Our doctoral program is essential to our Department. We understand that, in order to maintain a program of adequate size and quality, we must support our graduate students. With a few exceptions, teaching positions are our only means of providing that support.

Consequently, we have worked diligently over the past several years to offer as many of these positions as possible. We have reduced Adjunct appointments, encouraged regular faculty to teach 4000-level and above and increased the number of courses which require TAs. In the Fall and Spring terms, we are now able to offer at least some support to most second- through fifth-year graduate students who request positions and are not on academic probation.

In return for increased instructional opportunities, we ask our graduate students to perform their instructional obligations appropriately. In order to ensure that the standards of acceptable performance are understood, we articulate them below.

**Basic Standards of Performance for Teaching Assistants**

Teaching Assistants (TAs) are responsible for assisting students in the understanding of the material presented in lectures, and for enriching that material with their own elaborations. First and foremost, this requires that TAs be present at all scheduled recitation sessions. In the rare cases where attendance may not be possible, TAs must arrange for substitutes to conduct their recitations. In these instances, TAs must receive approval for these arrangements from their Instructors.

Second, TAs should be thoroughly aware of the material presented in lectures. This requires that TAs attend lectures regularly. We understand that, in courses with multiple TAs, it may seem sufficient for TAs to accomplish this by alternating attendance and sharing notes. However, this practice does not work. We have heard far too many complaints regarding TAs who are not aware of the material presented in lecture, who are not able to explain that material, and who grade students on material not presented in lecture. For this reason, acceptable performance as a TA requires regular attendance at lectures.

TAs must use their awareness and understanding of the material presented in lecture to enhance the students' understanding of that material. In some cases, that may entail recitation presentations designed by the Instructor. In others, it will be the TA who is responsible for recitation lesson plans. In either case, it is the TA's responsibility to present material which will be constructive in a manner which is intelligible and even appealing.

TAs should hold one hour of office hours per week for each recitation for which they are responsible. Office hours should take place at regularly scheduled times in every week of the semester following the first week, including the final week. Office hours should take place at all scheduled times unless extraordinary circumstances intervene. In this case, office hours must be rescheduled at convenient alternative times.

In practice, we are unable to monitor all of our TAs to ensure that they meet these standards. However, we hope to improve our monitoring practices through a variety of means. First, we will require Instructors to provide more comprehensive assessments of TA performance.
Department of Economics

Second, we will rely more heavily on recitation FCQs for the purpose of determining future instructional assignments. We interpret these scores as measures of student interest in recitation. Teaching Assistants whose recitations receive especially high response rates will be understood to have been especially successful, on the theory that they have stimulated student interest.

**Basic Standards of Performance for Graduate Part-Time Instructors**

Graduate Part-Time Instructors (GPTIs) are responsible for all aspects of their courses. They are responsible for the presentation of course material, the creation and evaluation of student assignments, and for TA performance if their courses have recitations.

In some cases, courses taught by GPTIs have established curricula and guidelines regarding content. In others, we understand that GPTIs are generally able, through informal contacts with other GPTIs, to design appropriate course materials. If these sources are not sufficient, requests for assistance to regular faculty of the Department or to the Director of Undergraduate Studies are appropriate.

In general, GPTIs should be present at all scheduled class times. If attendance is not possible, GPTIs should arrange for substitute instructors to conduct classes in their absence.

GPTIs should hold 1.5 hours of office hours per week for their course. Office hours should take place at regularly scheduled times in every week of the semester, including the final week. Office hours should take place at all scheduled times unless extraordinary circumstances intervene. In this case, office hours must be rescheduled at convenient alternative times.

We recognize that, as GPTIs and TAs are all graduate students, there are inherent conflicts in the requirement that the former supervise the latter. Nevertheless, GPTIs are responsible for their courses. If TAs are not performing appropriately, their GPTIs must either act or take responsibility for TA inadequacies upon themselves. If GPTIs are uncomfortable in this role, they are welcome to request assistance from the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

We monitor GPTI performance in the same manner in which we monitor faculty performance. Our primary instrument for this is FCQ reports. We evaluate them with adjustments for the level and difficulty of the course, and for the grading pattern.

**Basic Standards of English Intelligibility**

We recognize that our international students enrich our doctoral program in many ways. Moreover, we believe that it is important for our undergraduates to become familiar with instructors from different backgrounds, and to become accustomed to the English of those who are not native speakers.

At the same time, minimal standards of English intelligibility must be maintained. It is the responsibility of all instructors to ensure that they can function at an acceptable level of proficiency with spoken English. Their pronunciation must be clear. They must be able to utilize all of the vocabulary which is appropriate to their subject matter and to the instructional task. They must be able to speak with sufficient volume to be
heard throughout their classrooms. They must have sufficient listening comprehension to understand questions asked of them, to request clarification or repetition where necessary, and to respond appropriately.

It is the responsibility of the individual instructor to acquire adequate skills. These skills yield substantial private returns, both during and after doctoral training. For this reason, there is no distortion in requiring that individual instructors bear the cost (when scholarships are not available) of acquiring and maintaining English language proficiency.

The Graduate Program Coordinator can recommend a variety of different training opportunities, and has vigorously negotiated favorable rates and scholarships. Potential instructors who are uncertain of their English language proficiency should avail themselves of these programs. Doctoral students who meet higher standards for English intelligibility will have preferential access to instructional opportunities.