

Default Report

Post Interview Survey

April 7, 2021 7:04 PM MDT

Q1 - What is your academic rank/general professional title?

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Assistant Professor

Visiting Assistant Professor

GTA

Regents Professor

Assistant Professor

Professor of English

Ph.D. Candidate

Master of Fine Arts in Creative Writing Graduate Teaching Assistant

3rd year PhD student in English

First year PhD student

MA student / GTA

Q2 - Is there anything about the process of this interview that you would like brought to my attention?

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No--I simply want to thank you for the invitation! The entire process was professional and affirming.

I thought the interview was well organized (on your part) at least. I appreciated knowing the approximate number of questions, and the progress updates during the interview were also helpful (ex. "we are on question 17"). I also found many of the questions thought provoking and found the conversational nature of the interview enjoyable.

No

Not really--I enjoyed the opportunity to reflect on these issues

No

Nothing that occurs to me.

I think the process is effective and organic, especially when it comes to asking about personal experiences, for better or worse, with academic professionalization. At first, I guess I was thinking that some questions would be theoretically rooted in pedagogy, education studies, Writing studies, or English studies, but I was pleasantly surprised that I could enter in the conversation with no prior reading or foreknowledge of the precise questions.

When you asked about my professional goals I should have also said organizing revolts against capitalism and winning the Nobel prize in literature, but it didn't occur to me and it would've sounded even more unhinged than I already sounded lol.

No.

This interview felt very safe and comfortable. Thank you!

N/A

Q3 - Regarding the university mentorship system, is there anything that you would like to add that was not discussed during your interview?

Regarding the university mentorship system, is there anything that you woul...

No

I wish the university had a mentorship program for VAPs. Graduate students have mentors through the apprenticeship program, through their committees, and even in the classroom. Tenure track faculty are assigned faculty mentors. But, VAPs and adjuncts fall through the cracks. Having more professionalization for those of us in the "in between" would be so helpful.

No

Since mentoring can be uneven, I am really happy that the grad program has restarted professionalization workshops, even during the pandemic. I hope that continues.

No

Not really.

I believe there is potential in critically thinking about and discussing the university mentorship system, if indeed it exists in some shape or form. I found that in the past that the writing center was very matrifocal in its leadership and guidance while the English department was very patrifocal. I think, however, this metaphor based on kinship, leads to further thinking on a caste or class system, as it might appear in programs specific and departmentally. Who gets assigned what course to teach is a tad bias at times, and the guiding philosophy behind this is usually rank/status (i.e. if you are a PhD student you get to do this, if you are a MA student you only get to do this).

As I continue to do mentorship work, it feels more tedious and busywork-like, but it's still comprehensive in learning to teach 1113, though I am curious how I'll prepare for 1213.

No.

N/A

We need more mentors who are dedicated to student success. Right now, we only have one solid faculty member who is willing to go above and beyond for their students. This causes many of us to leave the program confused or unsure of what path to take post graduation or even how to graduate / what classes to take.

Q4 - Regarding graduate-level pedagogy, is there anything you would like to add that was not discussed during your interview?

Regarding graduate-level pedagogy, is there anything you would like to add...

No

I don't think so.

No

I do think many of us have shifted in recent years to include more professionalization and more pedagogical applications in our literature courses, and that this is a good thing.

No

Not really.

I wish there was a more across the board criterion of expectations and outcomes in graduate-level pedagogy. It's extremely stressful completing coursework, particularly in courses with thinly defined end results, or at least a sense of what these might look like. It makes me think of the English department as a crisis heterotopia (Foucault). Rather than articulating a same space of learning, a lot of courses and the pedagogy therein bespeak an other space of learning, out of sight.

The more I speak to different graduate students, the more I see wildly different patterns to professors grading work.

No.

N/A

I initially mentioned that I hoped to learn this during my time in the PhD; however, I later expressed that I wasn't sure if I would ever learn graduate-level pedagogy. Now that I've had time to reflect, I find it concerning that this has never been brought to my attention.

Q5 - Regarding the working conditions of graduate students, staff, and faculty, is there anything you would like to add that was not discussed at the time of our interview?

Regarding the working conditions of graduate students, staff, and faculty,...

No

I realize the department is making changes to the offices, but the current office situation for VAPs, adjuncts, and graduate students is abysmal. While the shared office space can create a sense of community, it also makes it difficult to have professional and private conversations with students. I think this contributes to a feeling that contingent faculty and graduate students are not "real instructors" and this creates a morale problem. I noticed in other departments (namely agriculture), 2 graduate students share 1 office.

No

Only to reiterate that GTA stipends and the reduction or elimination of fees is crucial, and the department knows it but has been stymied in our attempts to do something about it. The same is true for the lack of retirement benefits for VAPS.

No

Not really.

Currently, I feel working conditions are gradually getting better but are unfortunately not ideal. There is still a lingering, unspeakable feeling of oppression, in terms of resources and technology. Office spaces are shared and cramped. Buildings are dilapidated. Internet/Wi-Fi is often shoddy. But yet graduate student, staff, and faculty tolerate these working conditions because it is just there but not questioned. Questioning these institutional conditions is sometimes a catch-22 or Pandora's box.

No.

N/A

The pay we receive is absolutely unacceptable. I cannot afford my rent, groceries, health insurance, medical bills, or even gas in my car. This is true for most of the people in our department. One instance in particular that upsets me, is not getting paid to organize / participate in / facilitate orientation. This isn't necessarily anyone's fault "locally," as I know the program directors would pay us if they were able to. I think it is the result of a flawed system overall. However, what it does result in, is receiving half of an already unacceptable pay check (despite the fact many of us were working the entire time). And, of course, we all still go through with it, because we can't afford to lose our assistantships by saying "no."

End of Report