Policy Statement. The University of North Texas (UNT) is committed to teaching and the advancement of knowledge. It is the mission of UNT to provide the highest standards of excellence in higher education and to foster intellectual and personal development. To realize these goals, it is the policy of UNT to identify, recruit, and select highly qualified and diverse Teaching Fellows and Teaching Assistants in accordance with relevant accreditation standards for the University.

Application of Policy. Academic Departments.

Definitions. None.

Procedures and Responsibilities.

1. Each academic unit shall meet minimal academic criteria required for teaching fellows/teaching assistants in the department, in accordance with relevant accreditation standards for the University and the unit. These criteria shall be filed with each school/college and shall be periodically reviewed.

2. TFs who have primary responsibility for teaching a course and/or for assigning final grades for such a course must have earned at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching discipline. "Teaching discipline" will be determined by the Dean of the appropriate College or School within Southern Association of Colleges and Schools criteria.

3. Transcripts and other appropriate documentation of qualifications (including letters of recommendation, if required by the unit) shall be obtained for all TF/TAs who are to be employed, and shall be retained as long as the TF/TA is employed. UNT transcripts and imaged copies of official transcripts from other universities are located in the Office of the Registrar. Copies of transcripts from other universities are also on file in the School of Graduate Studies. Each academic unit will retain unofficial copies of transcripts for all TF/TA employees in the unit.

4. Language competencies for all nonnative speakers of English who seek teaching assistantships or teaching fellowships must be assured. Language competency shall be given careful consideration at the time of their selection and appointment.
a. International students should be selected as TF/TAs only after having been in residence one long semester or both summer sessions. Exceptions may be made only after approval of the dean of the college. If exceptions are made, the following procedures should be adhered to:

1. Telephone contact should be made by the department (preferably with prior warning to the student) to obtain an indication of the student's ability to communicate in English.

2. The letter of appointment shall contain a provision that the student, upon arrival on campus, must demonstrate a facility with spoken English sufficient to function in the classroom; otherwise the letter of commitment is void. English proficiency will be determined by the Intensive English Language Institute.

3. Close supervision shall be conducted by the faculty coordinator within the department during the first several weeks of the class to ensure that communication within the classroom situation is acceptable.

b) Language competencies and communication skills of all teaching fellows/teaching assistants, for whom English is a second language, shall be of primary concern to the departments and should be carefully monitored and supervised by the faculty coordinator of teaching fellows and teaching assistants within each department.

5. Participation in school/college-wide or academic unit orientations for TF/TAs shall be stated as a condition of employment in the letter of appointment. Individual academic units may make additional stipulations such as enrollment in special courses or attendance at special seminars for TAs and TFs.

6. The institutional requirement for a minimal load of academic work for TF/TAs in any long semester is 9 semester credit hours (SCHs) of graduate courses. Upon written recommendation of the college/school dean or her designee and approval of the dean of the graduate school, the minimum registration limit may be reduced to three semester hours for the long term for students who have filed an approved degree plan, have completed all course work, and are either ready to take the qualifying examinations and/or registered for thesis or dissertation.

The total combined load of course enrollment and teaching assignment may not exceed the equivalent of 18 SCHs in any long semester. Each academic unit may specify higher minimal loads so long as the specified loads do not exceed Coordinating Board established standards, which specify that supported graduate students may not be required to enroll in more than 9 SCHs of organized graduate coursework or more than
12 SCHs total with the additional 3 SCHs consisting of individualized or non-organized graduate coursework such as research, practicum, special problems, etc.

7. No fellowship or assistantship is regarded as valid until the applicant has obtained admission to the Graduate School and to the student’s academic unit. This statement shall be included in the letter of appointment.

**Responsible Party:** VP Academic Affairs

**References and Cross-references.**
Tex. Educ. Code § 51.917  
UNT Policy 06.023 Program of Assistance to Faculty whose Primary Language is not English

**Forms and Tools.** None

Approved: 8/1/1990  
Effective:  
Revised: 8/94; 8/95; 6/99; 7/03; 10/2011