Chapter One
Guidelines for a Departmental GSI Program

There are many ways to plan departmental development programs for graduate student instructors (GSIs). Because each department is unique, effective programs are tailored to the needs of the GSIs in a particular department. This section describes the steps a department might take to develop or restructure a program for graduate student instructors.

Designing an Effective GSI Training Program

This chapter focuses on two important goals that should be kept in mind when planning or restructuring a departmental GSI program:

1. The skills that GSIs need to develop in your department in order to be successful GSIs and future faculty.
2. The developmental needs of new GSIs as compared to more experienced GSIs.

Once these goals have been established, organizers of departmental GSI development programs will be ready to plan or revise a program. The last sections in this chapter offer logistical information to assist in this task:

3. Who will plan and run the training program?
4. What needs to be done when?

GSI Skills and Responsibilities

When planning a GSI training program that is tailored to a particular department, school or program, two key questions to ask are:

1. What are the GSIs' responsibilities?
2. What skills will GSIs need to fulfill their responsibilities?

1. What are the GSIs' responsibilities?

It is important for everyone -- faculty, GSIs, and students -- that GSIs understand exactly what the department and their supervising faculty member expect of them.

New GSIs have the dual role of being teachers and students. Knowing exactly what their teaching assignment entails will help GSIs allocate their time. More importantly, it will ensure that GSIs can answer students' questions about the course. While GSIs cannot be expected to have all the answers, and there are times when the faculty member will want
students to consult him or her about certain issues, it undermines GSIs' credibility when they must continually express uncertainty about the course and their role in it. Clarifying grading and course policies, how the course will run, and how the GSIs will fit into the course will help GSIs and undergraduates avoid misunderstandings.

Communicating a clear set of expectations to GSIs has benefits for supervising faculty in at least two ways. First, developing such a list before the course begins will save work throughout the semester. There will be fewer misunderstandings and miscommunications if GSIs know their responsibilities in advance. This in turn will help to insure that the course runs smoothly. Second, faculty can use the list of responsibilities to help them evaluate and give feedback to GSIs. By having a detailed list of GSI responsibilities, supervising faculty will be in a position to give specific feedback about strengths and areas that need improvement (see Chapter Seven for more on feedback and evaluation).

The following lists are designed to help you spell out GSI responsibilities and course policies about which undergraduates may inquire. The lists are not meant to be exhaustive and may include ideas that do not pertain to the GSIs in your unit. As you construct your own list, you might consider talking to experienced GSIs with whom you have worked in the past. GSI classroom responsibilities often include some of the following:

**Classroom Teaching, e.g.,**
- Leading discussion sections
- Teaching a lab
- One-to-one teaching in the studio
- Teaching a course as the instructor of record
- Holding office hours or review sessions

**Coordination with Other Parts of a Course, e.g.,**
- Attending, and perhaps giving, lectures
- Attending meetings of the instructional team to align lecture and section activities
- Coordinating course policies and grading expectations
- Relaying information from/to students for the instructor

**Testing and Grading, e.g.,**
- Creating assignments, test questions, and quizzes
- Grading and commenting on student writing, lab books, problem sets, etc.
- Explaining and assigning participation grades
- Calculating final grades

**Working with Instructional Technology, e.g.,**
- Coordinating the course management system
- Arranging AV materials, e.g., movie clips, in-class PowerPoints, visuals
• Handling online course materials

When drawing up a list of GSI responsibilities, faculty should consult the contract negotiated between the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) and the University (available online at http://www.umgeo.org/contract/). GSI appointments entail a given number of hours of work per week. Should GSIs' duties routinely exceed their contracted appointment hours, the GEO can lodge a grievance on behalf of the GSI with the University. To be fair to GSIs, and to avoid lengthy complaint procedures, coordinate GSI duties with the amount of hours in their appointments.

Figure 1.1 illustrates a sample list of responsibilities, outlined for a GSI teaching a lab section. It also can be helpful to think about how faculty and GSI responsibilities interface. Figure 1.2, from the Department of Psychology, is one example of this delineation.

