TA Training in English:
An Annotated Bibliography

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In a recent national survey of writing program administrators employed by both private and public universities (*WPA* 18.3 [1995]: 53-73), Sally Barr-Ebest found that 70-90% of the WPAs working at doctoral institutions were responsible for training graduate teaching assistants in their department. At comprehensive universities (those offering Masters degrees), 20-60% of the WPAs listed training TAs as one of their regular duties (56). Barr-Ebest also found that most WPAs received no formal training for their position; instead, they tended to learn on the job. Only 12% of the men and 3% of the women responding to the survey indicated that they relied on reading and research to learn how to perform their duties (54).

Perhaps one reason so few WPAs rely on reading and research to develop and refine the skills they need to perform their duties is the sheer difficulty of locating some material. While the *CCCC Bibliography* and various computer data bases have made research in rhetoric and composition administration easier, material on TA training in English can still be hard to locate and obtain, as we found when we began compiling this bibliography almost two years ago. Prior to the 1980s, only a few books on TA training in English had been published; in reference works, articles could be indexed under a range of headings; and relevant book chapters often escaped indexing altogether.

Over the last 10 to 15 years, though, a number of important books have been published on TA training in English, TA training has been a popular topic for presentations at conferences such as CCCC, and an increasing number of important journals in the field have published work on the topic. This bibliography includes many of the articles, book chapters, and conference presentations published on TA training since 1980 (plus a few older pieces), readings we found especially helpful as we reviewed and restructured our TA training program.

The annotations are purely descriptive; we have made no attempt to evaluate the quality of the material. For the sake of convenience, we have also grouped the readings under several headings: TA Training and Evaluation Techniques, Program Descriptions, Teaching Duties, Employment Issues, and History.

Readings under "TA Training and Evaluation Techniques" offer suggestions on how to train TAs and evaluate their performance. The material included under "Program Descriptions" addresses similar topics, but is more narrowly

focused, offering in-depth discussions of training programs developed at particular institutions. Several readings located under these headings discuss how to structure TA training programs (Comley; D'Angelo; Gracie; Guinn; Humphries; Roberts; Weimer, Svinicki and Bauer; Weimer; Wilhoit, "Toward"), describe and categorize different types of programs currently in existence (Angelo and Cross; Haring-Smith), or discuss the results obtained from surveys of training programs across the country (Cooper and Kehl; Diamond and Gray; Puccio, "Graduate"; Ruszkiewicz, "Doing"). Most, though, address specific training and evaluation techniques, such as peer coaching (Cooper and Kehl; Hairston, "Training"; Puccio, "Graduate"), faculty mentorships (M. P. Baker; Hansen, Snyder, Davenport, and Stafford; Hayes), team teaching (Simpson), internships (Smith and Smith), videotaping classes (Baker and Kinkead; Puccio, "TAs"), role-playing (Strickland), and developing teaching portfolios (Webster). A few describe how to recognize and reward good teaching among TAs (Langford; Jackson), reduce anxiety about teaching (McBroom; Williams), address TA burnout (Hunt), encourage professional development among TAs (Davis), improve faculty-TA interaction (Dunn; Reagan, "Practicing"), conduct research (Angelo and Cross; Wilhoit, "Conducting"), and link training efforts with various stages of TA development (Staton and Darling; Tirrell).

Under the heading "Teaching Duties" are articles that suggest how to prepare TAs to teach courses other than introductory composition (Allen; Comprone; Cox) or work in a campus writing center (Blalock; Broder). Under the heading "Employment Issues" are articles that address TA stipends (Gething), taxes (M. J. Baker), workload (Gething), grievance procedures (M. J. Baker), and general working conditions (Minkel). Two address collective bargaining arrangements among TAs (Carlson; Craig, "University"). Finally, articles that examine training efforts of the past or discuss how current programs came to assume their present form are included under the heading "History of TA Training."

While reading and discussing this material on TA training, we have noted several trends. First, and not surprisingly, most of the readings offer practical advice on TA training: they discuss specific aspects of writing instruction TA supervisors should include in training programs and suggest how to cover that material. Only a few articles, most published in the mid- to late-80's, suggest that teacher training programs should also include instruction in composition theory (Haring-Smith; Hesse).

We also found surprising uniformity in the structure of the TA training programs described in the readings. Most involve preservice and in-service workshops, with support provided by more experienced TAs, faculty, or the TA supervisor. A few authors, though, have begun to question the theory and structure of TA training programs, raising a number of interesting questions: Who runs these programs? For what end? What is the role of the TA in these programs? What alternatives are available? (see, for example, Chism, Cano, and Pruitt; Cooper and Kehl; Dunn; Kelly et al.; Webster; Weimer, Svinicki, and Bauer; Weiser, "Teaching").

