

# GUIDELINES FOR ENGLISH 594: Practicum In Teaching

The purpose of the following guidelines is to insure the integrity of English 594 as a course that serves the educational purposes of the graduate student enrolled for credit. Since the practicum is a variable credit course and could take shape in a variety of forms, the guidelines are general.

One way to approach thinking about guidelines is to compare 594 with the teaching assistantship.

--Teaching assistants have a consistently (throughout the course) high level of responsibility for independent planning and execution of teaching in a course, including grading. Or in cases where teaching assistants might not have that high a level of responsibility, they would nonetheless be paid to facilitate increased enrollments in a given class by supplementing the work of the faculty member. They may also be used to improve the level of personal instruction offered in large lecture courses.

--In 594, the level of responsibility of the graduate student for teaching should be defined by the educational goals of the practicum and should not approach, at least not for a sustained time, those of teaching assistants in English 101. Nor should the teaching activities of the student in 594 result in increased generation of undergraduate credit hours--at least not by design.

--The number of hours of work for 594 should be determined by the number of credit hours, following the catalog guidelines and normal expectations for work in other graduate courses (approximately 3 hours a week of preparation for each credit). The hours are not, as for teaching assistants, determined by the extent of the teaching duties.

--For the teaching practicum, both actual teaching experience (practice) and course work related to teaching (pedagogy) are necessary.

## 40-60% pedagogy / 40-60% practice

The practicum should be evenly weighted between pedagogical study and classroom experience, with the particular balance flexible given the particulars of the course, professor and student.

### **Pedagogy**

Pedagogical consultation and evaluation: the time student and professor meet together to discuss issues of teaching techniques, theory, etc., plus evaluation of the student's progress in the class.

Pedagogical reading and research: the time the student takes to read and research critical works on teaching.

### **Practice**

Class preparation: the time the student spends reading and/or evaluating undergraduate work, preparing lesson plans, etc.

Class contact: the time the student is directly responsible for leading or facilitating class, and the time the student sits in on classes as an observer.

## Practicum Contract

In order to establish a solid agreement between student and professor on the particular structure of their practicum, a written contract with the following elements should be drafted and signed by both before registration can occur:

A description of the goals of the practicum and how it fits into this particular course, and this particular student's interest.

A description of the specific activities the student will undertake to meet these goals. This will describe, in percentages or hours per week, the student's responsibilities for pedagogical study and classroom practice. (See the options above.)

If you are filling an Internship position, you should also describe the additional teaching duties you will accomplish as a T.A.

Copies of previous contracts can be obtained from the Graduate Studies Secretary if you want to see some specific models.

### Registration

Students interested in taking 594 need to complete a contract prior to registering for the course. The contract should be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.

### Exit Requirement

Both student and professor should write their own assessments of their experience with English 594. If the section of 594 is connected to a T.A. Internship position, then the assessment should include remarks about that experience as well. These assessments will be submitted to the English Graduate Program Office to be filed along with the contract.

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