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**Figure 1.1: Department of Physics, University of Michigan**

*Job Responsibilities of Graduate Student Instructors for Introductory Physics Laboratory Courses*

GSIs are paid employees of the University and, as such, have certain job obligations and rights (which are specified in the GEO contract). These are meant to help you develop as a teacher, to insure the quality of instruction afforded undergraduates, and facilitate safe, effective, and fun Introductory Physics Laboratory courses. Your obligations include the following:

- **Conduct**: Maintain a professional demeanor. This includes being sensitive to the cultural and ethnic backgrounds, sex, creed, age, sexual orientation, disabilities and other individual concerns of your students.
- **Training**: Participation in the discipline-specific GSI Training Program.
- **Meetings**: Attendance at weekly meetings with peers and coordinators to discuss concerns related to the course.
- **Preparation**: Preparation for the classes before you teach. This includes, but is not limited to, performing the lab beforehand, preparing brief introductory remarks, having any necessary handouts, and returning graded material promptly.
- **Classroom**: Come to class a few minutes early to check equipment and review safety procedures. Make sure that equipment is neat and turned off before you leave.
- **Overrides**: 20 students are the limit for any one lab section. Since students will collect and analyze data and write a lab report in class, all members of a group must be contributing in an integral way during class time. Often in groups of three, one member of the group becomes a spectator. There are only 10 lab tables per classroom; therefore the limit is 20 students. More than 20 can be admitted by GSI override but only with the permission of a lab supervisor.
- **Substitute**: The GSI should make every effort to make it to their section and be punctual in doing so. If you are unable to make it to your section you should arrange for a substitute and let D. Allen know who is covering for you. If you cannot find a substitute, contact your lead GSI or D. Allen ASAP.
• **Office Hours**: You should have one contact hour for every two sections you teach. These office hours are to be held in the Help Room (1416 Randall). Please encourage your students to come. When not assisting your own students you should attend to any other students in need.

• **Documentation**: Give a copy of any supplemental materials you prepare for your students to D. Allen for documentation. This will be helpful for GSIs or faculty requiring resources in your absence.

• **Mail/Email**: Check your mail and email regularly for important messages concerning the labs.

• **Feedback**: You are required to get written feedback on your teaching from your students with a mid-semester feedback form. An example of this is provided in the appendix. There is also an end of semester evaluation which you can view after the final semester grading is complete. See D. Allen for details.

• **Final Grades**: Submit grade sheets to lab supervisor within one week of the end of scheduled lab meeting. The grading policy is covered in *General Notes for GSIs*.

• **Hours**: The number of hours of work you spend on your teaching depends on your contracted fraction, the lab that week, and how experienced you are. Here is a typical weekly breakdown for a .25 appointment. If you find you are spending much more than 10 hours per week *on average*, please talk to the course administrators about time management.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Hours (range)</th>
<th>Hours (avg.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hour</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Departmental Meeting</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation</td>
<td>1-3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meetings/Email/Other</td>
<td>0-2</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8-15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Instructors’ preparations**

Psychology faculty are expected to help prepare GSIs to teach their specific courses with a variety of pedagogical information before and during their GSI term. Suggestions based on current practices are identified in the following sections.

**Before the term begins**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>GSIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First meeting</td>
<td>Schedule 1-3 months ahead of the teaching term. Discuss course goals, materials, and expectations for GSIs and students</td>
<td>Review previous courses &amp; materials Discuss with previous GSIs Bring questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define role of GSM</td>
<td>If GSM is assigned, negotiate tasks and expectations</td>
<td>Discuss how GSM will interact with GSIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choosing readings &amp; videos</td>
<td>Involve GSIs in review and decision</td>
<td>Gather, review, post materials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating syllabi</td>
<td>Explain course syllabus Provide previous syllabi Work with GSIs to maintain comparable section syllabi</td>
<td>Coordinate syllabi with GSIs and instructor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observing lectures &amp; sections in similar course</td>
<td>Encourage observations of lectures and sections</td>
<td>GSIs should observe similar sections in term before teaching if possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expectations, procedures, rules</td>
<td>Discuss with GSIs</td>
<td>Discuss with other GSIs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create and share outlines for sections</td>
<td>Guidance needed for uniformity Maintain equivalent workloads among sections</td>
<td>GSIs work together to develop section syllabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decide on assessments, schedule exam rooms, create grading rubrics</td>
<td>Discuss with GSIs and include in syllabus or in CTools</td>
<td>Discuss grading different products before term begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create CTools site and upload materials</td>
<td>Create site and publish basic information before term begins</td>
<td>Create section sites and coordinate with GSIs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the term