We were also surprised by some almost uniform assumptions concerning the audience of these pieces. First, only a few articles addressed the role of WPAs at smaller, comprehensive universities (Foster; R. Smith). Barr-Ebest's survey found that many WPAs at these schools are responsible for TA training; their particular interests and concerns might not be getting adequate attention in the literature. Second, in almost every case, this material seems to be written by and addressed to WPAs or other interested faculty. Very few of the articles on TA training—even those examining employment issues—were written by or addressed to TAs themselves. While many of the pieces offer retrospective accounts of the author's experiences as a teaching assistant, very few works were written by currently employed TAs. Also, almost all of the articles narrowly focused on training new TAs to teach introductory composition courses. We ran across only a few articles that described other teaching duties or that examined how to prepare experienced TAs to teach introductory literature or advanced composition courses. Finally, only a few pieces seriously examined TA employment issues. WPAs hoping to find in the literature serious, varied discussions of TA work load, salaries, and benefits may be disappointed.

TA Training and Evaluation Techniques

Abbott, Robert D., Donald H. Wulff, and C. Kati Szego. "Review of Research on TA Training." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s*. Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 111-124. Summarizes research on the components of TA training programs and the relationship between TA classroom behavior and student course evaluations. Concludes that the field needs more empirical study of TA training and offers suggestions for further research.

Angelo, Thomas A., and K. Patricia Cross. "Classroom Research for Teaching Assistants." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s*. Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 99-107. Contends that training programs can better prepare TAs for their future role as college instructors by encouraging TAs to become teacher researchers. By closely studying their students' work and behavior in class, TAs learn to construct research projects as they improve their own teaching. Reviews how TA training programs are commonly structured.

Baker, Mark A., and Joyce A. Kinkead. "Using Microteaching to Evaluate Teaching Assistants in a Writing Program." *Evaluating Teachers of Writing*. Ed. Christine A. Hult. Urbana: NCTE, 1994. 108-119. Explains Utah State University's use of microteaching to evaluate TAs. After the TA and WPA discuss the skills the TA needs to teach a certain portion of a class, only that portion of the class is videotaped. The WPA reviews the tape with the TA to offer instruction, encouragement, and advice. Discusses problems with and advantages of this evaluation technique.

Baker, Moira P. "Mentoring as Teaching and Learning." Conference on College Composition and Communication. San Diego, 31 March-3 April 1993. ED

358 459. Provides personal narrative describing the need for good relationships between mentors and graduate teaching assistants. Focuses on aspects of this relationship at Radford University that improved both the TAs' and the mentors' teaching practices. Emphasizes that the benefits of such relationships will be felt in all courses, not just composition classes.

Border, Laura. "Producing a TA Newsletter." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 140-143. . Discusses how a TA newsletter can improve communication among TAs and describes how to put together such a publication. Discusses content ideas including professional development as well as teacher training and support services.

Bridges, Charles W. "The Basics and the New Teacher in the College Composition Class." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition.* Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 13-26. Describes a training program which incorporates theory and practice in developing teachers capable of creating a "student-centered writing curriculum." Discusses five aspects of writing instruction which must be developed in new teachers (process vs. product, peer collaboration, assignment making, response vs. evaluation, and dealing with errors). Presents possible readings and assignments.

Chism, Nancy Van Note, Jamie Cano, and Anne S. Pruitt. "Teaching in a Diverse Environment: Knowledge and Skills Needed by TAs." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s.* Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 23-36. Argues that faculty must take a leading role in preparing TAs to teach an increasingly diverse student body. Training programs should address how to teach ethnic minorities, returning adult students, students with disabilities, women, gay and lesbian students. Offers a number of ways TA training programs can be modified to meet these goals.

Comely, Nancy R. "The Teaching Seminar: Writing Isn't Just Rhetoric." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition.* Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 47-57. Argues that freshman composition teacher training programs should synthesize work in literary theory, creative writing, and composition rather than continue to separate these aspects of English studies. Discusses strategies and texts for combining reading and writing in the composition classroom and in teacher training programs.

Cooper, Allene, and D. G. Kehl. "Development of Composition Instruction through Peer Coaching." *WPA* 14.3 (1991): 27-39. Advocates the use of collaborative coaching, especially for novice TAs who may feel a sense of isolation in the classroom. Maintains this isolation can be reduced through organized active cooperation among experienced TAs and newcomers. Presents results of a nation-wide survey of TA training

which indicated substantial interest in collaborative training techniques. Describes and evaluates the program developed at Arizona State University.

D'Angelo, Frank J. "Strategies for Involving Graduate Students in the Teaching of Composition." *ADE Bulletin* 54 (1977): 34-36. Suggests several strategies for helping TAs primarily trained in literary criticism use that knowledge to improve the writing instruction they offer: give TAs the historical context for modern composition instruction, focus on the study of form and structure in writing, demonstrate how literary criticism can inform composition instruction, demonstrate how composition theory can inform literary criticism.

Davis, William E. "TA Training: Professional Development for Future Faculty." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 129-131. Asserts that training programs do not adequately emphasize TA professional and career development. Claims that TAs respond more favorably to training programs that emphasize preparation for future careers in teaching. Discusses a professional development series offered at the University of California, Davis, and mentions possible directions for other professional development programs.

Diamond, Robert M., and Peter J. Gray. "A National Study of Teaching Assistants." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 80-82. Discusses results of research into the background, responsibilities, and preparation of TAs from research institutions across the country. Includes statistics from a five-part survey that consisted of questions on demographic information, teaching responsibilities and supervision, teaching preparation and support programs, training international TAs, and general comments and suggestions.

