GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIPS
Composition Program

Graduate Teaching Assistants who teach in the Composition Program at Virginia Tech are welcomed into a supportive, vibrant community of teachers and researchers. We are a student-centered academic program whose work with writers foregrounds rhetorical education and research design.

COURSE

First-year writing courses (ENGL1105 and ENGL1106) are fifteen weeks. Sections cap at 20 students. The courses are based on program principles and a common textbook. Classes require four major projects, including a short presentation and portfolio.

SEQUENCE

Many students take both ENGL1105 Composition I and ENGL1106 Composition 2. The first course offers a foundational introduction to effective writing practices at the university. The second course builds upon the first through the development of a sustained research project.

TYPICAL WEEK

Full GTAships in English typically require 20 hrs/wk (half-time). One section of composition approximates 10 hrs/week, on average.

- 2-3 hours preparing
- 2.5 hours in class
- 1-3 hours reading and responding to writing
- 2 office hours avail. to students

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GTA education at Virginia Tech includes ENGL5004, a grad seminar in theories and practices of college composition, a mentorship program, an August Workshop, colloquia, and three program-wide meetings every semester.

MENTORING

In our semester-long mentoring program, new GTAs are introduced to experienced instructors as a way to learn the inroads of effective composition teaching. The program has a 1:4 mentor-mentee ratio, which makes it possible for GTAs to interact substantially as you apprentice into your teaching practice.

OBSERVATIONS

We believe all teachers benefit from the give and take of supportive, timely dialogue with other teachers. In the Virginia Tech Composition Program, we invest in such exchanges conversationally and through written observations, including peer-to-peer, formal (annual), and periodic informal observations of teaching.

RESOURCES

The Composition Program's resources are continuously expanding, as we curate materials for supporting teacher development and the effective teaching of writing. A growing collection of documents is available for public, open access at http://www.hokieswrite.com/. The program also offers customizable Canvas sites for each of the courses. Above all, we encourage you to reach out to the program's leadership team via email at composition@vt.edu with your ideas and questions.