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Instructor</th>
<th>GSIs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attend lectures</td>
<td>Faculty are encouraged to involve GSIs in their lectures and to require their attendance</td>
<td>GSIs should attend lectures to know what was presented and to be available for student questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give guest lecture</td>
<td>Not first time GSIs Need to provide guidance and advice to GSIs CRLT might evaluate</td>
<td>Need to practice public speaking, using media, and interacting with class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organize section activities and attend weekly GSI meetings</td>
<td>Choose weekly activities in sections Guide GSIs with models, collaboration, or rotating turns for designing activities</td>
<td>Report problems &amp; successes Maintain similarity across sections Discuss grades, attendance, cheating, etc. as they arise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade quizzes, exams, papers</td>
<td>Make format, due dates, penalties, grading systems clear</td>
<td>Provide prompt and clear feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam reviews</td>
<td>Some instructors do reviews; sometimes GSIs do reviews</td>
<td>Attend reviews Encourage student study groups to hold their own reviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term GSI evaluation</td>
<td>Can use CRLT Use the information to help GSIs reflect on and improve their teaching</td>
<td>Informal and anonymous surveys. Ask CRLT to observe or collect anonymous suggestions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain C Tools site for section</td>
<td>Add weekly resources, announcements, grades</td>
<td>Maintain discussion groups or blogs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve test rooms, proctor exams</td>
<td>Make expectations clear for GSIs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End of term grades discussion</td>
<td>Insure comparable criteria used across sections</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. What skills will GSIs need to fulfill their responsibilities?

There may be a set of general skills that the department wants all of the GSIs to have, and there may be some skills that are needed only to teach a particular course. The more relevant the program is in helping the GSIs to gain the skills they will need to teach successfully, the more useful it will seem for GSIs.

The following checklist includes skills that GSIs may need to develop for different teaching responsibilities: teaching a discussion section, grading students and holding office hours, teaching an independent section, and teaching labs. Checking those skills on the list you think are necessary for GSIs in your department will help you focus on the needed training. After you have identified the skills needed, decide when it is best to give the GSIs instruction for those skills. Which skills do GSIs need in order to make the first few weeks of class successful? Focus on those for inclusion in the program before classes begin. Which topics require some experience and therefore should be covered during the semester?

1) Skills for teaching discussion sections, courses, or review sessions

- Teaching inclusively and building rapport with students
- Planning a lesson
- Helping students integrate readings and lecture material
- Questioning students effectively
- Developing activities/tasks that will get students thinking
- Using writing to help students learn
- Using different methods for getting students actively involved
- Ensuring that everyone participates
- Beginning a discussion, setting up the task
- Bringing the material together at the end so students will know what they have learned
- Giving clear, short explanations
- Handling problems (students who dominate, students who get the class off track, students who won't take you seriously, etc.)
Setting up office hours, etiquette of office hours, ways to encourage students to attend office hours.

Handling problems in office hours (complaints about grades, personal problems, requests for extensions or extra credit, etc.)

Getting students thinking in office hours

Giving students feedback on written work, participation

Grading written work

Grading participation

Developing quizzes, test questions

Using instructional technology effectively, such as CTools, class websites, PowerPoint, etc.

Writing a section syllabus

2) Skills for grading and working with students in one-on-one instructional settings (like office hours or the studio)

Giving students effective feedback on assignments

Being fair and consistent in grading

Scheduling meetings

Handling problems (complaints about grades, personal problems, requests for extensions or extra credit, etc.)

Questioning students effectively

Building rapport with students

Getting students to think

3) Skills for teaching labs

Preparing for a lab

Starting off on the right foot on the first day of lab class

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____ Giving an introduction to the lab
____ Giving clear, organized, explanations and demonstrations
____ Presenting and reinforcing safety rules
____ Forming and using lab groups
____ Teaching inclusively
____ Grading and giving students feedback on lab reports
____ Questioning students effectively
____ Determining and communicating lab policies
____ Handling problems (complaints about grades, students being disruptive, unprepared students who only want the answer, requests for extensions or extra credit, etc.)
____ Using lab equipment and technology effectively

Stages of GSI Development and Implications for a GSI Development Program

Ideally, a GSI development program will address the training needs of not only new GSIs, but also more experienced GSIs as well. As GSIs gain more experience, research finds that they progress through several developmental stages, in response to which effective GSI training programs may need to adjust their training approach and topics (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998; Nyquist & Wulff, 1996; Sprague & Nyquist 1989, 1991). The following section discusses developmental considerations that GSI training programs will wish to address.