Dunn, Richard J. "Teaching Assistance, Not Teaching Assistants." *ADE Bulletin* 97 (1990): 47-50. Addresses a central contradiction in the treatment of TAs: on one hand, the institution considers graduate appointments a means of financial support; on the other hand, the graduate assistantship is a form of apprenticeship. Recommends departments do all they can to bridge the gaps between faculty and TAs or administration and TAs. To accomplish these goals, suggests increasing pay, decreasing workload, integrating graduate studies and the TA position, and abolishing "post-doctoral" appointments.

Foster, David. "Training Writing Teachers in a Small Program." *WPA* 10.1-2 (1986): 43-49. Maintains that larger composition programs should model their TA training practices on those commonly used in smaller programs which foster among TAs a sense of freedom, individuality, and collegial-

ity. Suggests that larger composition programs allow TAs greater freedom in designing courses and selecting texts, organize small TA/faculty discussion groups, establish TA/faculty mentorships, and invite TA participation in department activities.

Gebhardt, Richard C. "Unifying Diversity in the Training of Writing Teachers." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 1-12. Addresses training writing teachers in general, not just TAs. Suggests the diversity of needs among different client types within a training program can be overcome by emphasizing "unifying concepts." Explains three "unifying ideas" that should be addressed in teacher training programs. Acknowledges the need to balance theory and practice in training instructors.

Gracie, William J., Jr. "Serving Our Teaching Assistants and Our Profession: Teaching Graduate Students to Teach Composition." Conference on College Composition and Communication. San Francisco, March 1982. ED 214 170. Voices a concern that gains recently made in composition studies will be lost unless more attention is given to training TAs adequately. Good training programs should include sensitivity to the job market, course work in composition theory taken for credit, training in research methodologies, guest speakers, and teaching awards. Describes training program author developed at Miami University of Ohio.

Guinn, Dorothy Margaret. "Freshman Composition: Developing Teaching Assistant Teaching Potential." Conference on College Composition and Communication. San Francisco, March 1982. ED 215 359. Outlines some obstacles to teaching assistant training such as instructors' backgrounds in literary studies, little facility with teaching grammar, and lack of time for proper training. Discusses program at Southwestern University designed to address these problems through pre-service training in administrative concerns, classroom policies, evaluation procedures, and a one-semester graduate seminar and workshop to develop composition teaching skills by giving TAs a greater understanding of composition as a discipline.

Hairston, Maxine. "On Not Being a Composition Slave." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 117-124. Discusses how contemporary theories of and guidelines for responding to student writing can help college composition teachers—especially TAs—avoid being overwhelmed when grading papers. Describes how to combine grading with student-teacher conferences.

Haring-Smith, Tori. "The Importance of Theory in the Training of Teaching Assistants." *ADE Bulletin* 82 (1985): 33-39. Divides TA training programs into three categories: (1) a Basic Training approach, (2) an Observation/Apprenticeship approach, and (3) an Advanced Writing Seminar approach. Describes how instruction in composition theory is omitted from all three approaches. Argues that a knowledge of theory helps TAs understand how the students in their classes compose essays, provides

TAs with a meaningful framework in which to teach, alleviates TA burnout, and provides a means for effective TA self-evaluation.

Hesse, Douglas. "Teachers as Students, Reflecting Resistance." *College Composition and Communication* 44 (1993): 224-231. Examines why several students in a graduate composition theory course voiced frustration over theoretical readings. Argues that students may find some readings "difficult" because they lack sufficient knowledge of the field. Suggests that teachers ought to encourage their graduate students to reflect on why they find certain theorists difficult to understand and urge them not to reject new ideas out of hand. Claims that provocative theoretical texts encourage new and experienced instructors to confront their "common sense" notions of teaching.

Hunt, Maurice. "Essay Evaluation As a Framework for Teaching Assistant Training." *Freshman English News* 14.2 (1985): 19-21. Stresses the need for emphasizing evaluation techniques in TA training workshops. Maintains that proper instruction in evaluation is central to effective training: to properly evaluate a paper is also to begin to learn how to help the student improve as a writer.

___. "Preventing Burn-out in Teaching Assistants." *Freshman English News* 15.1 (1986): 12-15. Describes the symptoms and causes of TA "burn-out" then recommends several steps WPAs can take to help TAs manage their work load successfully. Suggestions include discussions of the importance of writing instruction, establishing faculty-TA mentorships, encouraging interactive pedagogy, and urging TAs to share their own work with their students.

Kelly, Kathleen Ann, et al. "To Have or Have Not: The Foucauldian Quandary of Control in Teacher-Training." Conference on College Composition and Communication. Cincinnati, March 1992. ED 348 674. Includes comments originally part of three talks on Foucauldian power/knowledge relationships. Suggests methods for encouraging teaching assistants to discuss openly and to question their pedagogical preferences.

Langford, Thomas A. "Recognizing Outstanding Teaching." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants*. Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 132-33. Describes the TA recognition program designed to boost graduate student moral and enhance professional development at the Graduate School at Texas Tech. Discusses some of the program's benefits for TAs and the graduate school.

