Undergraduate Teaching Fellows and Faculty Mentors Wrap Up the Year

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Four English classes benefitted this academic year from Undergraduate Teaching Fellows (UTFs). The UTF Program was established in 1991 and is celebrating its 25th anniversary. The purpose of the program is to “provide meaningful academic employment,” according to Professor Joyce Kinkead, who created the program while Associate Dean. The UTF program grew to encompass the entire university in 2001.

UTFs are generally selected from students who have already taken the class successfully. Their duties include attending classes, providing individualized sessions to review papers, holding exam review sessions, and presenting mini-lessons in class. Landon Graham, who served as UTF in English 3385, which focuses on mythology, taught two lessons on Homer in translation. Dr. Shively, his mentor, said, “Landon’s work was excellent. I’m changing the translation of Homer that I use in class next year because of his influence.”

Sonia Manuel-Dupont, who has worked with UTFs regularly, said, “I hand-pick my UTFs, someone with whom I will work well, someone who did really well in the class, someone with integrity who is trusted.” Carolyn Lyle worked with Dr. Manuel-Dupont in the new clinical experience for English Teaching majors. They noted that with a new class, a lot of problem solving was required.

One result is that they are developing a handbook for future clinical experience students in English.

Susan Andersen termed Amanda Lundberg “the pulse of the students.” Amanda also gathered resources—art, music—for the American Cultures class. Andersen noted, “By the end of the term, this peer of the students had really moved much closer to being my peer.” Evelyn Funda, who worked with Abigail Bentley in an American Literature class, noted how UTF assistance as a first reader of papers really expedited the grading process. Dr. Funda also pointed out that UTFs should capitalize on their experience when applying for graduate studies or work, “UTFs are limited in number. It’s an honor to be chosen by a faculty member to work together. It provides real leadership experience.”

Five faculty members were awarded UTF funding by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences this year. For 2017-2018, six UTF positions have been awarded to the department. The faculty employing UTFs next year include Dr. Shane Graham, Dr. Jessica Rivera-Mueller, Dr. Shively, Dr. Manuel-Dupont, and Ms. Andersen. UTFs earn $750 per semester and average about four to five hours of work per week.

Department Head Jeannie Thomas said, “We are very grateful for this support from the college and university. We had more requests than were funded, and we hope USU continues its important investment in students and support for faculty.”