Developmental stages are not determined by years of experience, as some new GSIs may jump quickly to beliefs and behaviors characteristic of advanced GSIs, while GSIs with multiple terms of teaching experience may continue to benefit from supervisory behaviors associated with new GSIs. Likewise, experienced GSIs faced with instructional challenges may revisit earlier stages momentarily as they figure out how to deal with the problem. Therefore, the best way to understand GSIs’ stage locations is through conversations about their particular needs, expectations, and strengths. The following sections offer some key concerns that may be voiced by new and advanced GSIs in that conversation.
Senior Learners

Beginning GSIs often are located at a stage Nyquist and Wulff (1998) title “senior learners.” Senior learners’ main questions about teaching include (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998):

- Will students like me? Will they listen to me?
- How can I balance time between my graduate student coursework and my GSI responsibilities?
- How can I get help from the faculty supervisor?
- What is the right way to teach? Where do I start?
- Am I doing a good job?

Implications for a GSI Training Program

For faculty supervisors of senior learner, regularly scheduled meetings – from before the term starts, to the time when grades are submitted – can help to clarify expectations throughout the term and establish good lines of communication. Research on senior learners indicates that many prefer a more structured, managerial style of supervision (Meyers, 1995; Prieto, 1999; Sprague & Nyquist, 1989). Such a supervisory style is characterized by the following behaviors:

- Remain visible and accessible (Sprague & Nyquist, 1989). To resolve issues expediently, establish regular meetings and let GSIs know how and when they can contact you if they have questions at other times. Regularly scheduled meetings promote mentoring relationships, and they can be important forums for faculty and GSIs to discuss both logistics and pedagogy (Boyle & Boice, 1998; von Hoene & Mintz, 2001).
- Work collaboratively, being open to feedback and a provider of feedback. (Sprague & Nyquist, 1989). GSIs can participate in a midterm student feedback process, where they can receive feedback from students. Other forms of early feedback that you and your GSIs can use include videotaping, consultations, and student surveys. (See Chapter Seven for more information.) If meeting GSIs in the context of a training course or program, it would be helpful to utilize one of these early feedback systems in order to get feedback on the class and model its use.
- Promote discussion of your expectations for GSIs. Make clear your standards for their work and performance, but be open to feedback and change.
- Discuss time and role management issues with GSIs. For new GSIs, the adjustment from student to teacher can be difficult. You may want to offer suggestions for managing their workload as both a graduate student and a GSI, or give concrete strategies for efficient grading and course planning.

Chapters Two and Three of this Handbook focus on specific training activities for new GSIs.
Colleagues-in-Training and Junior Colleagues

GSIs with multiple terms of teaching experience often are located at stages Nyquist & Sprague (1998) term “colleagues-in-training” and “junior colleagues.” Studies of experienced GSIs find that they are more satisfied with a collegial and mentoring approach that encourages collaborative problem solving and solicits GSIs’ opinions on training, supervision, and instructional activities (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996; Prieto, 1999). While colleagues-in-training can benefit from learning more about teaching, such as new and innovative instructional activities, junior colleagues often can serve as co-planners of a GSI training program.

Just as new GSIs have questions about their teaching, more experienced GSIs will have concerns, albeit about different instructional issues. Some these concerns may be:

- Are students learning?
- How can I learn about new teaching techniques?
- How can I get experience teaching my own course?
- What do I do if I have a different viewpoint about the material or course requirements than the professor?
- How can I prepare for a future position as a faculty member or professional?

Implications for a GSI Training Program

For departments, it may be tempting to feel that work with a more advanced GSI translates into a more “hands-off” approach. Instead, research suggests that GSIs at these stages benefit from a different type of supervision and training.

A “role model” supervisory style works well for colleagues-in-training, or GSIs who are in intermediate stages, with more experience than a novice instructor but not yet ready to take on significant independent course responsibilities. These GSIs still desire some structured supervision, but also wish to branch out to learn new and creative pedagogical techniques. As a role model, you can demonstrate good pedagogical practice, observe GSIs’ sections, encourage them to give you feedback on your own teaching, and direct GSIs to instructional resources in your field. When problems or issues arise, these more experienced GSIs may seek input in the decision-making process. As a role model, you can collaborate with the GSI to “think about the problem, generate options, and… discuss potential outcomes” (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996, p. 27).