Larson, Richard L. "Making Assignments, Judging Writing, and Annotating Papers: Some Suggestions." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 109-116. Provides suggestions on how new teachers of writing can develop their own assignments then evaluate and respond to their students' writing.

Lawrence, Joyce V. "Fostering and Monitoring TA Development: What Administrators Can Do." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 44-46. Discusses levels of interaction between graduate students and the university and how that relationship can become more positive through careful planning on the part of the graduate school. Examines the need for orientation, plans for performance evaluation, knowledge of graduate school's advocacy and support, and service assistance. Lists seven steps administrators can take to foster and monitor TA development.

Lunsford, Ronald F. "Planning for Spontaneity in the Writing Classroom and a Passel of Other Paradoxes." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition.* Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 95-108. Based on the author's own experience and study, suggests that the advantages of peer group editing outweigh the disadvantages, especially when the teacher acts as a consultant, moving from group to group, offering advice when called upon. Suggests short- and long-term training methods to prepare students to participate successfully in peer editing and revising.

McBroom, Geraldine L. "A New Crop of Teaching Assistants and How They Grew." *WPA* 15.3 (1992): 62-68. Traces the development of a group of TAs from novices to "emerging teachers" based on comments they made in journals during their first year as instructors. Describes how these TAs overcame their initial anxiety about teaching by developing individual teaching styles, forming more realistic expectations about their jobs and their students, and learning about composition instruction from peers and faculty mentors.

Mauksch, Hans O. "The Context of Preparing Teaching Assistants." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 14-18. Says teaching becomes devalued for both professors and teaching assistants when too much emphasis is placed on natural talent rather than practice and work. Discusses several assumptions harmful to teachers, including the idea that the ability to teach is an innate gift.

Puccio, Paul M. "Graduate Instructor Representation in Writing Programs." Conference on College Composition and Communication. St. Louis, March 1988. ED 297 333. Presents the results of a survey of TA training techniques employed in 50 writing programs which revealed widespread interest in and reliance on peer support. Discusses the advantages and drawbacks of peer training and questions whether peers offer any insights not available from more experienced instructors.

Reagan, Sally Barr. "Practicing What We Preach." *CEA Forum* 20 (1990): 16-18. Suggests that TA training can be improved if supervisors move beyond the traditional instructional methods of reading, discussing, and lectur-

ing. Offers as an alternative a training program that stresses practical experience and collaboration with faculty. Describes a program where new TAs observe and evaluate faculty-taught composition and literature courses which stress collaborative learning.

___. "Teaching TAs to Teach: Show, Don't Tell." *WPA* 11.3 (1988): 41-51. Outlines a seven-step process developed at Drake University for showing TAs how to modify their classroom practices to meet the needs of different types of students. Describes how the TA supervisor used the Myers-Briggs Personality Inventory, interviews, course evaluations, and meetings to help TAs appreciate how different types of instruction affect different types of students. Provides results and caveats derived from the initial trial of the program.

Recchio, Thomas E. "Parallel Academic Lives: Affinities of Teaching Assistants and Freshman Writers." *WPA* 15.3 (1992): 57-61. Argues that graduate teaching assistants have much in common with the students they teach. The transition one makes from undergraduate to graduate school is, in many ways, similar to the transition students make from high school to college. These similarities help TAs sympathize with the difficulties first-year students face in class as they are confronted by new information and critical concepts. Offers suggestions on how TAs may better understand their tasks as teachers of "critical consciousness."

Roberts, David D. "Survival Prosperity: TA Training Colloquia." *Freshman English News* 10.3 (1982): 4, 12-14. Identifies two goals often overlooked in TA training programs: TA prosperity and TA survival. In addition to stressing the theories behind rhetoric, organization, language acquisition, etc., training programs should also stress practical steps TAs should take to survive.

Ruszkiewicz, John J. "Doing What I Do: How New Teachers of Writing Compose." Conference on College Composition and Communication. Minneapolis, April 1979. ED 172 211. Presents the results of an informal survey of new TAs concerning their plans for teaching. Found that most TAs plan to base instruction in their composition classes on how they themselves compose essays and need to find better ways to cover pre-writing and grammar.

___. "The Great Commandment." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition.* Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 78-83. Suggests that, above all, writing teachers should teach writing. Emphasizes as goals for a writing course teaching invention, structure, style, audience analysis, assessment, and revision. Recognizes the difficult task TAs face and suggests they can overcome some problems by treating their students as apprentice writers.

Schenck, Mary Jane. "Writing Right Off: Strategies for Invention." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition.* Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 84-94. Argues that TAs' desire to maintain control in the

classroom may limit their students' opportunity to explore certain invention techniques. Suggests that composition classes should use movies or current events to generate discussions in the classroom and should emphasize responding to and analyzing what students have read or seen. Urges TAs to consider using journals, free-writing, heuristics, and collaboration as invention activities.

