interests and goals, one letter of recommendation from a faculty member with whom they have worked at the University of Oregon, a recent writing sample, and a Graduate Teaching Fellows application form. Students who apply for funding during an academic year because of a department need are awarded one term of funding. They are encouraged, however, to apply for full academic year funding the next year.

GTFs in other Programs and Departments. Students who do not receive History Department GTFs frequently apply for GTFs in other departments of the University of Oregon. They have been very successful in getting them; in recent years, history students have held GTFs in Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, the Humanities Program, and International Student Advising.

Students whom the department is unable to fund directly in the History Department are strongly encouraged to apply for GTFs in other programs and departments. A list of available possibilities is available on the graduate school's web page at:
http://gradschool.uoregon.edu/gtf_opportunities.html

Such positions come up throughout the year, and deadlines and requirements vary from program to program.

GTF Evaluations.

GTFs are evaluated both by the students in the class and (separately) by the instructor.

1. Student Evaluations. In cases where the GTF leads a discussion section, students are requested to complete a computer scan evaluation based on standardized questions. In addition, students are encouraged to complete a written evaluation as well. The scan evaluations are read by the computer and a summary sheet is given to the GTF. The GTF receives a copy of all written evaluations.
2. GTF Performance Evaluation. Faculty who are supervising GTFs are asked to comment on the teaching assistant's strengths, weaknesses and reliability. The instructor will sign the evaluation and give it to the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will inform the GTF that the evaluation is available for review and signature. The GTF may request an appointment with the faculty member providing the evaluation to discuss it. The evaluation is put in the student's file. Faculty are encouraged, but not required, to write an evaluation.

Assignments. Technically, all GTF teaching and grading assignments are made by the Chair in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies. Since 2004, however, the Department has tried to allow GTFs a substantial amount of input into the process. To that end, a committee of GTFs is formed each year to advise the department (referred to below as "management") on GTF assignments. The process is as follows:

The committee shall be comprised of three or more members, all of whom must be currently employed as GTFs by the History Department. At least one of the committee's members must be a first-year GTF. Committee membership shall be on a strictly voluntary basis and shall be agreed upon by management and a majority of History Department GTFs.

Committee membership shall last for three consecutive terms, starting with recommendations provided for Winter term of a given school year. Thus, a given committee will provide recommendations for Winter, Spring, and the following Fall terms, at which point its membership will be replaced by new volunteers.

GTF assignment recommendations shall be made on the basis of the following factors:

- Specific departmental needs, as determined by management.
- Faculty requests for specific GTFs in the courses that they are teaching in a given term.
- GTF requests for specific assignments, in the manner detailed below.
- Field of historical study, with an attempt to match a given GTF's field with the field of the course they are assigned to.
- History of each GTF's past assignments, with an attempt to balance grading and discussion-section assignments over the course of a given GTF's graduate career at the U of O.

After management has determined departmental staffing needs (including GTF needs) for any given term, it will submit that information to the committee, along with any faculty requests. A member of the committee will then send out an e-mail to all of the GTFs (including new GTFs starting in the next school year if at all possible) asking for each individual's top three choices for his or her own assignment and the history of assignments held in the past. After allowing at least one week for replies, the committee will compile this information and make recommendations of GTF assignments, taking into account all of the factors outlined above, which will then be submitted to management for approval.

Management will make final decisions regarding assignments and will communicate their decisions to the committee. The committee will coordinate with management in sending out a final e-mail to all GTFs informing them of the assignments, while management will be responsible for informing the faculty of assignments. Inevitably, as all parties recognize, unanticipated developments will occur, necessitating changes at the last minute. Management will take full responsibility for making those changes.

Management is ultimately responsible for all assignments. The committee is strictly to be an advisory body.

Contract. The History Department will send a contract to the student to sign and return. The contract states the salary amount, the teaching assignment, benefits, Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation representation, etc.

Once the contract is signed the GTF is expected to be on campus the first day of the contract.

Should the GTF not be able to arrive on that day, he or she needs to contact the Graduate Coordinator.

The contract has been developed by the UO attorneys and may not be modified. Contracts are done on an annual basis. This means that a student receiving a contract for 2005-2006 may expect to receive a contract for 2006-2007 provided certain conditions are met: first, that the student has continuing eligibility; second, that the student is making satisfactory degree progress; and, third, that the student's evaluations are satisfactory. The Director of Graduate Studies will review all three conditions and, if necessary, call a meeting with the student to discuss any problems.

Termination of Contract. Should the GTF want to terminate the contract, he or she needs to write a memo to the Director of Graduate Studies and give it to the Graduate Coordinator. If the GTF does not formally terminate the contract, the History Department may not reallocate the GTF slot to another student.

Payroll. If the student has not worked for the Oregon University System (OUS) previously, then he or she needs to be put on payroll. The Graduate Coordinator will send the payroll forms to the student to complete.

General Duties and Requirements Statement (GDRS). Along with the GTF contract the student will receive a copy of the GDRS. The GDRS is a document that is an agreement between the History Department and the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF) union. Among other things, the GDRS defines the workload limits.

Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation (GTFF). GTFs at the University of Oregon are represented by their graduate student union, the GTFF. For more information see the GTFF website at: <http://www.gtff.net>