Very advanced GSIs, or “junior colleagues,” will seek more independence in their instructional roles. As a faculty supervisor, your role will gradually transition to that of a mentor, where you and the GSI work jointly to plan and execute a GSI training program or course. You also can play a valuable role by helping GSIs plan their own courses for your department, school, or college, or a nearby institution. Additionally, junior colleagues can help to mentor less advanced GSIs. Chapter Four of this Handbook focuses on specific workshops and training activities that will focus on these issues for more experienced GSIs.
Additionally, many departments employ Graduate Student Mentors (GSMs), experienced GSIs appointed to work with other GSIs in a course or department to enhance teaching. This chapter has a variety of examples of how GSMs can be used, and CRLT offers workshops and resources to help prepare experienced GSIs to take on this role. (For GSM workshops, see http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/gsmgsicoordprog.html).

Figure 1.3 offers an example of a pedagogical training program that follows the developmental trajectory of GSIs. Offered by the English Department, it includes training courses and follow-up colloquia, such as a Spring Teaching Workshop that brings together new and experienced GSIs.
Figure 1.3: Department of English Language and Literature, University of Michigan

Pedagogical Training Outline

English 993 (1 credit; taught by tenure-track faculty and Lec III/IVs)
All GSIs teaching English 124 (Writing and Literature), 125 (College Writing), or 223 (Introduction to Creative Writing) for the first time as part of the English Department Writing Program participate in a two-day workshop in August as well as weekly teaching circle meetings during the Fall term. The workshop covers issues such as: creating focused writing assignments, grading and commenting on student work, effectively incorporating reading in a composition course, running discussion, handling individual student concerns, working with students for whom English is a second language, and facilitating writing workshops. Participants also have the opportunity to workshop their syllabi with other instructors, after they have received feedback on the syllabi from the faculty running the workshop.

Teaching circles meet every week during Fall term. Groups of 6-8 GSIs work closely with a faculty member as well as with the English Department Writing Program’s Graduate Student Mentors (GSMs); the weekly meetings focus on specific issues of teaching practice as well as the details of teaching rhetoric, grammar, and style. Each GSI has at least one classroom visit from the faculty mentor, with an individual conference afterwards to discuss the visit.

English 695 (3 credits; taught by tenure-track faculty)
This course is designed to provide guidance, support, and advice for English Department GSIs teaching discussion sections for the first time at the University of Michigan (typically second-year students in the Language and Literature Ph.D. program). The course aims to address both the practical questions that come with teaching and some of the broader theoretical issues involved in course design; the course also aims to help new GSIs develop a set of strategies for reflecting on their own development and practices as a teacher, now and in semesters to come. Throughout the term, the course focuses on many of the practical concerns of being a graduate student instructor: facilitating discussion, grading, negotiating one’s relationship with students and with professors, controlling one’s time, etc. These discussions are complemented by selected readings from some of the thoughtful published material on teaching, often specifically within an English department. The second half of the course focuses in part on course goals and syllabus design (including specific writing assignments) to help GSIs prepare for teaching English 124 the following year. As part of English 695, the faculty instructor visits each of the GSI’s classes and meets with the GSI afterwards to provide specific feedback on the GSI’s pedagogical strengths and weaknesses as well as the kinds of student interactions happening in the class. The course works on the premise that one key to good teaching is collaboration, and in this course we work together to talk through pedagogical questions and concerns, including how to apply pedagogical theory. Our weekly meetings as a community of professional teachers are a forum where GSIs can share teaching worries and successes, learn from each other’s experiences, and develop pedagogical strategies and skills that will guide them throughout their teaching career.
Required Texts

- Two course packs with scholarly readings and sample course materials.

Course Goals

- To expand course participants’ sense of the pedagogical theory behind our pedagogical practices;
- To address the practical concerns that all teachers confront in designing and implementing a course, including those specific to being a graduate student instructor;
- To continue to develop skills as a self-reflective teacher;
- To develop a self-reflective and supportive community of teachers within the program;
- To create a preliminary course design and syllabus for English 124.