Simpson, Isaiah. "Training and Evaluating Teaching Assistants through Team Teaching." *Freshman English News* 15.3 (1987): 4, 9-13. Argues that TAs are primarily *teachers* rather than *assistants*. Outlines the benefits of "team teaching"—having faculty and TAs teach a course together. Discusses the strengths and weaknesses of such programs, explaining how they help train and evaluate new teaching assistants. Describes program developed at Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, where faculty work with TAs teaching one course a year.

Smith, Eugene, and Marilyn Smith. "A Graduate Internship in Teaching." *Teaching English in the Two-year College* 16 (1989): 197-200. Describes an internship program developed by the University of Washington and North Seattle Community College which places TAs at a two-year college to observe teaching practices and to provide basic assistance. Discusses benefits to the graduate students, faculty, and students. Provides a basic outline for instituting a similar program at other universities and two-year colleges.

Smith, Ron. "The Supervisor of In-service Training in Small Programs: A Basic Job Description." Conference on College Composition and Communication. Philadelphia, March 1976. ED 128 806. Argues that supervising TAs in smaller graduate programs differs from supervising them in larger programs. Suggests that supervisors in smaller programs must act as the TAs' manager, teacher, and friend, roles that sometimes conflict. Describes the qualifications effective TA supervisors must possess and outlines the primary duties and responsibilities they must meet.

Sprague, Jo, and Jody D. Nyquist. "TA Supervision." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s.* Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 37-53 . Argues that TA supervisors must play several roles: manager, professional model, and mentor. Argues that supervisors can better succeed in these roles if they understand the changes TAs undergo as they move through several "phases" of development: senior learner, to colleague in training, to junior colleague. Suggests how TA supervisors can best help TAs at each stage of development.

Staton, Ann Q., and Ann L. Darling. "Socialization of Teaching Assistants." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s.* Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 15-22. Discusses the difficult position of TAs in the academy: being both student and teacher poses potential problems for new teaching assistants.

Describes how TAs undergo both "role" and "cultural" socialization as they learn to work with their colleagues, succeed in graduate school, succeed as teachers, and advance in the academy. Suggests how training programs can facilitate successful socialization among TAs.

Strenski, Ellen. "Helping TAs Across the Curriculum Teach Writing: An Additional Use for the *TA Handbook*." *WPA* 15.3 (1992): 68-73. Stresses the importance of a well-crafted TA handbook. Suggests that authors of TA handbooks are often too preoccupied with plagiarism and grading standards. Although these issues are important, other issues, such as time management, assignment design, and essay response should also be addressed in a TA handbook.

Strickland, Karen Syvrud. "Planning and Facilitating a Group Workshop." Conference on Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants. Columbus, OH, November 1986. ED 285 501. Discusses modelling and role-playing as tools for teaching new TAs. Suggests organizing informal gatherings to help TAs become familiar and willing to share ideas with one another.

Tirrell, Mary Kay. "Teaching Assistants as Teachers and Writers: Developmental Issues in TA Training." *Writing Instructor* 5 (1986): 51-56. Examines student and TA growth in light of the developmental theories expounded by Piaget, Vygotsky, Perry, and Bruner. Suggests that composition classes should be based on an understanding of students' cognitive and social growth. Explains how TA supervisors can use mentor programs, peer coaching, and journal writing to aid TA development.

Tremmel, Robert. "Beyond Self-criticism: Reflecting on Teacher Research and TA Education." *Composition Studies* 22.1(1994): 44-64. Explores how work in "reflective practice" developed in teacher education programs can be used to improve TA training programs. Reviews efforts to improve TA training, noting relatively little attention has been given to the importance of "self-reflection" as a learning tool. Offers several suggestions on how to develop more reflective, self-critical TAs.

Webster, Janice Gohm. "Composition Teachers: No Experience Necessary?" *ADE Bulletin* 92 (1989): 41-42. Argues against having inexperienced TAs teach composition classes. Suggests instead that all tenured faculty teach at least one composition class a term so TAs are free to take a course preparing them to be instructors.

Webster, John. "Great Expectations: Introducing Teaching Portfolios to a University Writing Program." National Council of Teachers of English Meeting. Louisville, November 1992. ED 361 748. Discusses how, at the University of Washington, a teaching portfolio system was implemented not only to assess and review the TAs' progress, but also to help the TAs in the job market. Describes the content of the portfolios and the four-year process they followed to implement the program. Examines the strengths and limitations of portfolios and offers model criteria and assignments.

Weimer, Maryellen, Marilla D. Svinicki, and Gabriele Bauer. "Designing Programs to Prepare TAs to Teach." *Teaching Assistant Training in the 1990s.* Eds. Jody D. Nyquist, Robert D. Abbott, and Donald H. Wulff. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1989. 57-70. Offers a series of questions that must be addressed by anyone beginning or evaluating a TA training program: (1) who should provide training; (2) if there are different providers, what should be the relationships among them; (3) how long should the program be and when should it occur; (4) what sorts of follow-up activities should be offered; (5) do international TAs need separate and more extensive preparation; (6) how should training be evaluated?

