

The 1976 Graduate Calendar has a section headed "Teaching and Research Assistantships", which reads "Graduate assistantships, both teaching and research, are available in most departments to graduate students at Simon Fraser University. Further information should be obtained by the student from the Department in which the major study is being undertaken".

As this paragraph indicates, hiring practices vary from department to department. In some departments, hiring is done by the professors requiring T.A.s. In others, a committee of professors makes the appointments, and in at least one, the departmental assistant assigns teaching assistants to classes. Significantly, the University's Policies and Procedures Manual has no section on teaching assistants, although it does have sections on Sessional Lecturers and Research Associates. These latter groups are also teachers without faculty status.

All TAs to whom I spoke agreed that presently positions are granted on the basis of friendship and patronage. In many departments, students in each tutorial group are required to fill in a report on their TA at the end of the semester, and if a TA receives many unfavourable evaluations from his class, or if the professor is not pleased with the TA's performance, it is unlikely that another TAship will be awarded. In most departments, TAs are not assigned a group until after classes have met at least once, so there is little job security attached to the position. (This may be justified in part because enrollment is unpredictable in most courses until after the first week of classes.)

Duties of a TA include attending the lectures given by the professor in the course which he is TAing, preparing his/her own tutorials, holding his/her own tutorials, submitting examination questions, helping to develop courses (in some "young" departments), keeping regular office hours, and marking essays and examinations. These duties would occupy about twenty hours a week for a course which meets three hours a week.

The number of TAs in the summer semester is about one-third the number working in the fall or spring semesters. Figures obtained from the few departmental secretaries who responded to a questionnaire sent out in August indicates that male TAs greatly outnumber female TAs in every department.

The number of semesters that a student may hold a TAship seems to vary from 4 to 8 among departments.

Salaries were increased by the Board of Governors over the summer. Beginning in September rates for a semester's work will be \$2200 for a TA with an undergraduate degree and \$2650 for a TA working toward a Phd. Half of this is considered a grant and thus is not taxable under some circumstances.

Some persons who attempted organizing in the spring of 1976 wrote a constitution modelled on the constitutions of the AUCE locals.

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Teaching and Research Assistantship
graduate students at Simon Fraser University. Further information should be obtained by the student from the Department in which the major study is being undertaken.

As this paragraph indicates, hiring practices vary from department to department. In some departments, hiring is done by the professors themselves. In others, a committee of professors makes the appointments, and in at least one, the departmental assistant assigns teaching assistants to classes. Significantly, the University's Policy and Procedures Manual has no section on teaching assistants, although it does have sections on seasonal lecturers and research associates. These latter groups are also teachers without faculty status.

All this to whom I spoke agreed that presently positions are granted on the basis of friendship and patronage. In many departments, students in each tutorial group are required to fill in a report on their TA at the end of the semester, and if a TA receives any unfavorable evaluations from his class, or if the professor is not pleased with the TA's performance, it is unlikely that another TA job will be awarded. In most departments, the one not awarded a spot (and after classes have met at least once, so there is little job security attached to the position). (This may be justified in part because enrollment is unpredictable in most courses until after the first week of classes.)

Duties of a TA include attending the lectures given by the professor in the course which he is TAing, preparing his own tutorials, holding his own tutorials, submitting examination questions, helping to develop courses for some "young" departments, keeping regular office hours, and writing essays and examinations. These duties would occupy about twenty hours a week for a course which meets three times a week.

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The number of examiners that a student may hold a TA job seems to vary from 4 to 8 most departments.

Salaries were increased by the Board of Governors over the summer. Beginning in September rates for a semester's work will be \$1200 for a TA with an undergraduate degree and \$825 for a TA working toward a BEd. Half of this is considered a grant and thus is not taxable under some circumstances.

Some persons who organized or participated in the writing of 1975 wrote a constitution modeled on the constitution of the AUCU locals.

Difficulties to be faced on organizing would seem to be:

1. appointments are for a 4 month period only--there is no stable continuing work force;
2. TAs are workers and students and hence have much of their time committed;
3. persons who benefit from the ad hoc nature of the present system are reluctant to change it;
4. The ad hoc nature of the present system leaves organizers very vulnerable;
5. TAships are considered part of the training of a student towards an academic career and are thus not considered solely as jobs;
6. TAships are considered by many as a form of financial assistance and are thus not viewed as strictly jobs.

Reccomendations:

1. Practical and financial assistance should be offered to the persons presently interested in organizing.
2. Sessional lecturers and research associates should probably be included in the group because of community of interest.
3. Organizing could be done through student unions in departments where these exist.
4. Concentrated organizing should happen during the 3rd and 4th weeks of classes when all tutorial groups have been assigned and the work load is still relatively light.
5. Organizing is likely most safely done by TAs in an "off" semester or by those who have already had their quota of appointments. The Student Society is hiring a person to organize student unions in departments, and this person could likely be counted on for much assistance.

Perilla Groves