Selected Assignments

- Creating sample writing assignments, exam questions, discussion questions, and course descriptions (all of which are workedshopped in class)
- Grading and commenting on selected student papers (the class then participates in a grade norming session)
- Creating a syllabus for English 124 (Writing and Literature).
- Visiting a class and writing a classroom observation.

Follow-up Training

- Monthly teaching colloquia, organized by the English Department Writing Program GSMs and facilitated by experienced tenure-track faculty, Lecturers, and GSIs.
- Individual conferences with the Director or Associate Director of the English Department Writing Program about course evaluations as needed (evaluations are reviewed every term), as well as any other issues arising.
- Classroom visits (often by tenure-track faculty, including the Director of the English Department Writing Program and faculty advising the GSI’s dissertation, as well as the GSMs).
- Midterm Student Feedback sessions conducted by the GSMs.
- Optional microteaching sessions facilitated by the GSMs.
- Available videos of experienced Lecturers running workshops of student essays and teaching close reading.
- Published goals and guidelines for English 124, 125, 225, and 325, as well as a detailed guide for new instructors of English 124 and 125.
- A website maintained by the GSMs where all instructors can share teaching materials, including syllabi, writing assignments, peer review guidelines, and classroom activities.
Who Will Plan and Run the GSI Training Program? Faculty-GSM Coordination

In many departments, there is a designated staff or faculty member in charge of GSI supervision and training. Some units also have a committee of experienced GSIs, staff and faculty to design and implement a program to help GSIs develop teaching skills. In recent years, it also has become common to utilize Graduate Student Mentors (GSMs) to work in departmental training programs. (A GSM position is a form of a GSI appointment, and some GSMs are also GSIs with an additional appointment fraction. The 2002 Provost’s Task Force on the Testing and Training of New GSIs recommended at least one GSM per department that hires GSIs, and for departments that hire several GSI, a ratio of one GSM per ten GSIs (www.crlt.umich.edu/publinks/Task_Force_Report02.pdf.) Utilization of a GSM for GSI training can offer many benefits: a peer mentor for GSIs, a person to share the workload and offer input into a program’s design, as well as a rich experience for the GSM’s development. However, in order to establish a productive relationship, work with a GSM should be carefully planned.

The following section offers guidelines for working with GSMs (Bierwert, 2002).

Hiring GSMs

• Choose GSMs who have proven themselves as good teachers and have good communication skills. In order for them to work effectively with other GSIs, they must be respected and competent.

• If you are able to select more than one GSM, consider choosing different genders, nationalities, races/ethnicities, etc. If you can only select one GSM, consider diversity across years (if your GSM was a woman last year, consider a man; if your GSM was white, consider a person of color, etc.).

• If the department has more than one GSM, try to stagger the appointments so at least one of the GSMs has been in the position for a year. This will provide continuity in the departmental program and help new GSMs build confidence and skills.

• Appoint GSMs by the end of winter term for the following fall. When GSMs are appointed early, it gives them enough time to discuss the job with experienced GSMs and attend CRLT GSM training workshops (http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/gsmscoordprog.html). It also gives the department a chance to work with them before classes begin so that they are comfortable with their positions and have a chance to plan their semester. It allows GSMs to contact and meet with the new GSIs before the fall term begins.

GSM Duties
• Give GSMs clear written definitions of their duties. (For an example, see Figure 1.4 of this chapter.) Be specific about what is expected of the GSM and give concrete suggestions for how to carry out these responsibilities.

• Make sure their duties can be done within the hours of their appointment. Most GSMs are also teaching as well as doing their own course work and research. Encourage GSMs to keep within the expected hours so that this important job does not "eat up" their other commitments.

• Don't put GSMs in an evaluative role (i.e., ask them to report on a GSI's skills for hiring purposes). If GSMs are put in an evaluative role new GSIs will be hesitant to go to them for help or to discuss openly any problems they might be having. The role of the GSM should be formative. In other words, their role should be to assist new GSIs in developing their confidence and their teaching skills.

• At the end of their term, have GSMs write a detailed report on what they did and ask them to include any materials they created. Make this material available for any incoming GSMs so they won't have to "reinvent the wheel."

GSM Support

• In general, make the position visible and credible to both GSIs and faculty. Make sure the new GSIs and faculty know who the GSMs are and what to expect from them. In the past, some GSMs felt that they were not empowered by their departments to do what they were expected to do. Some GSMs who were connected with large courses were not recognized by the faculty member teaching the course.