Weiser, Irwin. "Surveying New Teaching Assistants: Who They Are, What They Know, and What They Want to Know." *WPA* 14.1-2 (1990): 63-71. Contends that TA training programs could be improved if supervisors gained a better understanding of the TAs' experiences, needs, concerns, and questions before they begin any orientation activities. Advocates sending a survey to all new TAs to gather this information and describes the findings resulting from a survey of new TAs at Purdue University. Includes a copy of the survey form.

____. "Teaching Assistants as Collaborators in Their Preparation and Evaluation." *Evaluating Teachers of Writing.* Ed. Christine A. Hult. Urbana: NCTE, 1994. 133-146. Argues that involving TAs in their preparation and evaluation contributes to their success in meeting the goals of a TA training program. Describes three ways TAs specifically contribute to their training and evaluation: they complete pre-orientation surveys, evaluate their mentors, and help choose which questions appear on the end-of-term student evaluations for the courses they teach.

Wilhoit, Stephen. "Conducting Research: An Essential Aspect of TA Training." *Kentucky English Bulletin* 39.1 (1989): 48-55. Outlines how TAs can join the teacher-research movement by conducting studies of their students. Suggests seven types of research projects TAs can undertake, examining the strengths and limitations of each. Argues that undertaking research projects is an important part of TA training.

____. "Toward a Comprehensive TA Training Program." *Kansas English* 78.2 (1993): 66-74. Argues that effective TA training programs must focus equal attention on teaching, graduate study, and professional development. Suggests specific skills TAs need to acquire to become successful teachers, students, and scholars.

Williams, Linda Stallworth. "The Effects of a Comprehensive Teaching Assistant Training Program on Teaching Anxiety and Effectiveness." *Research in Higher Education* 32 (1991): 585-598. Reports the results of a comprehensive study of how training programs affect TA anxiety. Twenty-seven TAs at the University of Oklahoma were divided into two groups: both participated in a pre-service training program and in-service theory and pedagogy course, but the experimental group also participated in a

consultant observation and peer mentor program. TAs in the experimental group experienced lower levels of anxiety. Neither group, though, demonstrated an increase in teaching effectiveness ratings from students at the end of the term.

Program Descriptions

Altman, Howard B. "TA Training at the University of Louisville: Creating a Climate." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 174-76. Describes the contents of the University of Louisville program's pre-academic orientation for new TAs and the series of professional pedagogical seminars held twice a semester where TAs meet with outstanding faculty members to discuss pertinent issues. Evaluates the program by discussing the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of certain procedures and mentions future plans for training.

Bloom, Lynn Z. "Finding a Family, Finding a Voice: A Writing Teacher Teaches Writing Teachers." *Journal of Basic Writing* 9.2 (1990): 3-14. Discusses the circumstances which lead to changes in the TA training program at Virginia Commonwealth University. Stresses the importance of teaching writing instructors to focus on their own composing processes as a means of better understanding how to teach writing. Advocates forming a personal bond, a "community of writers," among professors and graduate students. Uses quotations from students' journals to illustrate the effectiveness of the program.

Diogenes, Marvin, Duane H. Roen, and C. Jan Swearingen. "Creating the Profession: The GAT Training Program at the University of Arizona." *WPA* 10.1-2 (1986): 51-59. Describes the TA training program at the University of Arizona which attempts to treat TAs as junior colleagues in the department by developing a sense of shared purpose. Includes information on Arizona's teaching handbook, class visitations, small group workshops, and successful TA/faculty collaborative publishing efforts.

Gefvert, Constance J. "An Apprenticeship for Teaching Assistants." *Freshman English News* 10.3 (1982): 16-19. Describes the TA apprenticeship program developed at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This program involves a reduced teaching load for new TAs so they can participate in an extensive preservice workshop, complete course work in composition theory and pedagogy, participate in small advising groups led by faculty advisors, and work in at least one specialized setting (i.e., the Writing Center, a community college, etc.). Explains how the English Department obtained adequate institutional support for their program revisions.

Hairston, Maxine. "Training Teaching Assistants in English." *College Composition and Communication* 25 (1974): 52-55. Describes the TA training program at the University of Texas, Austin, and its extensive use of peer counselors. Explains how, because of the large number of new TAs entering the department each year, the program began forming 5 or 6 new TAs into peer support and training groups lead by experienced TAs. These "counselors" meet weekly with the new TAs to design course goals, answer questions, and discuss grading standards. Describes how the program benefits the department, new TAs, and the counselors themselves.

Hansen, Kristine, Phillip A. Snyder, Nancy Davenport, and Kimberli Stafford. "Collaborative Learning and Teaching: A Model for Mentoring TAs." *The TA Experience: Preparing for Multiple Roles*. Ed. Karron G. Lewis. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1993. 251-259. Discusses the TA training program at Brigham Young University which relies heavily on collaborative learning and faculty mentoring. After their initial training, TAs teach first-year composition courses then have the opportunity to team-teach large advanced writing courses with faculty. Other aspects of training include peer mentoring and class visitations. Provides assessment information suggesting the team-teaching model achieves good results.

Hayes, Darwin L. "Integrating Supervision, Evaluation, and Training: Graduate Student Internships in Teaching Composition." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants*. Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 227-229. Describes the graduate student writing internship program at Brigham Young University. Students are prepared to teach upper-level English courses by being paired with faculty mentors, observing the faculty member teach the course before assuming sole responsibility for the class the following term. Maintains that the program improves the TAs chances for employment and promotes collegiality.

Humphreys, W. Lee. "The TA Seminar and TA Support Services at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. " *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants*. Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 171-173. Describes the two main objectives of the TA training program at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville: to enhance the instruction offered on campus and to help TAs develop their professional skills for future university teaching jobs. Discusses the format and content of the training seminar and lists other support services.

Irmscher, William F. "TA Training: A Period of Discovery." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 27-36. Describes the training program at the University of Washington. Argues that the similarities between the situations faced by new TAs and first-year students can be used to establish a sense of community

in the classroom. Discusses the benefits of peer observation among TAs. Highlights the role of the director of training.

Jackson, William K. "Support Services for Graduate Teaching Assistants at the University of Georgia." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants*. Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 158-59. Describes support services for TAs offered at the University of Georgia, such as a TA handbook, optional training program, international student screening for assistantships, and recognition of outstanding TA performance.

Puccio, Paul M. "TAs Help TAs: Peer Counseling and Mentoring." Conference on Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants. Columbus, OH, November 1987. ED 285 502. Describes how the University of Massachusetts Resource Center provides experienced TAs as volunteer counselors for new TAs. Peer counselors use videotaping to make new TAs more aware of their teaching style. Suggests ways to train TA counselors so their relationship with new TAs remains friendly and productive.

Robinson, William S. "Teaching Composition Teachers How to Teach Writing." *Composition Chronicle* 3 (December 1990): 4-6. Describes the "Certificate in the Teaching of Composition" program at San Francisco State University. Focuses on the evolution of the program from a one course seminar to a full-fledged MA degree. Argues that obtaining the certificate has helped students gain entrance into postgraduate programs and earn positions as writing program administrators.

Smith, Philip E., II. "A Pedagogy of Critical and Cultural Empowerment: What We Talk about in Graduate Teaching Seminars." Conference on College Composition and Communication. Seattle, March 1989. ED 307 617. Outlines the philosophy behind the University of Pittsburgh's graduate program and graduate teaching seminars. Describes content and emphasis of training seminars on teaching reading and writing, giving examples of readings employed. Includes excerpts of graduate student papers discussing teaching.

Smith, William L. "Using a College Writing Workshop in Training Future English Teachers." *English Education* 16.2 (1984): 76-82. Describes the University of Pittsburgh's Writing Workshop and the three-stage, highly structured internship program future writing teachers complete as a practical component to a required methods and theory course. Describes how the program gradually leads to the intern becoming an independent tutor before doing any actual classroom teaching. Lists five effects which the tutorial internship has been observed to have on interns' and former interns' teaching.

Van DeWeghe, Richard P. "Linking Pedagogy to Purpose for Teaching Assistants in Basic Writing." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 37-46. Outlines the TA training

program at the University of Colorado, describing both the theory-based orientation meeting and the more practical series of workshops held throughout the school year. Provides detailed descriptions of three sample workshops illustrating how they combine theory and practice.

Teaching Duties

Allen, O. Jane. "The Literature Major as Teacher of Technical Writing: A Biblio-graphical Orientation." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 69-77. Asserts that in the future, TAs will likely teach lower-level technical writing classes which have become increasingly popular among students and increasingly hard to staff. Claims that if TAs are to succeed as teachers of technical writing, technical writing must be placed in the context of other types of writing. Provides bibliographic material on four points of emphasis: definition, audience analysis, visual aids, and collaboration. Concludes with suggestions for research in technical writing.

Blalock, Susan E. "The Tutor as Creative Teacher: Balancing Collaborative and Directive Teaching Styles." *The TA Experience: Preparing for Multiple Roles*. Ed. Karron G. Lewis. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1993. 348-352. Describes how, at the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, graduate teaching assistants also work in the university writing center. Lessons learned working with students one-on-one in the writing center transfer to teaching strategies in the composition classroom and helped TAs address the individual problems of students in their classes.

Broder, Peggy F. "Writing Centers and Teacher Training." *WPA* 13.3 (1990): 37-45. Provides a general description of how working as tutors in writing centers can provide invaluable experience for prospective classroom teachers. Includes affirming comments from former tutors who have since become classroom teachers.

Comprone, Joseph J. "Managing Freshman English: Are We Really on the Right Track?" Conference on College Composition and Communication. Cincinnati, March 1992. ED 344 209. Questions whether TAs are best served by being put in charge of 25-30 students in a composition class of their own. Offers as an alternative having TAs meet with students in discussion sections of a much larger composition class taught by a professor. Describes how he designed such an experimental course at Michigan Technological University (113 first-year students, 9 TAs). Includes assessment techniques employed to evaluate the class, discusses student and TA response to the course, and suggests how schools can design similar courses.

Cox, Don R. "Fear and Loathing in the Classroom: Teaching Technical Writing for the First Time." *Training the New Teacher of College Composition*. Ed. Charles W. Bridges. Urbana: NCTE, 1986. 58-68. Examines the fears

some teaching assistants have when asked to teach technical writing courses. Attributes these fears to stereotypes and misconceptions concerning technical writing. Identifies and explores solutions to some of the problems TAs face when teaching these courses.

Employment Issues

Baker, Marilyn J. "Grievances and Taxes." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 49-52. Asserts that TAs need to be aware of grievance procedures and that those procedures should be tailored to the TAs' peculiar needs as both students and employees. Outlines grievance procedures at the University of Southern California, discusses common complaints, and recommends specific measures to avoid them. Discusses tax laws and suggests ways to lessen their impact on TAs.

Carlson, Charles E. "A Negotiator's Perspective." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 60-64. Discusses future of collective bargaining for the University of Wisconsin, Madison, after legislation passed extending collective bargaining privileges to TAs. Gives background on his experience as a professional negotiator with the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and the TAA (Teaching Assistant Association) discussing pros and cons of the arrangement. Elaborates on the difficulties TAs will encounter in bargaining with a state agency and discusses how the new legislation will effect all parties.

Craig, Judith S. "An Administrative Perspective." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 53-60. Gives background on what led to collective bargaining between the TAA (Teaching Assistant Association) and the administration at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and discusses some of its consequences for graduate students and the university. Talks about common issues that surfaced during bargaining such as wages and benefits, workloads, evaluation processes, grievance procedures, course content and pedagogy, and jurisdiction. Lists advantages and disadvantages of collective bargaining.

___. "University-level Policies for TAs: Experience at the University of Wisconsin, Madison." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 38-43. Discusses origins, structures, problem areas, and strengths of teaching assistant policies at the University of Wisconsin, Madison.

Gething, Thomas. "Stipends and Workloads." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 47-49. Describes how the University of Hawaii handles TA stipends and workloads. Discusses five areas of concern for TAs and administrators: setting stipends, adjusting stipends, establishing variable rate stipends, deciding workloads and overloads, and obtaining comparative national data.

Minkel, C. W. "The Formulation of University Policy for Graduate Assistantship Administration." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 35-37. Presents results of a survey on teaching assistant conditions in 46 major universities based on those universities' policies and procedures. Recommends that universities use a "model policy" for graduate assistant administration that focuses on issues such as training, teaching goals, qualifications, outside employment, and academic standards.

Weiser, Irwin, and Karen Dwyer. "The CCCC's 'Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing': Implications for Writing Program Administrators and Teaching Assistants." *The TA Experience: Preparing for Multiple Roles.* Ed. Karron G. Lewis. Stillwater, OK: New Forums Press, 1993. 19-24. Discusses the problems of applying standard, universal guidelines concerning the teaching of writing to particular institutions, using as an example the author's efforts to apply the CCCC's guidelines to the writing program in place at Purdue University. Special attention is given to the four guidelines that most directly apply to the role of graduate teaching assistants in the department. Argues that the CCCC's standards work best as guidelines, not as blueprints for program reform.

History of TA Training

Marting, Janet. "A Retrospective on Training Teaching Assistants." *WPA* 11.1-2 (1987): 35-44. Traces similarities and differences among the concerns addressed in various discussions of TA training since 1930. Identifies historical shifts in opinion, especially on the question of whether academic or pedagogical preparation should be emphasized in training programs. Describes the fruitful mix of scholarship and pedagogy that characterizes the content of most current TA training programs.

Parrett, Joan L. "A Ten-Year Review of TA Training Programs: Trends, Patterns, and Common Practices." *Institutional Responsibilities and Responses in the Employment and Education of Teaching Assistants.* Ed. Nancy Van Note Chism. Columbus: Ohio State University Center for Teaching Excellence, 1987. 67-79. Describes a study of teaching assistant training programs

that centered on training program patterns, training methods, and training formats from 1976-1986 across academic disciplines at a number of institutions. Issues addressed include curricular planning, TA participation, professionalism, TA duties and problems, instructional aids, student learning patterns, and general education.

Pytlik, Betty P. "A Short History of Graduate Preparation of Writing Teachers." National Council of Teachers of English Meeting. Louisville, November 1992. ED 355 545. Sketches the history of writing-teacher education in the United States. Identifies several reasons why the 1950s was a decade of academic reform in English, emphasizing how it proved to be a crucial transition period that greatly affected the way graduate students were trained to teach.

___. "Teaching the Teacher of Writing: Whence and Wither?" Conference on College Composition and Communication. San Diego, March 1993. ED 355 541. Discusses some of the academic and administration changes brought about by World War II and the enactment of the G. I. Bill of Rights in 1944. Describes the freshman composition programs into which returning war veterans were placed. Describes, too, some of the few graduate methods courses offered during the forties, fifties, and sixties, as well as the typical training program for TAs entering the profession at that time.

___. "Teaching the Teachers of Writing: Evolving Theory." Conference on College Composition and Communication. Cincinnati, March 1992. ED 345 273. Discusses the culture-versus-efficiency debate that took place in the early decades of this century and from which TA training emerged. Identifies seven early twentieth-century assumptions about teacher preparation that still exist today.