

**TEACHING APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM (TAP)**  
Principles Underlying the Selection and Service of  
Teaching Assistants, Teaching Fellows, and Graduate Instructors

1. Purpose of TAP: The Teaching Apprenticeship Program (TAP) aims to develop informed, effective, and skilled teachers for a variety of higher education contexts. The program provides sustained opportunities for faculty and students to reflect together on pedagogy. TAP strengthens the quality of teaching assistants, who help prepare students for leadership in ministry. PhD students enrich the educational experience for master's level students.
  
2. Levels of Teaching: There are three possible teaching levels that a doctoral student may assume in the teacher preparation component of the PhD program at PTS: teaching assistant, teaching fellow, and graduate instructor.
  - 1) Teaching Assistants
    - *Participation and Availability:* All students entering fall 2012 and beyond will be required to serve at least twice as a teaching assistant (or as a teaching assistant and/or teaching fellow). Some students may serve as a teaching assistant one time and then be prepared to move to a higher level of teaching. This will be at the discretion of the department. A teaching assistant is expected to work no more than an average of 15 hours per week.
    - *Prerequisites:* At least a second-year student or approval of the department; participation in the TAP colloquia: Foundations for Teaching I and/or II (if admitted fall 2012 or later).
    - *Learning Tasks:* Students gain experience in course observation, student mentoring, small group facilitation, assessment, and course evaluation along with other tasks as determined by the faculty colleague. A teaching assistant is normally appointed to lead three precepts over the course of one semester. In addition to attending plenary sessions and preparing for and leading precepts, teaching assistants may be expected to assist in the evaluation of papers, and attend to other course-related matters.
    - *Supervision of Teaching Assistants:* Teaching assistants are supervised by the instructors in the courses they serve. This supervision should include:
      - a) Orientation to the course and the responsibilities of the teaching assistant;
      - b) Guidance concerning method and style of conducting precepts and the standards of evaluating students' work;
      - c) Oversight of the teaching assistant's performance in precepts, in preliminary grading, and in student interaction.
    - *Application:* Students may apply by submitting the teaching assistant online application by March 1<sup>st</sup>.
  
  - 2) Teaching Fellows
    - *Participation and Availability:* All doctoral students may apply to serve as teaching fellows. Not all doctoral students will become teaching fellows. Participation in this level of teaching is optional. A teaching fellow is expected to work no more than an average of 15 hours per week.
    - *Prerequisites:* Normally, ABD status; at least one teaching assistant appointment or approval of the department; participation in the TAP colloquia: Foundations for Teaching I and/or II (if admitted fall 2012 or later).

- *Learning Tasks:* The teaching fellow and the supervising faculty colleague engage in a mentor/apprenticeship role (i.e. the teaching fellow shares a teaching role in the course at the level determined by the faculty colleague). A teaching fellow is involved in aspects of course preparation, execution, and assessment, though spending less time on these tasks than the faculty member. The team collaborates in the design of the course syllabus as well as in the identification of course-level learning goals and assignments that demonstrate learning.
- *Supervision of Teaching Fellows:* Teaching fellows are supervised by the faculty member with whom the student is apprenticing. The faculty mentor provides guidance concerning method and style of conducting lectures and offers evaluation of the teaching fellow's lecturing/teaching in the classroom.
- *Application:* Students may apply by submitting the teaching fellow online application by November 1<sup>st</sup> for the following academic year. The student is encouraged but not required to discuss a possible mentor/apprentice opportunity with a faculty member prior to submitting an application. This preference may differ by department.

### 3) Graduate Instructor

- *Participation and Availability:* In addition to the current doctoral teaching fellow (to be changed to graduate instructor) positions in practical theology courses and language reading courses, students will be able to apply for one of four graduate instructor positions that will be awarded annually on a competitive basis beginning in 2014-2015. The graduate instructors must receive initial support from the appropriate department/ R&S. Selections are made by the PhD Studies Committee. All graduate instructors must receive approval from the relevant department, the Masters' Studies Committee, the faculty, and the Dean of Academic Affairs. They are also approved by the President and the Board of Trustees. Since the graduate instructor opportunities are by the invitation of the department and by appropriate approval, students will not be guaranteed equal teaching opportunities. A graduate instructor is expected to work no more than an average of 20 hours per week.
- *Prerequisites:* ABD status; teaching assistant experience; completion of TAP Colloquia: Foundations for Teaching I and II (if entering fall 2012 or later). Departments may determine that an individual student be considered as a graduate instructor without having served as a teaching fellow.
- *Learning Tasks:* A graduate instructor teaches a course on his or her own. Graduate instructors are responsible for all aspects of course development, instruction, and assessment.
- *Application:* Students may apply by submitting the graduate instructor online application by November 1<sup>st</sup>.