• Have a clear line of supervision so that GSMs know to whom they should report. A faculty member should be clearly in charge of the departmental GSI training program and clearly visible during the training. This will make the program credible for new GSIs and will assure continuity of the training. It will give the GSMs the support they need to make the training successful.

• Provide training for the GSMs and keep them informed of activities available for them through CRLT. It is especially important for GSMs to know how to assist GSIs in dealing with diversity issues in the classroom, for example, how gender, race, and nationality might have an impact on each GSI's authority and credibility in the classroom. It is also important to help GSMs recognize cultural differences in communication styles and ways for them to work with GSIs to develop a relationship in which they can comfortably discuss issues.

• If there are multiple GSMs, create frequent opportunities for GSMs to meet together and with the faculty member in charge of the training to discuss what they are doing and any concerns they might have.
• Keep GSMs informed and updated about administrative information regarding GSI positions and appointments. Having up-to-date lists of GSIs and knowing how many GSIs will be appointed for each course allows GSMs to plan their activities accordingly.

• Include GSMs in departmental pedagogy or curriculum committees or discussions. This input will enable GSMs to give the department the benefit of their experience as GSIs, and will enable them to work more effectively with other GSIs in the department.

• GSMs should be aware of the training received outside the department by GSIs educated abroad in a non-English medium, so they can help avoid duplicative training.

Resources
• Provide resources for the GSMs. GSMs should have a small budget to work with for refreshments where needed, copying privileges, books that are relevant, etc.

GSM Activities

Below is a list of some of the ways that GSMs have worked with departmental GSI training programs:

• Assisted in designing the overall departmental GSI training program
• Assisted in the facilitation of departmental training before the semester began:
  • Facilitated practice teaching sessions (See Chapter Two).
  • Facilitated workshops on topics such as leading discussions, grading, etc. (See Chapter Three)
• Developed a departmental handbook for GSIs
• Invited individual GSIs out to coffee during the semester to discuss how they were doing: their successes, their problems, new ideas they wanted to get input on before trying
• Organized potlucks and other gatherings for new GSIs and experienced GSIs to get acquainted
• Facilitated weekly discussions with all new GSIs
• Observed new GSIs' classes and gave them feedback (See Chapter Seven)
• Facilitated midterm feedback sessions with students in all of the new GSIs' classes and met individually with GSIs to discuss the results (See Chapter Seven)
• Paired new GSIs with an experienced GSI to help them learn the "ropes" of the department and get acquainted with others in the department
• Paired new GSIs to visit and discuss each others' classes and then met in a group to discuss what they had learned
• Created a resource file of materials for GSIs
• Assisted GSIs in the application of technology resources
**GSM Responsibilities and Ideas**

- A 10% fraction means a work expectation of up to 93 hours per semester → pick and choose what interests you from the long list below. Only the first five bullets below are "core" GSM responsibilities.
- Participate in new instructor orientation in the week before the beginning of the Fall semester
  - I'll email you a tentative schedule and ask for your input
  - If you could help to organize the party that takes place on the Friday at the end of the orientation, that would be great 😊
- Provide teaching advice when requested
- Provide mentoring regarding the balance of academic, teaching and personal responsibilities
- Observe classes when requested, and give feedback
  - GSMs visit new instructors to provide informal feedback (not shared with the faculty coordinator) during the first couple of weeks before the faculty coordinator's first visit
  - The faculty coordinator may ask GSMs to visit instructors who need more feedback
  - GSIs may ask GSMs to visit them
- Attend CRLT events for GSMs
  - Great opportunity to meet GSMs from other depts. and share ideas
- Facilitate/attend informal lunches/coffee hours for GSIs to get together and exchange ideas in a "peer group" format. Some possible ideas:
  - An informal "Lesegruppe" [reading group]. A group holding discussions in German might be especially popular, and could also include e.g., History grad students studying German history, Comp Lit grad students whose languages include German, etc.
  - Dissertation writing support group: meet periodically to provide feedback on each other's drafts
  - Prelim support group: meet periodically to discuss progress with readings, etc.
  - Job market support group: meet periodically to provide feedback on drafts of cover letters, sample syllabi, teaching statements and teaching portfolios, job talks, etc., or to discuss interview strategies, job openings etc.
    - A related topic might be "upper level teaching": a group could meet regularly to exchange draft syllabi, encourage each other to arrange with professors to guest teach in their upper level classes, and to share and discuss each other's experiences in doing so, etc.
- Facilitate additional practice teaching sessions for instructors who want more practice beyond the Fall workshop
  - So far, no one has ever requested this.