3. Number of Teaching Assistant and Teaching Fellow Positions Available: The number of teaching assistant and teaching fellow positions is dependent on available funding. In the budget for 2013-2014, approximately 58 teaching assistant/fellow slots are available. All students in years 2-5 who applied for a teaching assistant position by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline will be assigned to one. Large enrollment courses (35+ for single teacher and 50+ for team taught courses) will be served first. With the new TAP, the overall number of teaching opportunities has decreased, but more students will be able to serve full-time.

4. Process of Assigning Students to Teaching Opportunities: TAP replaces the current practice that bases doctoral teaching assignments on course enrollment alone. Each March faculty

and departments will request students to serve as teaching assistants for particular courses. All students in years 2-5 who have applied to a teaching assistant position will need to be assigned to a course or courses. These requests will guide the assignment process for the following academic year. Faculty and departments are encouraged to provide rationale for why certain courses would benefit from teaching assistant support when rationale may be needed. Departments will recommend an overall plan for placement of PhD students in courses based on departmental need, distribution of opportunity, student capability, pedagogical experience available to doctoral students, etc. Teaching assignments are made according to enrollment and the educational opportunities for the PhD students. On rare occasion, and by special arrangement with the dean of academic affairs, a teaching assistant may be appointed on a half-time basis.

5. Department Recommendations for Teaching Assistants: During the spring (March/April Department Meetings), departments identify their probable teaching assistant needs for the following academic year, review the teaching assistant applications, and recommend teaching assistants along with any additional teaching fellows (for the following spring if slots are available). Departments need to remember that each student in years 2-5 who applies for a position by the March 1<sup>st</sup> deadline must be assigned one. It is helpful to assign a student to more than one particular course in case a course does not meet the minimum enrollment requirement. After fall enrollments are settled in August, the Office of Academic Affairs will assign teaching assistants and send contract letters. Spring teaching assistants can be assigned in early December. A student may be assigned to a course with lower than the minimum enrollment to ensure that the student receives his or her guaranteed appointment. All final appointments are approved by the dean of academic affairs.
6. Department Recommendations for Teaching Fellows: During the fall (November Department Meeting), departments/R&S are invited to request one to two teaching fellows (mentor/apprentice) for the following academic year. The teaching fellow must be connected to a particular course. It is recommended that students who serve as teaching fellows be beyond the comprehensive exam phase when working with the professor in course preparation (semester prior to the semester the course is offered). In March departments/R&S may recommend additional teaching fellows for the following spring semester if slots are available. Teaching fellows can work with professors in introductory courses or other courses that already exist. These do not need to be new courses. Teaching fellow applications are due by November 1<sup>st</sup>. Department recommendations for teaching fellows and other special courses as well as their teaching assistant assignments are reviewed by a group consisting of the dean of academic affairs, associate for academic affairs, associate dean for curricula, director of PhD studies, and director of master's studies with a view toward the larger curricular needs.
7. Selection of Graduate Instructors: Qualified PhD students may apply for a graduate instructor position, which allows the student to teach a course on his or her own. The student submits the graduate instructor online application by November 1<sup>st</sup>. The current doctoral teaching fellow positions in practical theology and language readings will continue but will change to the title of graduate instructor in 2014-2015. In addition, students will be able to apply for one of four graduate instructor positions that will be awarded annually on

a competitive basis beginning in 2014-2015. Graduate Instructors must receive initial support from the relevant department/R&S. The graduate instructors are selected by the PhD Studies Committee.

8. Final Grade Rests with Professor: Teaching assistants and teaching fellows may not be assigned final responsibility for grading any piece of student work. Although teaching assistants and teaching fellows may participate in the evaluation of student performance, grades are issued in the name of the professor of record, who alone is responsible for fairness and accuracy. Situations are discouraged where students are led to suppose that teaching assistants or teaching fellows have rendered controlling decisions about their work. They should not be called upon to explain their grading decisions to the student. This is the responsibility of the faculty member in whose name the grading is done.
9. Changes in Teaching Assignments: Changes in the assignment of teaching assistants may be made during the first two weeks of class by the dean of academic affairs. This may involve additional appointments of teaching assistants or a reassignment based on final enrollment numbers.
10. Grievance Matters: A teaching assistant or teaching fellow who is aggrieved by the decision of an instructor (or instructors), as related to the administration of the principles and procedures stated above, after he or she has conferred with the instructors concerned, may appeal to the dean of academic affairs. The dean shall then consult with all parties involved and adjudicate the matter.

*Revised by Office of Academic Affairs on May 29, 2014*