- Promote a departmental social life
  - Regular lunches (perhaps taking turns cooking, or just going to a local restaurant together, or getting take-out to eat together in the break room)
  - Bar afternoons, e.g. after the colloquium in Winter, or after 540 in the Fall
  - Joint visits to concerts of interest (e.g. performances involving members of the dept., or performances with German connections, or just good concerts)
  - Joint visits to films of interest at the Michigan Theater or elsewhere--e.g. German language films, or Literaturverfilmungen, or films relating to "Theory" in some interesting way, or just any interesting movie

- Periodic parties

- Sports
  - perhaps get just a few people together, but perhaps some events would interest more people
  - tennis doubles
  - Wally ball
  - bowling outings
  - set up/join a regular volleyball or soccer game (e.g. the soccer games Geoff Eley plays in, or pickup soccer games at Fuller park etc.)
  - pair people up as jogging or workout or swimming partners
  - bike rides, e.g. to Dexter
  - bird watching walks in Gallup Park or the Arb or the Furstenberg Nature Area next to Gallup park
  - joint outings to see sporting events such as UM Football (get a group of season tickets together??) or other UM sports (gymnastics, basketball, baseball, softball…), or Tiger baseball games, or Pistons basketball games, or Lions football games, or Red Wings hockey games…
  - enter a team in an Intramural sports competition

- Consider including graduate students from other departments in these events
  - work with GSMs for French and Spanish
  - include grad students in Slavic
    - slavic gsi@umich.edu will reach all current Slavic GSIs;
    - slavic.dept.grads@UMICH.EDU will reach all graduate students in Slavic.
  - contact grad students from History, Comp Lit, Anthropology, Sociology, English etc. who enroll in German grad classes

- CRLT consultations are available to advise GSMs
Running the GSI Training Program: A Sample Timetable

The following timetable is provided to guide departments in planning GSI teaching development programs beginning in the fall semester.

Winter Term
1. Evaluate present GSI development efforts. Contact the Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT) as early as possible for assistance with developing or revising your program.
2. Develop a tentative schedule for all GSI development activities. Before setting the date, check the dates of campus-wide orientations and programs. (Call 734-764-0505 to check the dates of the CRLT engineering or university-wide orientations.) Notify GSIs and faculty of the final schedule before summer break.
3. Assess GSI duties, responsibilities, teaching development needs, departmental resources, and any GEO contract changes. Hire GSIs and send out offer letters. New GSIs’ offer letters should include the training requirements they are expected to fulfill, such as orientations and participation expectations. (See Chapter Two for a sample.)
4. Notify GSIs, continuing and new, of the need to keep the department informed about changes of address, including summer addresses.
5. Contact faculty members who you wish to help conduct the orientation and workshop sessions. Hire GSMs, and get all involved in the planning of their sessions.
6. If CRLT assistance is desired for a particular GSI training sessions (for example, a session on multicultural teaching), contact CRLT as soon as possible: 734-764-0505 or crlt@umich.edu.

July - August
1. Have new faculty GSI coordinators and GSMs participate in workshops offered by CRLT to prepare for these roles (http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/gsmscoordprog.html).
2. Work with GSIs and faculty members who will be leading orientation sessions.
3. Develop evaluation forms for training programs.

August - September
1. Conduct teaching workshops and orientations before classes begin.
2. Give GSIs the schedule for workshops during the semester.
3. If your department’s new GSIs attend one of the CRLT GSI Teaching Orientations, GSMs and faculty are welcome to attend as well, in order to coordinate training efforts. (See Chapter Two for registration information and agendas.)
September - December

1. After classes begin, implement additional activities: practice teaching, videotaping, observations, consultation, workshops, visiting speakers, etc.

2. If utilizing an early evaluation system (see Chapter Seven), plan to implement it before the midterm. Plan for follow-up, whereby faculty or GSMs can provide targeted support to GSIs who need additional assistance.

3. Evaluate the program.

4. If new GSIs will be teaching in the winter term, plan for their training.

5. Plan for at least one offering that focuses on development of experienced GSIs. (See Chapter Four for examples.)

Compiled from:

Sources cited: