

AN EXAMINATION OF THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF A BASIC
UNDERGRADUATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM: A CASE STUDY

by

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ABSTRACT

Basic undergraduate physical activities programs play a vital role in providing undergraduates with an opportunity to develop sport related skills and healthy lifestyle habits. The effective instructional ability of the graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) who instruct a significant percentage of courses is critical to students' possession of lifetime skills. The instructional ability of GTAs largely depends on the organizational culture of the program. A program's organizational culture greatly impacts the socialization and development of its members in relation to their organizational duties and responsibilities. The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of the organizational culture of a Research I institution's basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP) from the viewpoint of graduate teaching assistants and administrators. For the purpose of this research, both qualitative and quantitative research methods and analyses were utilized. Data collection methods included: a) semistructured interviews with GTAs and administrators, b) document analysis, and c) field observations. A survey was administered to GTAs to obtain quantitative data regarding their perspectives on various aspects of the BUPAP's organizational culture. William Tierney's (1991) organizational

culture framework was used to guide the study. The framework has six areas: a) leadership, b) information, c) socialization, d) environment, e) mission, and f) strategy.

According to the findings of the study, the BUPAP did not take an active role in the training, development and supervision of GTAs who were instructors. Further, the GTAs developed instructional support systems that were comprised mostly of their peers and colleagues. Recommendations for improvement of the BUPAP included: a) modifying the existing selection process for graduate teaching assistantships, b) providing formal instructional supervision, c) utilizing an evaluation process that obtains multiple sources of data and d) providing more formal instructional training of GTAs. The findings from this study were consistent with previous research that suggests GTAs to be often under-trained and lack adequate instructional supervision and support.

INDEX WORDS: Organizational Culture, Graduate Teaching Assistants, Physical Education, Collegiate Activity Programs, Higher Education

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DEDICATION

Thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Without him this would not have been possible or worthy of attempting.

The following are a few of the many verses of support and inspiration that helped me find my way as a graduate student:

Isaiah 6:8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us? And I said, “Here I am. Send me!”

Philippians 3: 13, 14 Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead. I press toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 4: 19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Proverbs 24: 3, 4 By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established; through knowledge its rooms are filled with rare and beautiful treasures.

Galatians 6: 9 Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.

Ecclesiastes 3: 9 – 14 What does the worker gain from his toil? I have seen the burden of God laid on men. He has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men; yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end. I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live. That everyone may eat and drink, and find satisfaction in all his toil- this is the gift of God. I know that everything God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it and nothing taken from it. God does it so that men will revere him.

Romans 5:3 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our suffering, because we know that suffering produces perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, but God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Institutions of higher learning have historically served a vital role in the United States of America. The needs and wants of the United States' capitalistic enterprises had a significant influence on the manner in which universities and colleges meet their missions of education (Chepyator-Thomson & King, 1996). The initial missions of such institutions were grounded in the practice of teaching and improving society by preparing competent individuals to join the U.S.'s labor force. However, in the past century, this emphasis on teaching has changed to primarily one of research. Once seen as an independent entity free of influence by external forces, the U.S.'s colleges and universities have become social and cultural change agents and thus the connection between the institution and the greater society has become more obvious (Bok, 1990). Federal intervention took the form of legislation that facilitated an emphasis on research over teaching by providing monetary incentives. Also, similar legislation led to an increase in student enrollment due to the masses gaining greater access to higher education and the need for an additional instructional labor force to assume instructional responsibilities.

This labor force was developed from the ranks of graduate students seeking advanced degrees within the educational system. Graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) served the university as undergraduate instructors and reduced the teaching load for professors. This allowed those professors to devote more time to research and graduate

instruction obligations. Further, the graduate teaching assistantships allowed the graduate students to finance their way through graduate school and acquire valuable experience as instructors in preparation for future career choices. Although GTAs have served a vital role as undergraduate educators, little attention was paid to their development within the context of the institutional mission of the academic programs they served.

The study of GTAs has become increasingly significant since the early 1970s due to their roles as instructors in the continuously growing undergraduate programs in United States' institutions of higher learning. Nyquist and Wulff (1996) asserted that graduate teaching assistants were persons who interacted with undergraduate students in an instructional capacity and whose primary obligations included grading undergraduate tests and papers, leading lectures and discussions in classes, and assuming full accountability in course instruction. GTA research revealed many aspects of the GTA experience and issues they faced both as graduate students and instructors. Three broad areas of inquiry have dominated the literature: socialization and development (Rikard, G., & Nye, A., 1997; Nyquist, J., & Wulff, D., 1996; Nyquist, J., Abbott, R., Wulff, D., & Sprague, J., 1994); GTA training, program development and implementation (Ronkowski, 1998; Stout, 1998; Andrews, 1987); instructional and cultural issues in relation to international graduate teaching assistants (Jenkins, S., & Rubin, D., 1993; Sarkisian, E., & Maurer, V., 1998). However, the impact of organizational culture on the socialization of GTAs and its influence on their development as instructors of undergraduate courses has not been explored in depth. Further, the relationship between current employment practices and their future occupational roles have yet to be thoroughly examined in the research, thus leaving out an important piece of the GTA

development puzzle. It is critical towards the continuing development of GTA support and training strategies that organizational culture be examined to better understand the manner in which training and development programs prepare GTAs.

The emphasis of the study of culture has historically been based upon the manner in which members of an organization are influenced by, and participate in, the shaping of symbols and rituals found within the organization (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Davis, 1982). The conceptualization of culture finds its conceptual roots in the fields of anthropology, linguistics, and sociology. The term *culture* has been defined in a variety of ways in the literature, primarily that of sociology and anthropology. A noted anthropologist Clifford Geertz (1973) explained that culture “denotes a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life” (p. 89). According to Wolcott (1999), culture can be referred to as the means by which different groups go about their lives and the belief systems that guide their behaviors.

Culture as Bergquist (1992) explains, is "the conceptual foundation on which field observers base their explanation of the orderliness and patterning of individual and collective life experience” (p. 1). According to Deal and Kennedy (1982), organizational culture consists of a core of essential assumptions, understandings, norms, and implicit rules that direct the day-to-day behavior of members of an organization in the workplace. Based on Schall’s (1983) research, organizational culture is an enduring, interdependent symbolic system of values, beliefs, and assumptions evolving from interacting organization members that allow them to explain and evaluate behavior and ascribe

common meaning to it. The primary focus of research into corporate organizational culture has been the examination of mechanisms of socialization and their impact on members of organizations.

In terms of studying an organization, Rhoads and Teirney (1992) conceptualized culture as, “the informal codes and shared assumptions of individuals participating in the organization” (p. 1). Further, Peterson and Spencer (1991) viewed culture as, “the deeply embedded patterns of organizational behavior and the shared values, assumptions, beliefs, or ideologies that members have about their organization or its work” (p. 142). Among researchers, culture is something that cannot be seen directly but rather by observing and participating in a culture-sharing group, a researcher can see “culture at work” via observed behaviors, artifacts, and language (Creswell, 1998).

The field of organizational culture first appeared in scholarly research literature through the examination of culture within settings such as industrial corporations and academic institutions. Ouchi’s (1981) *Theory Z*, *The Art of Japanese Management* by Pascale and Athos, (1981), and Peters and Waterman’s *In Search of Excellence* (1982) coined the importance of organizational culture as exhibited in successful business enterprises throughout the world. What followed was the emergence of a variety of conceptualizations that shaped the definitions of culture in industry. According to Edgar Schein (1985),

Organizational culture may be defined as “a pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and that has worked well enough to be considered valid, and therefore, to be

taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems (p. 9).

The concept organizational culture found its way to institutions of higher learning through Kuh and Whitt's *Invisible Tapestry* (1988) and Bergquist's *The Four Cultures of the Academy* (1992). These authors utilized cultural theoretical frameworks to further our understanding of institutions of higher education as social organizations. A review of the research on organizational culture reveals that this realm of research is not new in higher education (Chaffee & Tierney, 1988; Clark, 1970, 1987; Dill, 1982). The aforementioned researchers sought to provide a holistic portrait of educational settings and the communication of meanings via symbols and rituals that inform and shape the behaviors of members of that setting.

The examination of the organizational culture of an institution or setting and its importance to the development and training of its members has been discussed in the literature and has many benefits for members of that organization. Tierney (1991) explained broadly that organizational culture encourages practitioners to:

1. Consider real or potential conflicts not in isolation but on the broad canvas of organizational life;
2. Recognize structural or operational contradictions that suggest tensions in the organization;
3. Implement and evaluate everyday decisions with a keen awareness of their role in and influence upon organizational culture;
4. Understand the symbolic dimensions of ostensibly instrumental decisions and actions;
5. Consider why different groups in the organization hold varying perceptions about institutional performance (p. 128).

By having an understanding of the culture in which members of an organization operate, administrators and supervisors can be knowledgeable about the needs and concerns of the members (Abbott, Wulff, & Szego, 1989; Chism, Cano, & Pruitt, 1989). Thus, they can provide the appropriate resources and feedback to aid in the development and training of those members in a meaningful and significant way. In the case of GTAs this is vitally important, due primarily to the possibility of role conflict, role ambiguity, and lack of instructional resources and training. Being that GTA programs are the primary means for GTAs to learn the intricacies of the teaching assistantship, it is vitally important that they are provided with the support that they need (Nyquist, Abbott, & Wulff, 1989).

Statement of Problem

The importance of organizational culture and its impact on the development and training of professionals has received considerable attention in many areas of study, specifically corporate and business management and organizational effectiveness. Likewise, institutions of higher education, primarily law and medical schools have begun to analyze their academic programs using organizational culture frameworks. However, in the field of GTA training and development scant attention has focused on the impact of the organizational culture found within academic departments in higher education. This omission has occurred despite an increasingly unawareness about the quality of undergraduate education being provided within institutions of higher education, and growing labor issues between GTAs and institutions that employ them.

The effective training and development of GTAs has increased in importance in relation to the instructional mission of United States institutions of higher education and

research inquiries in these areas have been overwhelmingly pragmatic in nature. The lack of theoretical-based research in GTA literature is possibly due in part to the need for practical solutions to issues in teaching and professional development. This is due primarily to the fact that GTAs provide a significant portion of undergraduate instruction. GTAs form the group of students in higher education that most likely proceed to become professors. Both of these issues are practical in nature and are not readily addressed sufficiently by theoretical frameworks and research paradigms.

The GTA training and development has been the topic of a myriad of instructional publications and the establishment of a variety of professional groups in recent years due to their essential and practical applications to the working of United States institutions of higher education. Nonetheless, organizational culture, an important aspect of the GTA experience has been overlooked. Unlike the fields of business, law, medicine, higher education GTA researchers have yet to thoroughly explore the impact of the organizational culture of an institution and/or department on the development and training of GTAs to be effective instructors. This study will examine the perceptions of the organizational culture of a BUPAP from the viewpoints of administrators and GTAs in an effort to ascertain its impact on the instructional experiences of the GTAs.

Whether by casual oversight or intentional marginalization, the impact of organizational culture on the training and development of GTAs has not received its due in the literature. This would seem hard to rationalize given the powerful influence of organizational culture on academic organizations and GTA programs, which are important subunits of any research universities academic staff (Madden, 1971; Clark, 1981). In relation to undergraduate education, Wert (1998) wrote that “graduate teaching

assistants provide instruction for roughly 40% of the undergraduate courses in research and comprehensive universities and they have teaching responsibilities in approximately 60% of the introductory courses taken by first- and second-year undergraduates” (p. xvii). Also, scholars confirm that the current “crop” of graduate students will soon take over the reins in academia due to the graying of the current pool of professors. Magner (1999) recently found that nearly a third of the nation’s faculty members of full-time status are 55 or older. It would seem that the proper training and development of these soon-to-be scholars would be in the best interest of universities and colleges across the country. An important aspect of that training that has been overlooked is the importance of organizational culture and how it shapes GTAs who are part of it.

The study of organizational culture and its impact on the professional training and development offered by an institution has been examined in several areas. Typically, qualitative and quantitative methods of inquiry have been combined to develop a holistic portrait of the research setting. Works by scholars such as *Becoming Gentlemen* (Guinier, L., Fine, M., & Balin, J., 1997) and *Boys in White* (Becker, H., Geer, B., Hughes, E., & Strauss, A., 1992) are just a few of the scholarly inquiries into the training and development of the future generation of a particular field or profession. In both these studies and similar studies, the manner in which the culture of the institution under investigation affected the preparation of the students for future enterprises was called into question and the underlying assumptions and messages were revealed. Also, a pragmatic or practical approach to the research was utilized and the importance of the implications derived from the data was considered more significant than any theoretical considerations. The organizational culture provides a framework for rationalizing

informal aspects of the organization, that are not found in formal documents and procedures, objective characteristics of its members, organizational charts, or empirical measures of resources and performance. Nothing could be more important to GTAs in institutions of higher education than the issues and conflicts that besiege them as soon as they step onto campus.

For the purposes of this study, organizational culture has been defined as the inherited or developed set or practiced acceptable norms, values, routines, and behaviors exhibited by members of an organization that are transmitted via socialization mechanisms such as artifacts, rituals and symbols by constituencies of that organization. A holistic examination of the organizational culture will allow for:

1. An assessment of the needs and concerns of GTAs within the program in relation to their instruction;
2. A descriptive account of the perceptions and perspectives that shape the organizational culture of the GTA program from the various constituencies that influence it; and
3. The identification of areas of organizational or staff development that possibly will enhance the GTA experience for the participating graduate students as well as the undergraduates that receive their instruction.

Due to increasing accountability for academic excellence, financial stability and a lack of sufficient theoretical measures to quantify organizational efficiency, the study of organizational culture and climate represent an avenue for the holistic examination of organizational effectiveness. Competition between institutions for high-achieving students and external funding has led to the increased importance of institutions and

academic degree programs to reflect a positive culture and climate. Thus, the analysis of organizational culture has moved from the simple examination of perceptions and attitudes within academic institutions to reflecting the “business” aspect of higher education and focusing on management and organizational effectiveness. Tichy (1983) and Blackburn and Pitney (1988) asserted the importance of culture in relation to organizational effectiveness and individual performance. In Peterson and Spencer’s (1991) work several of the functions of organizational culture are identified:

1. They provide members with perceptions and understandings of the purpose or meanings of the organization they are in and the work they perform.
2. They present a mechanism for attracting, selecting, and socializing new members.
3. A sense of organizational identity is provided for members through a “sense of what is unique or distinctive about their organization or how it differs from similar places” (p. 141).

Significance of Study

Institutions of higher education’s role in this society have been primarily to educate the United State’s labor forces in preparation for their entrance into society and to create new knowledge that was deemed beneficial by constituents of the institution and the greater society. GTAs play a vital role in this process and just as full-time faculty face difficulties in this role. Russell (1999) pointed out that GTA primarily face two types of challenges: challenges to the development of their instructional effectiveness and challenges to the balancing of dual roles as student and instructor. Along with a plethora of written materials on the development of GTAs, a number of institutional and

professional organizations have been established to facilitate the development of more effective and significant training programs for GTAs. It is not uncommon for larger institutions to offer institutional-wide and departmental GTA preparation course and programs. National organizations and programs such as the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program have formed partnerships with research universities and particular undergraduate institutions to enhance the overall preparation of GTAs for instruction. The impact of these resources on the training and development of effective instructional habits and strategies in GTAs are immensely significant not only to the undergraduate responsibilities of GTAs but also to the higher education system and its need for competent professors and scholars. Tice, Gaff, and Pruitt-Logan (1998) concluded that,

Successful faculty preparation programs provide graduate students with a better understanding of faculty roles and diverse institutions. This understanding, in conjunction with participation in a strong TA development program and collaboration with faculty mentors, results in graduate students who are better prepared to succeed as future faculty members (p. 282).

Although such support mechanisms are available, research has directed little attention to the manner in which the organizational culture of GTA training and development programs impacts the development of GTAs. Research has yet to fully take into account not only the perceptions of GTAs but also the insights and perspectives of

those who take an active part in their development (including GTA supervisors and program directors).

This research will aim to provide voice to multiple constituents of BUPAP and GTA training and development practices in an effort to understand where their visions and perspectives are aligned. With this understanding, means of correcting any misalignment can better be developed and implemented. This topic is of special concern to higher education due to basic physical education and activity classes that are often the last opportunity for young adults to improve their fitness levels and develop sport-related skills necessary to engage lifelong healthy lifestyle habits (Mondello, Fleming, & Focht, 2000). It is critical that undergraduate programs that employ GTAs ensure that college-aged students are provided effective physical activity instruction as they matriculate.

Research Purpose and Questions

Due to the complexity of human behavior and the concept of organizational culture, the exploration of a BUPAP and the perspectives of its administration and GTAs would be best served coming from a practical research approach rather than a purely theoretical one. The goal of this research is to add to the current GTA literature practical means of pursuing the mission of a BUPAP: a) to ensure quality undergraduate education and b) to prepare GTAs for their possible future professions of college teachers. Most appropriate for this research is a practical approach due to the inherent gap between theory and practical reality. The need for effective GTA training and preparation is one that calls for immediate and pragmatic solutions due to the need for quality instruction at the start of every semester and the graduation of a new crop of master's and Ph.D. students into the workforce. It is not hard to consider that the processes of staff

development and organizational change are pragmatic in nature although certainly theory has helped guide and shape practices in both of these areas.

I would argue that unlike U.S. businesses and corporations and education to a lesser extent, the emphasis on the implications of the culture of an organization has been vastly marginalized in the least and overlooked at its worst. It is important to understand the program, the supervisor's role and the responsibilities and role of the GTAs themselves within the context of the department and institution as a whole. Furthermore, I sought to identify where the program is situated within the context of the institution's mission of teaching. The purpose of this research was to conduct an ethnographic investigation of the perspectives of the organizational culture of a BUPAP at a southern university in the United States. The research questions that guided this investigation are:

2. How is the culture of the GTA program defined and communicated throughout the organization by its constituents?
3. What is the effect of cultural/environmental factors on instructional performance?
4. How has time as a TA prepared them for future career goals and aspirations?
5. What perspectives do GTAs offer on their experiences in the program?
6. What recommendations do the constituents of the GTA program have for its improvement?

Definition of Terms

Graduate teaching assistant (GTA): Graduate students who interact with undergraduate students in an instructional capacity whose primary obligations include grading undergraduate tests and papers, leading lecture and discussion classes, and assuming full accountability in course instruction (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996).

Organizational culture: A pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration-that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985, p. 9).

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The function and role of institutions of higher learning in the United States have historically been correlated to the needs and wants of capitalistic enterprises within the society (Chepyator-Thomson & King, 1996). The needs of society determine and perpetuate those behaviors and the rewards of individuals within institutions of learning that are most acceptable (Collins, 1977) and deemed beneficial to the country. In recent years, institutions of higher learning have become instruments of social and cultural change and subsequently, the connection between the institution and the greater society has become more evident (Chepyator-Thomson & King, 1996). Institutions that comprise the United State's higher education system have experienced a shift in organizational mission and philosophy in recent years. No longer can they function as isolated and self-regulated institutions that focus solely on the creation of new knowledge and remain independent of other social institutions (Chepyator-Thomson & King, 1996). But rather they have been forced by post-World War II federal and industrial intervention to become social institutions whose organizational structure and management is heavily influenced by the needs of the capitalistic and bureaucratic society, which it serves (Bok, 1990). Chepyator-Thomson and King (1996) explained that, "higher education institutions have since functioned as sources of (a) new knowledge discovery important to the nation, (b) science-based inventions helpful to the national defense, and (c) technological

innovations responsive to our economy and to the changing needs of our society” (p. 166).

In some respects, this change in institutional functioning and organization has led to a marginalization of the original mission of colleges and universities, which was teaching placing an emphasis on research instead. Perkins (1973) wrote that, “the newer functions of research, public service and, most recently, the achievement of an ideal democratic community within the university have brought about organizational requirements that are significantly different from those required for teaching” (p. 3). However, at the same time that U.S. institutions of higher learning were shifting their focus away from instruction and forming a monetary and dependent relationship with federal and industrial organizations they experienced increases in student enrollment since the end World War II (Trow, 1993). This increase was due partially to federal intervention in the form of legislation that opened the doors for the masses to enter institutions of higher learning. Due to the burden placed on faculty to conduct research and instruct larger undergraduate courses, universities and colleges took talented graduate students and placed them into instructional roles within undergraduate programs across the country (Trow, 1993). As such, graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) grew to become vital parts of undergraduate programs throughout the United States.

This chapter provides an analytic and comprehensive review of previous studies and literature that addressed issues and topics concerned with GTA training and development and its organizational culture. Section one examines the historical involvement of GTAs in higher education. The GTAs’ involvement will be discussed in the context of federal and state legislation as well as the changing mission of the

“modern” research university and college in the United States of America. Section two of this chapter centers on the contributions of empirical studies on GTAs to scholarly research. The third section provides an overview of the conceptualization of organizational culture and its use in scholarly literature. Following the overview a review of the inclusion of organizational culture inquiry in higher education will highlight research that had as its focus the examination of organizational culture. Specifically, research that investigated organizational culture within the fields of business, law, medicine, and higher education and its impact on the efficiency, development, or training of workers or students.

Historical Involvement of GTAs in Higher Education

This section examines the historical development and involvement of GTAs in higher education, paying special attention to the influences of the federal government and emergent roles and responsibilities of GTAs. This review will lead into a discussion of the evolution of the graduate teaching assistant with special attention being focused on the dominant roles and responsibilities of GTAs within institutions of higher education and how GTA training and development has been treated in the literature. Federal government interventions led to an emphasis on research over instruction in higher education due to an increase in research obligations to federal and private industries. Secondly, similar legislation after World War II stimulated already present increases in student enrollment, particularly during the Mass Higher Education Era.

Indeed, several key legislative decisions that directly impacted the changing focus of the U.S.'s institutions of higher education: the Morrill, or Land Grant, Acts of 1862 and 1890 and the Hatch Act of 1887; the Servicemen Readjustment Act of 1972 also

known as the G.I. Bill; and the Education Amendments of 1972, which created a broad spectrum of student aid federal programs (Trow, 1993). These legislative acts perpetuated two significant occurrences in the United States' higher education system. First, colleges and universities developed a partnership with the federal government and industry enabling them to expand in size and number in exchange for financial support. Second, the early-1900s saw colleges and universities experience a significant increase in student enrollment in both private and public institutions.

Due to these changes, a labor void developed within higher education. With climbing enrollment numbers, more instructional obligations were needed from university faculty. Simultaneously, projects involving federal and industrial research dollars mandated that faculty conduct research and train future scientists for an ever-changing society (Hensley, 1986). These two occurrences created a void between the two new requirements of academic faculty. Primarily graduate teaching (GTAs) and research assistants (GRAs) have filled this void, which has been present since the mid-1900s. The GTA has been called to assist the “strained” professor with undergraduate instruction and sponsored research, often without comparable compensation or prestige (Trow, 1993).

Federal Research Support

Federal and industrial financial support for college and university began to take root during the later decades of the 1800s. Several significant legislative and industrial social needs-based movements took place that led to a long-lasting partnership between sponsors of specialized and focused research and academic departments in need of external funding (Trow, 1993). This partnership led to an increase change in faculty workload and research obligations. There were four identifiable “waves” of financial

research support from the federal government and industry that transformed the instructional mission of the U.S. higher education system.

Land-grant institutions. The first “wave” of federal support came in 1862, when Congressman Morrill of Vermont introduced legislation that created land-grant colleges and the result was the development of a national network of applied research universities (Trow, 1993). The 1862 Morrill Land-Grant Act gave the states strips of land that were roughly equal in size to the countries of Switzerland or the Netherlands. The land was given without fixed or obligatory requirements. This system of universities worked hand and hand together with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A goal of this legislation was to support, at least one college in every state that would focus instruction on agriculture and mechanic arts, (engineering) without necessarily excluding academic subjects such as science, classical studies, and military tactics. The vocation of choice during the late 1800s was in the field of agriculture, which explains why the majority of schools that received funding were in rural settings. As Trow expressed (1998),

The only positive obligations were to dispose of the land or strip in a manner or on terms left to state discretion; maintain the fund as a perpetual endowment invested at 5 percent; devote the income to one or more institutions which, while including the traditional college subjects, must provide instruction in agriculture, mechanic arts, and military tactics; and make an annual report of the results (p. 57).

The setting aside of funds led to the establishment of a university/federal government partnership. During the late 1800s, college enrollment patterns were primarily local and regional, and the social background of a particular college’s students

reflected local socioeconomic conditions (Trow, 1993). The land-grant movement proposed to extend to previously underserved students the opportunity to attend college. The development of the U.S. land-grant college movement had political, social, economic, and educational implications. As Williams (1991) asserted:

The motives typically attributed to the movement involve the democratization of higher education; the development of an educational system deliberately planned to meet utilitarian ends, through research and public service as well as instruction; and a desire to emphasize the emerging applied sciences, particularly agriculture and engineering (p. 1).

After the 1862 Morrill Land-Grant Act, colleges did not necessarily flourish but enrollments – mostly college preparatory courses- did experience slow growth. Professors were forced to endure low pay, heavy workloads and less than stellar facilities. State support was not dependable and certain constituents of Congress condemned the colleges citing their inability to attract agricultural students (Williams, 1991; Trow, 1993). In 1887, Congress passed the Hatch Act, which required Land-Grant Colleges to organize and implement an experiment station, which researched agriculture and engineering and was to obtain information on the practical application of concepts and methods associated with the disciplines (Williams, 1991). George Washington Atherton was the driving force behind the Hatch Act of 1887, which encouraged the establishment of agricultural experiment stations at land-grant colleges and provided an annual appropriation of \$15,000 for the station's work (Williams, 1991). After the Hatch Act, a tense relationship developed between college presidents of land-grant colleges and experiment station directors, who often worked towards different goals and objectives

regarding the mission of the experiment stations and the college faculty within them. The scientist/faculty was often caught in the middle of this struggle. They soon found themselves overburden with responsibilities for teaching and service, along with research (Williams, 1991).

The Hatch Act provided the foundation for agricultural research and instruction and at the same time freed resources allocated for agricultural research to other academic programs. This legislation allowed the federal government the ability to use institutions of higher education for the implementation of national policy; while simultaneously, the same legislation gave the colleges the means to function as the collective research laboratory or center for innovative and expanding concepts in applied science. As Williams (1991) noted, “in gaining the stations, the colleges found a measure of needed academic respectability in the emerging university movement- in which research was highly valued” (p. 89).

When the federal government demonstrated a willingness to support the land-grant movement, the states soon followed suit and did the same. Atherton along with several land-grant college presidents worked furiously to continue to push their agenda for more appropriations to land-grant institutions (Williams, 1991; Trow, 1993). In 1890, with the aid of several prominent college presidents, Congressman Morrill again secured federal appropriations. This time for a grant of approximately \$25,000 per year to be devoted to the monetary need of research being conducted at each of the research stations. State legislature quickly did the same and matched and in some cases, exceeded the federal government’s annual \$25,000 grant (Williams, 1991). The 1890 Morrill Land-Grant Act infused land-grant colleges with much needed money. This federal funding

made it possible for the colleges to hire new faculty in research disciplines. Following the enactment, state support rose significantly for the remainder of the decade.

However, two competing missions for the experiment stations existed: many in the federal government wanted the stations to serve only as a scientific research unit while college personnel wanted to blend teaching as well as research into the mission of the station. The Adams Act of 1906 cleared up any misunderstanding of the government's standpoint on the issue of the purpose of these research stations (Williams, 1991). The act increased the annual stipend to \$30,000 but required that the funds be used only for conducting original research programs or experiments directly linked to the agricultural industry (Williams, 1991). Concurrently, the land-grant colleges were enjoying an increased student enrollment. The pressure of teaching more students and being held accountable for research placed considerable strain on college professors.

With the successful passage of these legislative acts, the Association of American Agricultural Colleges and Experiment Stations was formed. It became the first organization of peer higher education institutions in the country (Williams, 1991). The Association helped to develop the stature and reputation of the land-grant colleges, standardize entrance requirements, balance curriculum, and rationalize research methods. Through innovations such as graduate education, military instruction, mining engineering, and curriculum reform, and through developing relationship with the federal departments of Agriculture, Interior and War, the Association was able to develop a vision of the land-grant college as a comprehensive institution that focused on the liberal, scientific, and civic education of all students not just technicians and those seeking

vocational careers (Williams, 1991). The partnership between the federal government and agriculture and military universities continued to grow steadily.

Federal and industrial project research. During the 1940s, a second “wave” of federal government support began. The federal government introduced additional monies in the form of “project research” directly into the universities (Hensley, 1986; Williams, 1991). This indicated a significant change in the federal government’s approach to funding, because the government was essentially “purchasing” research of a particular type. Projects such as the Manhattan Project and other war-related projects led to the development of deadly military weapons within institutions of education (Williams, 1991). No institutional funds directly supported these projects due to their lack of relevance to instruction however; the use of better university facilities provided support indirectly.

The use of faculty-initiated research proposals became widespread throughout universities in order to secure funding from potential government sponsors. Project funding led to the creation of a number of research support positions as the need for larger staffs developed. With project funding, a direct obligation existed for the first time between the sponsor and the researcher. The achievement of specific objectives became the chief concern of the faculty and the government. Target contract research led to imposed product and fiscal accountability on faculty researchers that had not existed before (Hensley, 1986). Although resisted by academicians, through federally mandated institutional compliance policies, the burden of government regulation of research and fiscal accountability spread from project directors to all members of the faculty.

By accepting project funding, the university provided the necessary laboratory facilities and faculty. University departments now were called upon to balance two forms of research – “departmental” and “federal project” research. Also, there still existed the need to sustain the traditional functions of the university, which involved instruction. By the 1970s, it was increasingly apparent that research had become the primary function of many elite universities and that the worth of an institution was decided by the amount of federal project research and monies and not the reputation of instruction. The significant feature of this time period was:

The reversal of the federal government’s policy from providing general institutional or formula funding serving a broad mission to funding small grants and contracts for specific research accomplishing a very narrow project objective in a short period of time (two or three years) (Hensley, 1986, p. 23).

In response to the increasing amount of research being funded by the government and the sense of accountability, many universities and colleges developed administrative structures, policies, and very extensive facilities to conduct project research. Offices of Grants and Contracts began to be established among college and universities campuses in order to meet the needs of the institution. The major growth in the establishment of these offices occurred in the period from 1950 to 1980. The growth of these offices has increased with each “wave” of federal funding since the 1940s. In the early 1940s and 1950s, the national Office of Scientific Research and development was established to coordinate and stimulate research projects to further aspects of the war effort. These included the National Institutes of Health and Research, the National Science Foundation

(NSF) as well as mission agencies such as the Office of Naval Research, the Atomic Energy Commission, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration who depended on university project research to meet their objectives. The Great Society philosophy advocated by the federal government during the 1960s created hundreds of programs that solicited and supported thousands of university projects (Noll, 1998). Further, with the oil embargo of the seventies, the federal government appropriated huge sums of research dollars into energy research in the care of the Department of Energy, which relied heavily on university projects. Even now, many of these agencies continue to receive large Congressional appropriations that are utilized to support mission research. Along with these huge sums of project money came a strict and complicated system of fiscal accountability. University business officers and research principal investigators were chiefly responsible for the success of the project and the meeting of approved or stipulated objectives.

Organized research units (ORUs). The third wave of federal intervention involved the establishments of organized research units (ORUs), which dramatically changed many aspects of the university. With the formation of these centers, financing of research was no longer based on a single sponsor or single sector support. Instead, these units obtained support from multi-company and multi-agency organizations that focused on a particular research area (Hensley, 1986). The establishment of such centers continued the university's historical objective of originating and organizing thought about particular social or national problems and dilemmas. But it moved passed basic problem-solving techniques to a level of sophistication that allowed universities and colleges to solve even more increasingly complex social and technical problems. Also, no longer

were single researchers the sole agents of investigation, now teams of researchers were established along with possible associates. As Hensley (1986) pointed out “this fundamental change improved the efficiency of the university in problem-solving, because the collective mind now approached broader, long-term problems that the single bench scientist could not easily resolve” (p. 26).

The establishment of university ORUs transferred practical problem solving issues from the industrial sector of the U.S. to the university sector. Universities gained national acclaim and respect with the formation and successful operation of a legitimate center or institute of research. The university would gain a reputation for having a significant mass of researchers and support for the addressing of broad-spectrum problems for a specific industry and to also solve basic industrial problems. Such a reputation led to increased funding from the government and industry.

The ORUs were necessary for the survival of the new-age university research. The centers administrative structure and support staff were essential to the university due to its inability to adequately meet the instructional and applied research demands placed upon it. Also, new centers emerged and their new personnel widened the spectrum of university research into multidisciplinary research, pilot plant development, regulation research, advanced process research, product-oriented research and development (R&D), classified defense research, and a variety of technological development (Noll, 1998). Since the 1940s, when a significant percentage of universities and colleges were instruction dominated, over 5,000 university research centers have been established in American universities (Hensley, 1986). These centers were not part of the traditional instructional mission of the universities; therefore, a whole new administrative structure

was established in institutions of higher learning. This was another signal that the emphasis of universities and college was shifting from instruction to research.

Prior to World War II, early academic research centers were primarily basic research and instruction oriented and usually had a small professional staff. These centers were funded by small endowments and grants without strong ties to industry. After World War II, the nature of these centers changed drastically. These centers advocated the philosophy that there must be a significant support for university research and development by both the federal government and industry, and that the support would directly fund organized research for answers to existing and developing scientific, technological and commercial problems in particular fields of industry or academics. The money was given directly to the center and no longer to the university or individual research projects. As Hensley (1986) stated, “organized research units are new, powerful, university mechanisms that are supported by national government policy and individual business commitments to advance focused university research in a particular field” (p. 30). Before funding could be given to an ORU, the center had to convince the sponsoring agency that it had the essential mass of scientists, support personnel, and equipment to do the project.

Common grounds research. The final wave of federal intervention led to the development of common grounds that were the results of the development of collaborative efforts between industrial and university research during the late 1960s. This development facilitated dramatic changes in the mission and operations of universities. The faculty member was brought out of the classroom and away from traditional methods of funding and into partnership with particular industrial firms and

agencies. The instructor had to leave campus to do his or her work and thus the time for instruction decreased substantially further emphasizing the decline in the importance of teaching in comparison to research. As Hensley suggested (1986),

This movement to a common ground required much more than physical movement – it required radical changes in campus philosophy and policy, as university resources were being committed to the development of specific industrial objectives with the idea that the nation or state would be economically served through the attraction of business dollars to develop high technology in a particular region (p. 34).

Research parks were established to actively promote industry/university collaboration. The association with the development of collaborative partnerships with industry was necessary for many universities in order to be internationally competitive with major world research universities. During the early 1980s many industrialized nations experienced a fundamental change from industrial economies to technological economies due partially to the dominance of technological research. As Hensley (1986) stated “it is a change that is profoundly altering as the transformation from the agriculture economy to an industrial economy (p. 34). Modern universities and colleges found themselves scrambling to meet the technological knowledge needs of local industries, while striving to compete with international markets. The increase in demand for technological research led to the need for larger staffs of research personnel and increased the demands on the time of university faculty members who took part in such research. This increase in university research support was due to a change in social needs. Hensley suggested (1986),

That this wave of university research support was brought about by industry switching from established manufactured products to new products and services that were more technologically based; from a workforce that was predominately blue collar to one that is white collar; from bench science to sophisticated science, and from heavy, rigid manufacturing to automated, flexible technologies” (p. 35).

To accommodate these societal changes, the research universities had to change their internal and external structures from one that emphasized conducting work in a departmental laboratory that was used primarily for instruction to conducting work in partnership laboratories that promoted advanced students to research industrial identified problems and from single investigation-oriented research projects to center-focused research that not only has applied but basic research objectives. It is in the research universities that training for many of the technologically oriented jobs of the future was taking place. This was due primarily to the fact that it was the only institution that had faculty who understood the advanced technology and it was that same faculty that led the charge in innovations in the field of technology. The goals of many universities and colleges included the preparation of technically trained students who were prepared to make the transition into a technologically oriented practical and work force. As Hensley (1986) wrote,

Business and industry seek to hire the graduate of research universities affiliated with research parks and industry encourages its industrial researchers to collaborate with universities in the development of

instructional programs and personnel exchanges that meet industrial objectives” (p. 37).

The relationship between university instruction and the industrial sector had become increasingly interactive and profitable for both parties. This relationship called for a common ground for instructional development as well as research development. Apparently many advanced technologies require customized training programs that were developed in collaborative practices between industry and the university. Research universities had the opportunity to learn and offer practical experiences of conducting research and corporate training programs due to their connection to common ground partnerships.

The increase in industrial education needs led to the development of a significant mass of continuing education support personnel who assisted the faculty and the university’s industrial partners in meeting the technical training needs of industry. Staffs of continuing education groups often worked separately from traditional departmental graduate and undergraduate instructional programs. University research was deemed vital to sustaining the economy and to promoting the general welfare of the country. Most importantly, university research formed the foundation for our entire technological society. Without it, the U.S. seemingly would lose its technological advantage in the international market. Sponsors from outside of the university footed the bill for much of the billions of dollars in research support. The federal government, the states, foundations, industry, and voluntary associations utilized university research projects to advance their personal goals and objectives.

Federal Influence on Student Enrollment

The Mass Higher Education Era (1945-1975) is considered the “golden age” of higher education (Cohen, 1998). During this time in U.S. history legislative acts were passed that led to the perpetuation of the already occurring increases in student enrollment via funding for university and college expansion and open access to higher education for all citizens regardless of nationality, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. The federal government’s involvement with the operation of colleges was justified by the ideology that college education was key to personal success and was socially valuable (Noll, 1998). Changes in the United States such as economic growth, the baby boom of the post-World War II era, a variety of federal support programs, and gender and race equality legislation led to an acceleration of student enrollment after 1945 (Graham & Diamond, 1997).

College and university enrollments grew remarkably relative to the nation’s population during the post-World War II era. Student enrollment in institutions of higher education doubled every fifteen years and the number of earned Ph.D’s doubled every eleven years for the post World War II era (Lucas, 1994). Indeed, it was estimated that 2.3 million students enrolled in over 1,800 public and private two and four-year institutions by 1947 (Anderson, 1968). From the late 1940s through the mid-1970s, there was a steady increase in student enrollment with most of the student population residing in public institutions (Trow, 1997). The 1970s experienced a jump in college and university enrollment from 3.6 million to 7.9 million (Freeland, 1997). By 1990, there were roughly 900 public community colleges, 2,100 public colleges or universities, and 1,400 private colleges (Lucas, 1994). This growth was in response to the 19% increase in

student enrollment experienced between 1981 and 1990 that led to 14.4 million students entering higher education (Zusman, 1994). Subsequently, graduate assistants became a viable option for research institutions in their pursuit of methods of meeting the instructional needs of an increasing student population and the demands of federal agencies for scientific innovations.

The Servicemen Readjustment Act of 1944- the original G.I. Bill – had a profound impact on enrollment trends. The primary intention of the bill was to give tribute to returning servicemen and to improve their chances of employment in a prospering economy (Thelin, 1994). Veterans could take their tuition payments and stipends to any university or college that would accept them, accredited or nonaccredited. It led to a significant increase in enrollment, which included non-traditional students of a more mature age and seriousness towards academics. It is estimated that approximately 2.25 million veterans utilized the G.I. Bill system for education (Cohen, 1998). With such a consistent supply of new students entering U.S. institutions of higher education, there was the opportunity to train a new generation of skilled workers and professionals (Chaffe, 1991). During the decades that followed, a consistent supply of students and federal dollars, allowed institutions to experience a period of prosperity unheard of during previous decades (Freeland, 1997). As Altbach (1994) said, “the G.I. Bill following the World War II stimulated the greatest and most sustained period of growth in the history of American higher education” (p. 226).

Beside the G.I. Bill, several significant legislative acts or movements transformed the perception that higher education was only for the elite in the U.S. society. The civil rights movement resulted in increased diversity of the university student population and

initiated conflicts over curriculum, university hiring and promotion policies (Cole, 1994). President Harry Truman's appointment of a committee to examine the conditions of civil rights and to make recommendations for their improvement in 1946 was a significant step in creating a climate in which the social status of African-Americans improved (Franklin, 1980). Since the 1950s, women and people of color have attended post-secondary education in greater numbers than decades prior. On May 17, 1954, the United States Supreme Court in the case of *Brown v. The Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* ruled that the concept of "separate but equal" was unconstitutional. This ruling along with the enactment of Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, affected racial segregation in public elementary and secondary education as well as in higher education (Roebuck & Murty, 1997). This act authorized the federal government to aid in the desegregation of public facilities and institutions of learning and in the training of staff for problems caused by school desegregation (Cohen, 1998).

President Johnson's War on Poverty legislation in 1964 led to the development of work-study programs and grants to help college-eligible students of color (Hansen & Stampen, 1994). Students lacking the necessary income and resources for post-secondary education were offered federally funded national teaching fellowships, low-interest loans, and grants by the Higher Education Act of 1972 (Lucas, 1994). Before the Education Amendments of 1972, various agencies of the federal government were providing support for specific issues, such as science laboratories and libraries, and underrepresented students from areas deemed vital to national security or economic welfare through graduate fellowships. However, the recipients of these fellowships were relatively small in comparison to the total population of eligible students of age to go to college (Trow,

1993). African-American enrollment increased from 155,000 in 1955 to 1,163,000 in 1980 and had reached 1,901,000 by 1996 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). The United States Congress approved the Title IX amendment to the Higher Education Act in 1972, which prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender in any educational program receiving federal funds (Vertinsky, 1992). Female undergraduate enrollment increased from approximately 4,452,340 in 1975 to 6,849,762 by 1995, an increase of approximately 10% (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996). Also, older non-traditional students began to enter the university systems in significant numbers.

In the years after World War II the federal government came to look at research universities as a precious public resource for research and research training that was worthy of a partnership, even during peacetime (Gumport, 1994). With the launching of the Soviet's Sputnik I in 1957 and the United States' technological leadership seemingly in jeopardy, the government provided more resources for basic research to colleges and universities throughout the United States (Gumport, 1994). At the same time, federal policy makers began to turn to top United States universities and colleges for scientific innovations and expertise (Graham & Diamond, 1997).

The government supplied roughly half of the financial support for some colleges during the 1940s (Lucas, 1994). Education was seen as the key to maintaining international military and intellectual superiority. President Eisenhower supported the 1958 National Defense Act, which eventually transferred more federal dollars into educational establishments than any other legislation in previous history (Chafe, 1991). The government, seeking to finance research and training in the scientific and technical fields, developed and implemented grant and loan programs for lower-income students,

educational benefits programs for veterans, and other financial aids to institutions (Armacost, 1998). The involvement of the federal, state and local government in the financing of public and private institutions from 1945 to the late 1970s was significant. In 1950, governmental and private funding accounted for 69% of public and 16% of private institutions' total income. This number grew to 32% private and 77% public by 1966 (McPherson & Shapiro, 1991). The mid-1970s experienced a decline in governmental funding received for private institutions (29%) but a slight increase in funding for public institutions (79%) was observed (McPherson & Schapiro, 1991).

The flip side to the government's aid to struggling colleges and universities was the advancements that were produced in research laboratories and classrooms of science and technical departments across the country. Universities and colleges were now building scientific and technical research centers and laboratories on campus using federal money and prospering while other academic fields and specialties struggled. By financing these institutions, the federal government was able to manipulate their research endeavors and university officials could not openly protest or risk losing precious federal dollars. As Lucas (1994) stated, "by right of purchase, "capital" had purchased the modern research university and was well advanced in bending it to its ends" (pg. 235). By 1995, it is estimated that the federal government supported 60% of research and development programs in colleges and universities (Teich, 1998).

Summary of Federal Intervention

The first signs of increases in student enrollment had manifested themselves and the reliance of United States higher education institutions on federal and industrial dollars had already taken root well before the Mass Higher Education Era. However, this work

focused on the period between 1945-and the late 1970s in an effort to clearly illustrate how the combinations of a variety of federal interventions led to a increase in not only student enrollment and federal financing but the development of the GTAs in response to a need for preparation of future professors and scholars and to ensure the continuing exposure of undergraduate students to quality education. The late 1800s up to the mid-1900s observed the federal government forming a relationship with institutions of higher education to promote agricultural and military research. As time passed, this focus turned to industrial and military research. The sixties and seventies saw the development of legislation that provided broad support through student financial aid. The goals of this legislation were “to aid institutions of higher education who were undergoing rapid growth and to encourage further expansion of access, especially by groups historically underrepresented in higher education” (Trow, 1993; p. 60). The amendments centered on student aid while earmarking provisions for the institutions.

The most noteworthy aspect of the legislation took the form of guaranteed loans to students and federal grants, with special attention to needy or disadvantaged students. The legislation worked extremely well. The U.S.’s higher education system currently enjoys a period of growth that has lasted relatively for 50 years. Due to research grants and aid from industrial companies and the federal government and open-access legislation, there has been a continuous supply of students and money. However, these two increases have led to such a demand for instruction and research that the faculty has struggled to keep up. It has been the GTA that has been asked to step forth and fill the void left by academics that are being stretched in both directions and to this point have

been unable or unwilling to accomplish the mixed goals of higher academics due to the emphasis on research over instruction.

Review of Literature on Graduate Teaching

Assistants (GTAs)

The roles and functions of graduate teaching or research assistants in higher education are directly linked to the historical transformation of universities and colleges' emphasis on research over education. The role of the GTA in institutions of higher education has seen little change since its inception in the late 1880s. Nyquist and Wulff (1996) defined graduate teaching assistants as students who have instructional duties and responsibilities related to undergraduate education. These duties can range from grading and proctoring undergraduate exams, leading lecture and discussion groups, to conducting courses independent of professors and assuming full responsibility of course instruction. For the GTA, this experience provides a way to finance graduate studies and acquire “on-the-job” training for a future career in higher academics while under the guidance of an experienced mentor/supervisor. In relation to the department, GTAs serve as undergraduate instructors and thus free up professors to conduct other duties such as research and graduate course instruction. Also, as Cole (1994) suggested, GTAs serve the department as recruiting tools to lure prospective talented graduate students to their departments. It is the delicate balance between undergraduate instruction and professional preparation that the majority of GTA research has focused upon and the following sections examine in-depth the GTA literature.

This section provides a review of the literature pertaining to GTA training and development. First, a summary of Nancy Van Note Chism's (1998) research *Preparing*

graduate students to teach: Past, present, and future will be provided to illustrate the evolution of initiatives and discourses on the subject of GTAs in higher education.

Second, a review of the current literature will follow. The literature associated with GTAs show that an emphasis has been placed on three key areas: a) GTA socialization and development; b) issues with international GTAs; and c) GTA training, development and program implementation. Lastly, a section will be devoted to GTA research in the academic field of physical education.

Very few thorough reviews of the evolution of GTA training and development are found in the literature; however, Nancy Van Note Chism (1998) provides the most comprehensive review available and it will be summarized and presented in the following sections. Chism (1998) describes four phases of the evolution of graduate student professional preparation using conversation as a theme. The first phase is titled “Nothing To Say”. This phase encompasses the time from the first appearance of graduate teaching assistants at Yale University during the 1800s to the 1960s. It is characterized by a lack of concern on the preparation of GTAs for instructional roles. Chism noted, “These first hundred years or so of TAs in the United States appear to have been the ‘rugged individualism’ era of starting a teaching career...Here’s the textbook. There’s the class” (p. 2). The philosophy of the time was that there was nothing to teaching; that teachers are born, not made; or that teaching is telling. As a consequence of this mentality, very little developmental work was directed at GTAs. Research focused on the development of protocols and instructional cues for GTAs in the instructional setting.

The second phase is titled “Private Conversations”, and it extends from the 1960 to the early 1980s. Chism (1998) concluded that, “universities began to employ more and

more TAs in increasingly independent teaching roles, student criticism of the quality of education escalated, and institutions began to respond” (p. 3). In response to these occurrences, formal efforts to prepare GTAs began mostly at the departmental level and only in programs with large numbers of GTAs. At this time, dialogue about GTA training and development occurred at the departmental level and little outside influence was deemed necessary. However, two exceptions to this trend were the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which was designed to prepare graduates for teaching in college settings (Richlin, 1995) and the Danforth and Kellogg Foundations which provided funding for the establishment of centers for faculty growth on college campuses such as Stanford University and Harvard University. Research during this time centered on the evaluation of TA performance and student rating. Two significant studies were Carroll’s (1980) examination of the effects of training programs on GTA instructional effectiveness and Ervin and Muysken’s investigation of the needs of international GTAs.

By the late 1980s, the first conference on TA issues was organized at Ohio State University. This was followed by a training institute at Syracuse and then a second and third national conference. Chism (1998) refers to this phase as the “Can We Talk” period. She wrote, “during this phase, large institutions came together to publicly talk about a situation that they had previously treated cautiously: the fact that TAs were carrying a large part of the undergraduate load and that efforts to prepare these graduate students to teach were in their infancy” (p. 4). Several key occurrences marked this period. The Council of Graduate Schools and the American Association for Higher Education began to endorse the need for GTA research. The preparation of TAs turned from simply developing instructional protocols to analyzing the means of selecting and assigning

GTAs. Also, handbooks, awards, certification programs, courses on pedagogy, and consultation services became popular on college campuses, in the media, and in scholarly research. As Chism noted (1998), “during this phase, research on stages of TA development began and became a much stronger theme in the literature”. Works by Sprague and Nyquist (1991), and Darling (1987) were the highlights of GTA developmental research.

Lastly, the “Extending the Conversation” phase began in the early 1990s, which was characterized by the need for GTA training and development to include the perspectives of multiple constituencies, ideas, and initiatives. There was a sense of greater accountability to the public and as Chism (1998) wrote, “regulations, legislations, budget reduction, and internal policies from this period have continued to impact TA development efforts” (p. 5). Professional associations began to connect to the GTA movement due to the number of GTAs who would go on after graduation to fill professional positions within their disciplines. Examples are: the American Chemical Society, American Sociological Association, Modern Language Association of America, Speech Communication Society, and the Society of Industrial and Applied Mathematics (Chism, 1998). A focus on the mission of preparing graduate students for future occupational roles and providing quality undergraduate education began to develop between different elements within and outside the university setting. Chism (1998) wrote, “the focus on partnerships-between departments and central programs, between research faculty and faculty from liberal arts and comprehensive institutions, between universities and industry-was just becoming prominent during this period” (p. 6).

Chism (1998) noted that six central ideas were prominent during the evolution of GTA training and development and the discourse found in the literature and national discussions:

- 1) In the broadest sense of the term, professional development efforts center on teaching.
- 2) Other aspects of future careers besides teaching comprise professional development efforts.
- 3) All graduate students should be exposed to professional development, not just those going into teaching in college settings.
- 4) Efforts for professional development go beyond training.
- 5) Professional development efforts should extend throughout the course of the graduate student program and into the early years of being a faculty/professional.
- 6) A team effort is required for effective professional development.

It is an understatement to say that many GTAs are unprepared for their instructional roles in the classroom setting and that this fact is primarily due to the lack of sufficient and meaningful preparation and supervision (Burkel-Ruthfuss & Gray, 1990; Nyquist & Wulff, 1992). A review of literature on GTAs revealed found three main areas of focus: a) issues and perspectives of international graduate teaching assistants, b) GTA training, development and program implementation and c) GTA socialization and development. It is important to note that throughout the literature; most of the focus was on practical applications of findings rather than the development of theories, with the notable exception of Sprague and Nyquist's (1989) developmental model research.

Presence of International Graduate Teaching Assistants

With the internationalization of higher education in the United States, have come the challenges of communicating across cultures in the instructional setting. Inadequate communication is a potential problem in any inter-cultural setting, but becomes emotion laden when educational consumers such as students and their parents feel that the quality of instruction is compromised (Smith, 1996, p. 53).

Although all graduate teaching assistants suffer from an often-harsh introduction to the culture and roles of graduate life, international graduate teaching assistants (IGTAs) experience additional cultural and organizational issues during their matriculation (Madden & Myers, 1994; Byrd, Constantinides, & Pennington, 1989). Wilson (1991) concluded that, “nearly everyone familiar with graduate education knows of the problems this situation [IGTAs lack of cultural awareness of American classroom settings in higher education] presents linguistically, interculturally, and pedagogically, but solutions have been elusive” (p. 96). During the last several decades, an increasing emphasis has been placed on the training and development of IGTAs due primarily to questions of their ability to effectively communicate and thus provide instruction to undergraduates despite cultural barriers. Smith’s (1996) work highlighted several of the issues that confront IGTAs, their supervisors and those who would question their effectiveness as instructors:

- 1) How well has an IGTA learned and applies “American” methods of classroom instruction?;

- 2) What cultural barriers are present that may impede the instructional effectiveness of IGTAs?; and
- 3) To what extent are IGTAs proficient in the English language?

Research on IGTA teaching effectiveness. The current flux of IGTAs, especially in science, mathematics, and engineering departments is a result of U.S. research universities providing assistantships to non-English speaking foreign students due to U.S. students' lack of interest in higher education and the qualifications presented by foreign applicants. Plakans (1997) wrote, "...fewer U.S. students are undertaking graduate work in science and engineering fields and because many of the foreign applicants are highly qualified in their respective fields of study, departments offer assistantships an inducement to foreign students during the recruiting process" (p. 96). However, IGTAs suffer due to their lack of cultural knowledge and the "U.S.A. style of instruction" primarily due to the fact that TAs are rarely found in institutions of higher education throughout the world, thus IGTAs have few means of knowing ahead of time what to expect in their roles as TAs (Bailey, 1984). The discussion of cultural expectation include "attitudes towards students, how the IGTA handle before-and-after class time, and their attitudes towards questioning. Similar areas of concern have been explored from the perspectives of GTAs of color and women.

Research on undergraduates' experiences and attitudes toward IGTAs is plentiful (Abraham & Plakans, 1988; Briggs & Hofer, 1991; Davis, 1991; Plakans, 1997). The University of Minnesota took the early lead in the investigation of undergraduate concerns towards instruction by IGTAs (Berdie, Anderson, Wenberg, & Price, 1976; Matross, Paige, & Hendricks, 1982; Mestenhauser et al, 1980) and laid the groundwork

for future investigation into the perceptions of students, primarily undergraduates and the instructional effectiveness of IGTAs. The Mestenhauser survey was administered to approximately 400 undergraduate students. Over forty-three percent (43%) of the undergraduate respondents to the Mestenhauser survey said that ITAs had hurt the quality of their undergraduate courses, whereas nine percent (9%) had helped. The same four hundred students were surveyed six months later, to assess any changes in attitudes toward IGTAs before and after the Iran hostage crisis. It was found that less than one-third of the respondents agreed that there was meaningful contact between foreign students and U.S. students at the university and even less felt that IGTAs had contributed to their education. Several other findings from the study were:

- 1) Sixty-four percent (64%) reported having a foreign student as a casual friend or associate but only sixteen percent (16%) reported having a foreign student as a close friend;
- 2) U.S. undergraduates at Minnesota University who had known foreign students as friends but not as TAs had more positive attitudes than those who had both foreign and IGTA friends; and
- 3) Those students who had known only IGTAs expressed the least favorable attitudes towards foreign students.

Research continued to explore the relationship between IGTAs and undergraduates in a variety of educational settings and contexts. Orth (1983) compared undergraduates' evaluations of the speaking proficiency of IGTAs with the ESL teacher's evaluations of the same IGTAs and found dramatic differences. It was found that the undergraduates often rated the IGTAs solely on extralinguistic features of delivery and

other nonverbal aspects of communication. Bailey's (1983), study on classroom behaviors of both native and non-native GTAs indicated, that students who were not majoring in the same academic discipline as their IGTAs were significantly more critical and oppositional to the IGTAs public speaking (English proficiency) than students who majored in a common academic major. She also found those IGTAs' individual personalities and instructional styles contributed greatly to how they were evaluated. Hoekje and Williams's (1992) study found that IGTAs have shown difficulty in expressing themselves appropriately in the classroom as well as applying instructional skills learned in preparation courses and programs in different instructional contexts. However, other factors beyond the effectiveness of the IGTAs themselves play a part in their acceptance as competent instructors as Bailey (1984) concluded, "undergraduate students, while often having valid reasons to complain, sometimes respond to their non-native speaking TAs' foreignness with an attitude of annoyed ethnocentrism" (p. 15).

A plethora of studies have continued to explore this field of inquiry well into the 1990s. Student evaluation studies have produced a significant amount of research (Abraham & Plakans, 1988; Briggs & Hofer, 1991). Research by Carrier et al (1990), found that although IGTAs student evaluation rankings were generally lower than those of U.S. born GTAs, they were still in the acceptable range. The cultural assumptions about IGTAs were found to be more influential in the evaluation of IGTAs rather than linguistic information (Brown, 1992; Rubin, 1992; Nelson, 1992). It has been suggested by researcher that perhaps some type of intervention with undergraduate students may be as helpful in the quest for good student-IGTA relationships as altering the IGTA's speech and behavior (Vom Saal, 1987; Jenkins & Rubin, 1993).

Proficiency of the English language is the primary complaint against IGTA's and the foremost reason for parents and other constituencies of institutions of higher education to express concern about the quality of instruction being offered.

Administrative support for IGTA's have essentially centered on developing programs that allow for foreign students to gain a better grasp of the English language for the sake of their instructional roles and not much else. The primary drawback of current IGTA programs is the over-emphasis on preparing the IGTA to succeed in a required role (current instructional assignments) and not the development of language and instructional skills in general. As Madden and Myers (1994) asserted, "ITAs need to know expedient and effective language, not necessarily to develop accurate and/or grammatically sophisticated language" (p. 2). Althen (1991) noted that in order for IGTA training programs to be successful several considerations must be included in the program design and implementation:

- 1) The IGTA program is to be attached to a established GTA program;
- 2) There must be significant exposure to "American" classroom culture; and
- 3) Oral English proficiency and the acquisition of instructional skills beyond the classroom setting should be the primary objectives of the program.

The seemingly lack of effective IGTA programs is not due to an absence of research and resources. Books with extensive bibliographies and instructional resources that provide program coordinators with a comprehensive survey of the GTA field, current perspectives on IGTA knowledge and testing issues, and summarizations of significant research are readily available (Madden & Myers, 1994; Baur & Tanner, 1994; Nelson, 1991; Sarkisian, 1997). Along with literature and research, several national organizations

and networks such as the Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) have been established in recent years to aid GTA/IGTA program supervisors with providing meaningful instructional resources and supervision.

A seminal work in the area of IGTA effectiveness and linguistics is Madden and Myer's (1994) *Discourse and Performance of International Teaching Assistants*. This work was the first volume of literature to explore IGTAs, language and teaching research. As the editors wrote,

It focuses on issues related to the language needs of ITAs in their varying roles in the university setting and places these issues in the broader context of applied linguistics and English for specific purposes (ESP). Our intention is to align the concerns and research in the language development and performance of ITAs with ongoing empirical investigations of the discourse of both native and nonnative speakers (p. 1)

Discourse and linguistic theory was interwoven with IGTA and GTA training and development literature throughout this work. A variety of topics were covered, including:

- 1) The examination of theoretical frameworks from the field of second language learning and teaching and their possible application in the field of IGTA training (Hoejke, 1994; Shaw, 1994);
- 2) Insights into the manner in which IGTAs use language in a variety of academic environments (McChesney; Rounds, 1994); and
- 3) A review of research that focuses on the IGTA interaction and program design (Yule, 1994; Douglas & Selinker, 1994).

The editors presented two strands of research that have emerged from their review of the discourse on IGTAs. The first was research that focused on the development and use of innovative approaches to training that meet the contextualized instructional needs of IGTAs. This can be thought of as a pragmatic approach to research inquiry. This strand includes the research that examined the effectiveness of field-specific materials in IGTA courses (Anderson-Hsieh, 1990; Smith, Myers, & Burkhalter, 1992). In Steven's (1989) research, it was concluded that the use of native-speaking students to serve as "tutor" who modeled and provided immediate feedback to IGTAs on pronunciation and cultural issues was highly effective. Lastly, Scheinder and Stevens (1991) found that frequent interaction and monitoring between IGTAs and native-speaking students led to a dramatic increase in English proficiency and classroom effectiveness. The second strand of research identified by Myers and Madden (1994) was theoretical in nature and focused on a reshaping of the curriculum that was used to train IGTAs in such a way that it took into account the various environmental and discipline-specific issues that IGTAs faced (Byrd, & Constantindes, 1988). John and Dudley-Evans (1991) concluded that contemporary curriculum utilized to train and prepare IGTAs have yet to define IGTA instructional needs and to examine actual language difficulties that they have on a day-to-day basis.

Summary of literature on international graduate teaching assistants (IGTAs).

This review of the literature has emphasized the role of language in the effectiveness of IGTAs in the classroom setting. This is not to suggest that more pragmatic matters such as classroom management and grading are not important as these issues. However, they are often discussed in the broader context of GTA literature in general. A major obstacle

to effective program design has been the lack of, or inability of faculty, experienced native and non-native GTAs, graduate and undergraduate students to commit to a collaborative effort to socialize IGTAAs and to support them during this transition period into the classroom (Civikly & Mushisky, 1991).

The assumption by many coordinators and peers is that the IGTA arrives with a command of the English language and culture due to their ability to successfully negotiate the applicant process and English proficiency screening. This attitude permeates institutions of higher education despite research to the contrary that suggest that there is a lack of consistency in language skills, cultural awareness, and pedagogical experience (Shaw & Garate, 1984; Ostler & Perimutter, 1994). For those institutions that recognize the need for a formal orientation or training for IGTAAs they themselves have fallen short. Many research universities and colleges establish IGTA programs in a hope that a crash course in English as a Second language will prepare them for their instructional duties. This is hardly the best way to aid IGTA in preparing for their instructional roles and dealing with cultural issues that affect them as students as well as instructors.

By no means are IGTAAs being singled out as the sole reason for a diminishing public respect for higher education instruction. As an examination of IGTA training courses by Smith, Byrd, Nelson, Barrett, and Constantindes (1992) found that the emphasis on IGTA training courses paralleled TA training for native speaks of English but differ in the emphasis on English proficiency and the aspects of the United State's academic culture. However, despite screening practices at the majority of large research universities and colleges, the "myth" of the unbearable IGTA still exists and sometimes

takes on a life of its own and is used by individuals to push personal agendas. Plakans (1997) wrote,

Assumption about the problems that arise between ITAs and the students whom they teach are normally based on hearsay evidence: complaints passed on to the university president by disgruntled parents and alumni at fund-raisers; platform of student government office seekers who promise to 'seek dismissal of all instructors who can't speak understandable English'; native-speaking TAs who find that, by the 2nd week of the semester, their education sections are overcrowded with undergraduates who have switched from the ITAs' recitation sections scheduled at the same time (p. 96).

Chism (1987) expressed that an emphasis on IGTA development has served a dual, yet opposed purposes. On one hand, the increased exposure has led to a more thorough and formal evaluation of contemporary GTA training methods across the board and increased allocation of instructional resources for all GTAs, native and non-native. However, a potentially negative implication for this increased attention has been the reinforcement of stereotypical views of IGTAs and the establishment of hastily conceptualized training program. Smith (1996) asserted that program coordinators and supervisors should strive to "fit" the assistantship to the IGTAs better in order to ensure that linguistic, cultural, social, and professional goals are included in the planned experiences of the IGTA. Smith's research (1996) found,

Even ITAs who were experiencing initial difficulties in communicating in the teaching context, or were stalled in the process of developing as a

teacher, were able to improve their ability to communicate with students once they had defined goals they could realize through their teaching responsibilities. Making the assistantship 'fit' their [international graduate teaching assistants] particular needs translated into behavior, which improved their English and their understanding of the dimensions of communicating in a second language (p. 53).

GTA Training, Program Development and Implementation

The desired benefits to TAs would include greater understanding of and appreciation of teaching, as well as an enlarged repertoire of teaching skills and the ability to apply them to particular problems and situations (Carroll, 1980, p. 178).

If ever there was an area of focus in GTA literature it is research into the development, content, and implementation of GTA training programs. The effectiveness of these program directly affect and embody the main objectives of the graduate teaching assistant experience to provide quality undergraduate education and to prepare the next generation of educators in higher education. As Rhodes (1997) explained:

The purpose of having teaching assistants (TAs) seems to be three-fold:

(1) to provide a system of load-relief for senior faculty who are completing research, (2) to help offset the operational cost of the administration of higher education, and (3) to regularly train a body of people who will influence the future face of academia" (p. 2).

As is the case with the other areas of GTA research, scholars have examined many topics in this particular field of inquiry. Scholars have examined the GTA presence

in higher education; however, two camps have formed in relation to GTA education. One camp emphasized the direct outcomes of teaching GTAs strategies and skills for instruction as it relates to undergraduate education and the other focusing more on the preparation of the future generation of university professoriate. The latter camp emphasizes that assistantships serve as means of financing one's way through graduate school and providing quality instruction while preparing for a future occupation as a professor. As such, an important aspect of the GTA experience should include formal preparation for the role of higher education instructor. The former tends to focus on immediate and practical applications of research findings towards the duties and responsibilities of an undergraduate instructor with little acknowledgement of the need for future career preparation. The following section will examine J.G. Carroll's work in the research of training programs and GTA effectiveness. His work formed the basis for the examination and establishment of GTA preparation programs. Following that section a brief overview of the roles and issues surrounding centralized and departmental programs will be provided.

J. Gregory Carroll (1980) conducted the seminal work in the inquiry of GTA training program development and subsequent instructional outcomes. His work *Effects of Training Programs for University Teaching Assistants* formed the basis for future research into effective program development and implementation. This study serves as the most comprehensive review of the GTA literature on the subject of GTA effectiveness and training programs. In identifying the goals of his review of current research on TA training, Carroll wrote that it was, "...intended to serve three purposes: (a) to present a critical analysis of the empirical research on TA outcomes and student

outcomes, (b) to recommend directions for future research, and (c) to discuss implications for educational policy” (p. 168). From Carroll’s review of forty-eight studies emerged two key trends:

- 1) The studies were essentially descriptive accounts of various GTA training programs which utilized questionnaires and surveys; and
- 2) There was a dearth of empirical studies that highlighted the effects of the GTA training.

Carroll’s (1980) review of the literature was broken into two parts: research on GTA variables which included studies that focused on measures of GTA knowledge, attitudes, and observable teaching behaviors; and those studies that examined student-centered variables such as student achievement, attitudes, and the rating of the instructors. Carroll (1980) wrote: “one implication that seems apparent from the research reviewed here is that subsequently more effort ought to be devoted to assessing the effects of TA training programs rather than simply describing ways of conducting programs” (p. 176). He continues by providing several areas of future research to consider:

- 1) Investigating variables that influence the degree to which GTAs actually implement the training they receive within the classroom;
- 2) Examining the changes in GTAs’ perceptions of teaching as they receive training;
- 3) Exploring the affects of GTA training on the career goals; and
- 4) Inquiring about the use and effectiveness of alternative models and methods of GTA training.

Carroll (1980) concluded his work by pointing out several considerations for policy makers in position to develop and implement GTA training programs. He noted that before developing a program, coordinators should consider important factors in implementing programs for TAs, such as the size of the program, the extent of training necessary, characteristics of potential TA trainers, and the role of established centralized or decentralized administration of programs on campus. Next, he strongly encouraged a collaborative effort between faculty and students within graduate programs. He asserted that the influence of instructors, advisors, and mentors within the programs directly influenced the manner in which GTAs would go about their instructional responsibilities. He wrote, “TAs take their cues from their instructors, advisors, and mentors. They will readily detect a lack of faculty participation in training programs and will revise their priorities accordingly” (p. 179). Carroll (1980) suggested that faculty should be allocated release time in which to work with GTAs and aid them in their preparation for instructional duties through preferably the establishment of formal courses.

Centralized GTA programs. Two types of GTA training and development programs typically exist on the campuses of larger research institutions. Centralized programs are usually supported by the university or college as a whole and cater to a variety of GTAs from various academic programs. Mintz (1998) noted that centralized programs are often directed by holders of a Ph.D. and may range in staff number from one to many, depending on the size of the institution. Often, there is a strong but not always willing relationship between the staff of centralized programs and departments on the respective campus. To whom centralized programs report to, also varies from campus to campus. In some cases, directors report directly to the head academic official on

campus and in others, they must report to undergraduate and graduate coordinators only.

Research by Gappa (1991) concluded that,

While it may be optimal to consider the mission, needs, resources, and support within the institution in an integrated fashion before creating a centralized teaching assistant program, current reporting lines and locations of TA programs, evidence a continuum from hasty additions to existing institutional programs to more deliberate programs" (p. 21).

As Gappa (1991) insinuated, not all programs are effective in their mission of providing meaningful and pragmatic preparation for GTAs. Research has pointed out several considerations that developers of centralized programs must account for if they truly wish to develop effective and meaningful programs. It has been found that without strong support from campus administration and faculty, GTA programs will suffer from a lack of legitimacy, credibility, visibility, and resources (Lambert & Tice, 1993; Smith, Byrd, Constantindes, & Barrett, 1991). Hiimae, Lambert, and Hayes (1991) noted that in order to "promote ownership and allegiance to the program" (p. 128) program planners needed to develop and consult with a task force of individuals from campus, who in turn could speak on the program's behalf to the larger university community, especially in situations where monetary resources are needed. Mintz (1998) reported several suggestions from her research into the establishment of effective preparation programs for GTAs:

- 1) Develop and work with a campus-wide advisory committee consisting of crucial personnel and other constituencies;

- 2) Pay particular attention to the continuity and initial development of the program's mission and objectives, membership, and the education of new members;
- 3) Communicate and coordinate with all campus-wide units which provide or acquire services from GTAs in order to maximize the effectiveness of those services;
- 4) Maintain an adequate and dependable budget; and
- 5) Continuously evaluate the program in respect to the needs of the GTAs themselves.

Potential benefits of the establishment of a centralized program have far-reaching implications. As Gappa (1991) explained, "the strength of a centralized program is its campus-wide perspective and concern for a professional instruction climate" (p. 87). Centralized programs have the ability to assess the needs of GTAs across campus, match them with the specific departmental needs, and through collaboration with faculty members provide more exposure to traditional and non-traditional instructional issues and resources than a department could do alone. As Andrews (1987) pointed out,

We are a link to the body of research and writing on instructional methods and can often suggest fresh teaching ideas. We can be expert on the skills involved in eliciting participation, fostering learning, enhancing student self-esteem, and many other functions that cut across all disciplines...I have found that, with increasing experience, I have learned how to translate general teaching approaches into discipline-specific terms-to use

brain-storming to analyze a literary work or to foster mathematical problem solving skills...(p. 109).

Mintz (1998) pointed out that centralized programs facilitate and support the instructional goals and objectives of departmental training and development programs for GTAs. This support entails a sharing of research, resources, experts, experience, recognition for excellence in teaching and other forms of assistance in an attempt to advance departmental efforts. Another potential benefit of such centralized/departmental collaboration is the development of a safe and neutral atmosphere in which GTAs can discuss instructional concerns and matters as well as their roles as graduate students. It is the mixing of the departmental faculty and centralized program staff that allows for a free exchange of ideas and thought that are relevant to the GTAs. Lastly, centralized programs are often the "storage and manufacturing" place for instructional materials and resources, such as handbooks, videotapes, and evaluation guides (Lewis, 1992). Mintz (1998) summarized the potential benefits of a well-structured and maintained centralized GTA training and development program when she wrote that, "participation in centralized programs exposes teaching assistants to colleagues and students from every discipline and a variety of backgrounds. It broadens skills and provides a deeper knowledge and appreciation of teaching from an enlarged perspective" (p. 32).

Just as departmental support is a potentially strong benefit for centralized programs, research has shown that it is often variable and limited. As Lambert and Tice (1993) explained, "...the reality is that the quality of the graduate teaching assistantship experience depends directly on how willing faculty in the discipline are to commit themselves as mentors and guides" (p. 17). Weimer, Svinicki, and Baur (1989), continues

this point, "some departments devote much time and energy to TAs' preparation; others devote virtually none" (p. 60). When this is the case, it is often the role of the centralized program to step in and aid the GTA in their instructional development. However, often there is tension between the centralized program and the department on the manner in which a GTA is to be educated on their instructional duties. This leads to the next issue facing centralized programs, to what extent can they or should they teach instructional skills and strategies to GTAs? As Mintz (1991) wrote, "whether by mandate or not, centralized programs often find themselves in the position of coordinating university efforts and stepping in when departmental mentoring is lacking. On occasion, sheer presence seems to invite opposition" (p. 33). Often, in an effort to aid departments in their general preparation of GTAs, they seemingly overstep their boundaries and marginalize the departmental and discipline-specific instructional considerations that the GTAs are responsible for. Lastly, is the possibility of supplying too much of a "good thing". While centralized programs actively seek out and need departmental connections they run the risk of spreading their staff and resources too thin in an attempt to provide for all.

Departmental GTA programs.

Discipline-based training for teaching assistants (TAs) is a primary means for preparing graduate students as college and university professors. Long before there were formal or identifiable TA training and development programs, faculty mentored and modeled for their graduate students the role of university teacher as well as that of researcher (Ronkowski, 1998, p. 41)

The interest of universities and colleges across the U.S. in the training and development of their GTAs has been growing since the late 1970s with the introduction of campus-wide GTA training programs. It was during this time that a movement commenced in higher education that led to the formalized implementation of instructional development and teaching excellence centers on many of the U.S.'s campuses of higher education. During the 1980s the majority of the emphasis was on GTA training in general and thus the focus was placed on the role of centralized and campus-wide training programs. It was in the 1990s that focus on GTA training became more discipline-specific and switched to the emphasis on departmental training programs (Heenan & Jerich, 1995; Ronkowski, 1995). The switch occurred due primarily to several reasons. First, departmental training programs gained assistance from campus-wide training programs due to these programs acquiring the expertise and funding to be of assistance. Second, academic departments faced increased pressure by university officials to place more emphasis on pedagogical skill in relation to both faculty and graduate students' teaching. Third, an ever increasingly competitive market for graduate students seeking an edge for preparation for future faculty positions placed greater emphasis on departmental GTA development opportunities. Lastly, general teaching skills complemented by teaching strategies specific to a particular academic discipline proved to be more than campus-wide programs could effectively provide.

Ronkowski's (1995) research indicated that in order for departmental training programs to be effective, they must focus on four elements. The first was academic content knowledge which requires the teacher-scholar to draw from various aspects of their individual academic disciplines, explain how they relate, and place the concepts in

the larger perspective of the discipline. Second was pedagogical content knowledge which refers to, “the interaction between learning processes and academic content, that us expertise in designing examples, analogies, metaphors, and simulations that help students integrate new knowledge into their existing schema” (Ronkowski, 1998, p. 44). Lastly, knowledge of learners was considered to be an important component of departmental GTA preparation programs and includes learning styles, student motivation, general learning principles, and stages of student cognitive development. This particular area of inquiry has been examined from the perspective of GTAs thoroughly in the literature (Svinicki & Dixon, 1987; Grasha, 1996; Elbe, 1980; Andrews, 1981).

Evaluation of GTA programs. Accounts of how GTA training and development programs are routinely evaluated are not plentiful in the literature, however several studies have attempted to describe the extent to which instructional/faculty development programs evaluate their services (Chism & Szabo, 1996; Gaff, 1975; Centra, 1976). These services are similar and often the faculty and TA development programs are combined, thus the literature in this area is somewhat informative (Chism, 1998). Two types of evaluation are often carried out: formative and summative. The formative evaluation seeks to acquire information during the actual enactment of the program, primarily for the purpose of making improvements. Summative evaluations are concerned with charting the needs and progress of a program in an attempt to make decisions regarding matters such as funding increases, continuation of the program, and the like (Chism, 1998). In relation to on-going program evaluation, Chism and Lumpkins (1995) recommended several questions to ask:

1. What is the extent of program usage?

2. What is the satisfaction level of the TAs themselves?
3. What effects does the program have on the teaching of the TAs?
4. What effects does the program have on the learning of the TAs' students?

These questions were utilized to frame Chism and Szabo's study (1996), which explored the extent to which GTA and faculty development program evaluated their effectiveness. It was found that most programs collect data on participants, report percentages of use, and provide at least a partial description of the users. The use of open and closed-ended survey instruments were discovered to be used more frequently in determining satisfaction (Chism, 1998). The last two questions explored by Chism and Szabo (1995) were found to be less explored by departments, thus calling into question the willingness by the department to take into account the perspectives and attitudes of the GTAs and their students. It was found that when the effects of teaching were examined, surveys, interviews of the user, observations, student evaluations, and other measures were utilized. As Chism (1998) stated, "program evaluation activity that focused on ascertaining effects of the program on student learning was found to be nonexistent" (p. 250).

Although somewhat scarce, several studies have shed light on the effectiveness of GTA programs. Researchers such as Chism and Szabo (1995) concluded that in terms of user satisfaction, ratings for GTA programs were relatively high, and when instruction and its effects were considered, scores typically were high or moderate. Carroll (1980) conducted a seminal review of studies in the GTA literature that explored program effectiveness and found that small gains were associated with GTA development interventions. He did note that a major fault with most studies was that they were not

conducted with sufficient scientific integrity. Gardener (1985) also evaluated GTA training effects and concluded that studies of training in specific areas (such as providing feedback) consistently reported improvements and these improvements positively impacted the GTA's student evaluation. Another of her conclusions was that studies of general training found mixed results on whether the training intervention influenced GTAs' attitudes about their role.

Further support for positive findings associated with GTA development programs were found in a review by Abbott, Wulff, and Szago (1989). However, they too felt that the research conducted on the subject of GTA effectiveness and program design needed to be conducted more systematically. Lewis' (1997) research on GTA development documented overall changes connected with program interventions. But just as researchers before her, Lewis's analysis found no significant difference in the sole research study she analyzed that explored the effects of training on student learning (Chism, 1998). The summarization of these studies and others in the GTA development evaluation literature finds that studies frequently rely on measures of user satisfaction more than formal experimental design focused on student outcomes and they generally find positive effects associated with instruction improvement interventions (Chism, 1998; Levinson-Rose & Menges, 1981; Weimer & Lenze, 1991).

Summary of GTA training, program development and implementation. The field of GTA training has covered a vast array of topics and issues. But as Carroll's (1980) work noted, there has been very few empirical studies from which to present generalizable claims to what works well and what does not in the training of GTAs. However, there are many descriptive accounts of what works but they obviously are not

meant to be generalizable to other institutions and training programs due to the theoretical limitations of qualitative research. The effectiveness of both centralized and departmental programs often lay in the hands of the administrators, faculty and GTAs who put forth the effort to develop and teach within the programs. It is important to note that research has shown that when both types of programs work in unison, GTAs and subsequently undergraduates benefit immensely (Gappa, 1993; Craig & Ostergren, 1993). Although on the surface each GTA preparation type serve different purposes, it is the successful combination of strengths and acknowledgement that can lead to the greatest strides towards fulfillment of the mission of GTA preparation programs in general: preparing the next generation of professoriate and providing quality undergraduate education.

GTA Socialization and Development

The successful socialization of graduate teaching assistant into their roles in academic departments consists of the realization of two primary goals: first, the development of the GTA as a future professor and scholar and second, the establishment of effective educational strategies and behaviors in the GTA in order to ensure that they provide quality undergraduate education. Templin and Schempp (1989) defined socialization as, “a dynamic process involving pressure to change from various directions as individuals assume roles and attempt to learn to influence the role expectations within a social setting” (p. 3). Staton and Darling (1989) pointed out that GTA socialization occurs in four distinct ways:

- 1) The GTA first becomes an advance learner attempting to gather information about his or her discipline and the expectations associated with the new role of being an instructor.
- 2) The GTA then begins to develop a broader understanding of concepts in their field of study in order to eventually make a contribution to the knowledge base of their academic discipline.
- 3) Compelled by social dynamics within and external of their departments, GTAs are called on to think, feel, and act like experienced instructors while simultaneously defining themselves on an individual level.
- 4) Finally, the GTA learns to successfully balance the instructional and student-oriented demands of their roles as teachers in the undergraduate program and graduate students.

The socialization of GTAs focused on four main areas in the literature: a) preparation of future faculty, b) instructional concerns and needs, c) developmental issues and d) supervisor/mentor support. The following sections will discuss the treatment of these areas of focus in the GTAs literature.

Preparation of future faculty.

The next generation of college and university faculty is now being educated in doctoral programs in American research universities. The continued health of higher education institutions depends on attracting a diverse and talented group of doctoral students to the professoriate. It also depends on these faculty members being able to ethically perform the range of roles required of professors (Golde, C., & Dore, T., 2001, p. 1).

The preceding quote highlights the primary role of graduate teaching assistant programs historically, which is the preparation of future generations of scholars and professors for United State institutions of higher education. However, few institutions properly prepared their graduates for this role until recently, but rather GTA training and development programs focused on the development of quality undergraduate instruction (Witherspoon & Gilbert, 1996). Davis and Minnis (1993) indicated that, “the initial motivation for establishing these programs [GTA training and development]... was improving undergraduate education through ‘job related skills training’ for graduate student instructors, not preparation of graduate students for careers as teachers in higher education” (p. 212). This assertion is supported by Parrett's research (1987) that concluded that training and development programs for GTAs are primarily for and focused on training them to be effective instructors during their limited employment. The lack of instructional development in regards to scholarly research and quality instruction beyond the doctoral program hurts the initial effectiveness of novice faculty members upon starting their jobs as professors as well as stunt their development as instructors and scholars while graduate students (Slevin, 1992).

The area of faculty preparation has received considerable attention in the past 10 years, primarily due to the realization that the current stable of professors at research institutions are rapidly approaching retirement and a new crop of U.S. scholars are needed (Tice, Gaff, & Pruitt-Logan, 1998). In the past decade, two important nationwide initiative have been addressed and promoted by individuals concerned with the role of GTAs in higher education and their subsequent career options and readiness upon graduation- the establishment of GTA training and development programs and also

Preparing Future Faculty programs on college and university campuses. Druger (1997) stated that, “our goal is to transform these TAs into confident, knowledgeable, effective teachers who enjoy the opportunity to help students develop and learn (p. 425). Ronald Lee (2001) justified the existence of preparation for future faculty (PFF) programs when he noted:

1. PFF programs are effective recruitment tools for those prospective graduate students who wish to pursue occupations as college instructors.
2. PFF programs improve alumni satisfaction due to improved graduate experiences and possible subsequent job placement.
3. They improve graduate student placement by developing a “dialogue among those who produce, those who acquire, and those who hire Ph.Ds.” (p. 47).

Both of these initiatives have led to a more comprehensive program for GTA training and development on research university campuses. A landmark study in 1991 titled *Preparing Graduate Students to Teach: A Guide to Programs That Improve Undergraduate Education and Develop Tomorrow's Faculty* that was conducted by Lambert and Tice (1991) showed the promise of such programs. The study analyzed GTA programs and the manner in which they supported GTAs in carrying out their teaching responsibilities. Findings suggested that although relatively new, virtually every institution surveyed had some combination of centralized and departmental GTA training. Approximately 80% of the centralized programs had been established in the 10 years before the survey, and of that percentage roughly 60% had been established for only four years or less (Tice, Gaff, & Pruitt-Logan, 1989). Lambert (1993) noted that the content and presentation of that content was the primary focus of the majority of the

comprehensive programs. The research indicated that the leadership of these programs was drawn from either members of the existing faculty and TA development center, the graduate school, or the school of education. The leadership of the GTA programs saw barriers to the full utilization of the programs as being: the hegemony of research, the low regard for teaching in research universities, and the ethos of the university and department.

A second report issued in 2001 analyzed the conditions of graduate students and their preparation for future faculty positions. The report titled *At Cross Purposes: What Experiences of Today's Doctoral Students Reveal About Doctoral Education*.

Researchers Golde and Dore (2001) sought to provide a snapshot of the experiences of over 4,000 doctoral students at 27 selected universities, one cross-institutional program (The Compact for Faculty Diversity), and the pool of doctoral students represented 11 arts and sciences disciplines. The purpose of their research was that:

While existing data provide evidence of the numbers of doctoral degrees granted each year and the career tracks that new Ph.D.s pursue, we lack an understanding of how well prepared new faculty are for the careers they face. We have neither a clear picture of the experiences of doctoral students, nor an understanding of how these experiences vary from by field and by institution. Such information will give us greater insight into the process of doctoral education and provide direction for improving it (p. 1).

A survey instrument called The Survey on Doctoral Education and Career Preparation was utilized for this research. It consisted of five sections that explored the

multiple perspectives of doctoral students including: (a) experiences as a graduate student, (b) description of program and department, (c) career plans, (d) expectations of the faculty job, and (e) background information. The data was analyzed using qualitative, descriptive, comparative, and multivariate relational analyses. The research questions posed were:

- 1) Why are doctoral students pursuing the Ph.D.?
- 2) How effective are doctoral programs at preparing students for the wide range of careers they pursue, both in and out of the academy?
- 3) How effective are doctoral programs at preparing students to be faculty members?
- 4) Do students understand what doctoral study entails before they enroll and once they begin their studies?
- 5) Do students understand what is expected of them during their programs and how to adequately meet those expectations?
- 6) Are the day-to-day processes of doctoral programs sufficiently clear so that students can concentrate on developing knowledge and skills?

Findings from the study revealed the following: a) the training of doctoral students was not what they wanted, nor did it prepare them for the jobs they aspired to take, and b) many of the doctoral students did not understand beforehand what doctoral studies would entail, how the processes worked and how to effectively and successfully navigate through their degree programs. Several significant findings supported the primary conclusions. It was found that over 60% of the students wanted to become faculty members at institutions of higher education but they perceived the training that they received as being inadequate for the responsibilities of such a position. As the

authors wrote, “the data from this study show that in today’s doctoral programs, there is a three-way mismatch between student goals, training and actual careers” (p. 5). Secondly, research training was considered the primary role of graduate education with little time being allotted for the development of instructional capabilities and other aspects of the faculty role outside of research. Lastly, the results from the study indicated that many of the students did not fully realize the expectations and demands of graduate work and subsequent entrance into the academic job market. The authors concluded that, “in sum, the comments of the respondents reveal that many students came to graduate school with unformed expectations. They did not know about the constrained academic job market, nor did that have an idea of how to get the most out of the experience” (p. 33).

Golde and Dore (2001) concluded that higher education must take a more active role in the development of their graduate students in order for the continuation of a viable supply of scholars and professors. Ways of doing this included better developed training and development programs, the establishment of more effective recruitment and retention practices by departments, and a concentrated effort to promote mentorship relationships between graduate students and faculty. The researchers wrote in conclusion,

While doctoral programs do an exemplary job of training graduate students as researchers, preparation for the other roles faculty members play- teaching, advising, and university governance-is generally not as rigorous. Furthermore, the ethical dimensions and core values of the profession not well communicated to prospective faculty members. The health of the profession, and its ability to maintain autonomy through self-regulation, is thus endangered (p. 1).

Several researchers have offered suggestions for the development of effective faculty preparation programs. Research by Witherspoon and Gilbert (1996) found that an integrated approach to TA education was most effective. They noted that the inclusion of an organized, for-credit graduate course, workshops, a colloquium, and a mentoring program were most effective. The authors wrote, “this approach provides instructional activities that are complementary and designed to communicate an appreciation of teaching to those who will be its practitioners and leaders” (p. 69). Research by Chism (1998) found that future professors must be taught to have:

1. Deep understanding of one discipline along with an appreciation for interdisciplinary connections.
2. Skill in interactive pedagogy.
3. Understanding of student learning.
4. Knowledge of instructional design.
5. The ability to work within a team
6. Links with experience.
7. Appreciation for difference.
8. Assessment techniques.
9. An understanding and facility with human relations.

Beaudoin and Felder (1996) found that mentorships with present faculty members allowed GTAs to better prepare for future roles as professors. Following this line of thought about the needs of first-year faculty was Slevin (1992) who recommended that graduate training must include preparation for the full range of responsibilities, especially

those associated with teaching. Tice, Gaff, and Pruitt-Logan (1998) provided recommendations for policy development and included:

1. Doctoral degree programs should also provide a faculty preparation program.
2. Graduate students interested in a career in academia must have access to faculty preparation programs along with effective TA development programs and graduate teaching experience.
3. A faculty preparation program should be connected with existing TA development programs or TA work should be supplemented by a broader faculty preparation program.

The importance of effective GTAs development does not stop with the graduation of the student. Smith and Kalivoda (1998) highlighted the process by which graduate teaching assistants survive the transition from being a GTA to becoming a faculty member. They provide a theoretical framework to indicate how individual characteristics of TAs along with disciplinary, institutional, and departmental forces shape the formulation of a set of professional values. The researchers tracked how doctoral students utilized their graduate experiences to make the successful transition into faculty roles. Utilizing a qualitative, multi-case research approach, approximately 56 participants were tracked over a four-year period. The authors pointed out that the “TAs who successfully move into faculty careers begin the academic morphing process early in a graduate program by aggressively taking advantage of a variety of graduate school experiences which reflect faculty roles” (p. 99).

In conclusion, graduate programs are just now beginning to realize the importance of the preparation of their graduates for roles as professors, thus balancing the emphasis

within the academy on research over instruction. Programs such as the Future Professoriate Project at Syracuse University, Compact for faculty Diversity and the Preparing Future Professors: A New York State Consortium Project are just a few of the programs designed with the advancement of GTA development as their priority. But even with such programs, few opportunities are available for GTAs. Davis and Minnis (1993) wrote, “graduate students preparing for higher education teaching careers have few opportunities to participate in comprehensive programs designed to prepare them for that role” (p. 223). Faculty preparation programs are effective means of providing in-service development to GTAs who seek to become part of academia and also as a means to improve their current instruction as members of a GTA staff. However, the effectiveness of such programs are still being evaluated and changes are being made to the foci of such programs in order to keep up with the changing nature of instruction and student needs in higher education (Chism, 1998).

Instructional Concerns, Challenges and Needs

As noted earlier, GTAs face a multitude of challenges as they attempt to balance the roles of being a graduate student and instructor. Challenges for GTAs have typically been broken into two categories: challenges to the development of their instructional effectiveness and personal issues related to their dual roles as students and instructors (Russell, 1999). Nyquist and Wulff (1996) noted that the GTAs experience three fundamental challenges in their new roles: a) representation of their discipline; b) becoming analytical and reflective about their teaching; and c) learning to accommodate diverse student populations. It is important to consider these aspects of the GTA experience due to the changing characteristics of the student body found in institutions of

higher education. GTAs will be forced to consider and deal with challenges brought about due to the increased enrollment of ethnic minorities, an influx of older adults (non-traditional) seeking degrees, students with disabilities and students with alternative sexual identities (Chism, Cano, & Pruitt, 1989).

These changes in the make-up of student bodies across the United States will provide GTAs with more concerns within the classroom and directly influence their attempts to facilitate instruction and learning among their students. It is the role of the supervisors of GTA programs to provide the support and resources that are necessary. Just as full-time faculty must deal with these challenges so must GTAs, however the major difference between the GTAs and full-time faculty is the amount of preparation and in-service support provided for each (Russell, 1999). Unless this discrepancy is evened out, GTAs who provide such a significant amount of instruction will be negatively affected and also they will be unprepared for the same issues of diversity that they will face if they choose to accept jobs as professors.

Bedient (1997) found that GTAs concerns and questions were focused on several areas: TA rights and responsibilities, TA recourse, teaching skills, motivating students, interaction with students, preparing instruction, laboratory teaching, and evaluating students. Piccinin and Fairweather (1996) also utilized the voices of the GTAs rather than those of administrators or so-called experts and found that upon an analysis of TA training needs were: training in designing a course, receiving feedback from students, self-evaluation, intercultural communication skills, designing a course outline, preparing course material, and developing a better understanding of university policy. They pointed out that “the bulk of previous research has aimed to identify TAs’ training needs, and

other aspects of TA training programs, by undertaking surveys of faculty, department heads, or instructional developers at different institutions. What has been predominately absent from the literature, however, are surveys of the TAs themselves at individual institutions as to their particular training needs” (p. 23).

Bonner (1993) examined the perceived pedagogical needs of GTAs at seven land grant Doctoral I status institutions and found that the majority of GTAs received one day or less preservice training and no inservice training. Also they reported via questionnaire that items needed for TA training were: techniques for increased participation, lecturing, questioning, interacting with students, dealing with problem students, departmental expectations and course planning. A major finding of the study was that the greatest problems confronting GTAs in the study were conflict of graduate studies and their teaching duties which is corroborated by the research of Devers (1998), Powers (1994), and Duba-Biedermann (1991).

Supervisor/mentor support. The primary socialization agent within GTA programs is the supervisor or program coordinator. Supervisors must create an atmosphere in which GTAs can be introduced to and gain confidence in their roles as instructors. Consequently, support programs designed to prepare and assist them, as GTAs are necessary to ensure effective GTA training. Johnson (1992) noted that effective supervisors provide their GTAs with clear instructional expectations, recognize that GTAs have individual needs, treat GTAs as professionals, and provide them with critical resources for their instruction. Rikard and Nye’s (1997) work explored the experiences of physical education GTAs and examined the challenges that GTAs faced as college teachers and recommended means of providing departmental support. They

identified three factors that directly affect the teaching success of graduate instructors as being: 1) role definition, 2) balancing the role of graduate student and instructor and 3) faculty/administrative support. Rikard and Nye (1997) also supported the use of Sprague and Nyquist's (1989) developmental model to aid supervisors and administrators in assessing the needs of GTAs effectively.

Much of the writing that has focused on the GTA supervisors takes the form of handbooks or manuals for the effective development of GTA programs and means of properly providing supervision. One such work is *Working Effectively with Graduate Students* by Nyquist and Wulff (1996). In this work, the authors asserted that the effectiveness of the supervisor is greatly determined by the type of relationships that are established between themselves and the GTAs. The developmental model for GTAs (Sprague & Nyquist, 1989) served as the primary means for supervisors to assess the needs of GTAs and to subsequently provide adequate resources and support. Nyquist and Wulff (1996) asserted effective supervisory relationships with GTAs could be established using the developmental model to assess GTA needs and instructional concerns, assessing the performance of the GTAs as instructors, and addressing special considerations when working with international GTAs.

Throughout the book, emphasis is placed on being flexible with management approaches due to the varied needs and concerns of the GTAs within any given department, thus reinforcing the assumptions of the developmental model. Nyquist and Wulff (1996) concluded that the supervisor's role changes across a number of dimensions such as GTA-supervisor relationships, teaching training activities, and evaluation process

as the GTA themselves progress through the various phases of development. As Nyquist and Sprague (1998) indicated,

As graduate students change and develop, they will need supervisors who can model the values, behaviors, and characteristics of a professional in their field. TAs will benefit from supervisors who adapt as the TAs changes, providing close supervision in the beginning but progressing to a role as consultant and colleague (p. 84).

A major critique of the GTA literature is the seemingly lack of research with a focus on the perspectives of the GTA supervisor. The research that has been conducted has focused on the supervisor in the context of a broader issue or topic (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996; Nyquist & Sprague, 1998; Althen, 1991). This has led to the marginalization of the voice of the supervisor and has regulated their issues and perspectives to the “backburner” so to speak. This emphasis on the production of “how-to” manuals for GTA supervisors has led to very little research on their effectiveness as supervisors. However, descriptions of what supervisors should do and the manner in which they can theoretically develop GTA programs and teach aspects of instruction have been duly noted (Sprague, 1992; Wulff & Nyquist, 1986; Nyquist & Wulff, 1988; Sprague & Nyquist, 1991).

GTA development.

The full complexity of the process by which people move from being students toward being professors mitigate against programs designed around teaching tips or a series of quick workshops (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998, p. 62).

In order to truly think about GTAs development and how best to assist them, it is important to use three questions as frames of reference in which to contextualize the discussion: what is already known about the development of GTAs, the broader trends affecting higher education, and factors related to the individual GTAs (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998). Educational policymakers are currently engaged in a national discourse about the preparation of future scholars and professors. The traditional assumption that mastery of subject matter is the one true necessity and condition for knowing how to be a faculty member in higher education has not lacked critics. However, little reform has taken place with the academy to ensure the quality of doctoral candidates receiving degrees and pursuing jobs as professors. National organizations have begun to establish programs such as the Preparing Future Faculty, which promotes the formulation of partnerships with institutions of higher education and the development of learning experiences for graduate students that would prepare them to choose the academic context in which they could best make their contributions.

Due to pressure from taxpayers and parents, universities have been forced to move away from the perspective that GTAs are just cost cutting mechanisms used for undergraduate education. External pressure has called into question the quality of instruction that undergraduates at research universities are receiving. This pressure has begun to redefine the purpose of graduate education and called for a much needed attention to be paid to GTA's training experiences. The development of a GTA's instructional competence is predicated on the individual's past experiences and many factors within their environment. Nyquist and Sprague (1998) asserted that when attempting to contextualize the process of preparing GTAs to become instructors and

future scholars three factors must be considered. First, the GTA's prior understanding of effective teaching which includes any formal training he or she has received as well as undergraduate experiences (Brokfield, 1990; Wulff, 1993). Second, the messages the GTA receives about teaching, especially those they receive from administrators, supervisors, and influential professors. Along with the messages they receive, attention must be paid to how these messages are interpreted and processes. Lastly, those in position to assist GTAs must consider the influence of the GTA's peers and colleagues on their development. Darling (1986) found that GTAs consistently ask their peers for advice and often act on that advice, especially novice GTAs. Staton and Darling (1989) highlights this point when she wrote,

When TAs needed information that was highly salient, risky, and unobtainable through observation, they typically consulted a reliable third party (for example, they asked an experienced TA how a particular professor would be likely to respond to a challenge). Only when the information concerned something of low risk (for example, how to approach a particular topic in class...) were new TAs likely to consult professors directly (p. 19).

Sprague and Nyquist (1989) advocated a model that identified three phases in GTA development. The phases were given the role descriptors of senior learner, colleague-in-training, and junior colleague. The model suggests that as a GTAs gain experience and skill in relation to their instructional roles and responsibilities, they progress through the phases. For supervisor, four dimensions are highlighted that allows for identification of what phases their GTAs are in and the manner in which they should

provide support and resources that are developmentally appropriate for them. The four dimensions to consider are: concerns, discourse level, approach to authority, and approach to students. A successful matriculation through these phases allows GTAs to become professionals, effective and confident problem solvers, effective in interactions over content in their field of study, and productive researchers (Chism, 1988, 1993; Fink, 1984; Austin, 1992, 1993). It is imperative that supervisors and program coordinators identify placement of GTAs in given phases. Sprague and Wulff (1996) stated that by, "... systematically observing and listening to the TAs and RAs with whom you work, will provide you sufficient information about where they are in their development and what leadership and interventions are most appropriate" (p. 19).

The development of the GTA developmental model draws from several bodies of literature. Schon's work (1987) provided insights into the process of professional development from the perspective of being doctors, architects, and designers via an apprenticeship of practice that leads to professional competence. Scholars such as Connolly and Bruner (1974), Kagan (1988), and Sprinthall and Theis-Sprinthall (1983) explored the phases of development of teachers, counselors, and novice faculty members as they progresses towards professional status. These works provided parallels to observe and analyze how GTAs developed skills and judgment in relation to their instructional roles and responsibilities.

Table 1

Indicators of TA Development

	SENIOR LEARNER	COLLEAGUE-IN- TRAINING	JUNIOR COLLEAGUE
Concerns	Self/Survival	Skills	Outcomes
Discourse Level	Presocialized	Socialized	Postsocialized
Approach to Authority	Dependent	Independent or Counterdependent	Interdependent/collegial
Approach to Students	Engaged/vulnerable; student as friend. Victim, or enemy	Detached; student as experimental subject	Engaged/professional; student as client

Adapted from: Sprague, J., & Nyquist, J.D. (1991). A developmental perspective on the TA role. In J.D. Nyquist, R.D. Abbott, D.H. Wulff, & J. Sprague (Eds.), *Preparing the professoriate of tomorrow to teach: Selected readings in TA training* (pp. 295-312). Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt.

Research in the area of GTA concerns and development (Staton-Spicer & Bassett, 1979; Williams, 1986) indicated that the earliest stages of concerns focus on self and survival. GTAs tend to focus on issues that indicate the comfort level of their students over their own. For example, common concerns are what to wear, the manners in which students address them and how the GTA addresses the students. As a colleague-in-training, concerns shift to the subtle aspects of teaching such as the proper way to lecture, construct exams, or develop assessment and evaluation instruments. At the latter stages, GTAs are mostly concerned with how well the students are learning. At this point, the GTA becomes relatively comfortable with their role as a GTA and focused on the impact of their instruction on their students.

The ways that GTAs talk about their disciplines are another avenue for identifying their development. Novice GTAs (presocialized) tend to speak of their discipline in rudimentary technical vocabulary (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998) in informal and colloquial speech and often offer simplistic explanations. As socialized GTAs (colleague-in-

training), they become more immersed in their discipline and subsequently, tend to gain more fluency, precision, and confidence in the use of more technical terminology.

Postsocialized GTAs begins to link the language and terminology of their discipline with that of other disciplines. As Sprague and Nyquist (1998) wrote, “the speaker connects the language of the new community with the language of the broader community” (p. 70).

As a senior learner, GTAs are often dependent on their supervisors or other experienced instructors for support and guidance. This aspect of the development is concerned with the manner in which GTAs approach authority usually a supervisor or administrator. The GTAs focus is on doing their job the “right way”, which is often dictated by the culture of the department. After some experience is gained, the GTA tends to become more autonomous. Sprague and Nyquist (1998) wrote, “this stage [colleague-in-training] is described as counterdependent because sometime the motivation goes beyond establishing independence and reflects a need to break with authority” (p. 75).

The final dimension to consider in relation to GTA development is the manner in which they approach their students and develop effective teaching relationships with their students. Initially (senior learner), this relationship can be somewhat complex due to the need by the GTA to feel that they are effective as instructors. The GTAs tend to assess their feelings and the emotional feedback they are receiving from the students daily (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996). As a colleague-in-training, the students-instructor relationship is somewhat detached and the students are view and from a more analytical perspective. Also, the needs of the class as a whole tend to weigh more on the GTA than those of an individual student. Sprague and Nyquist (1998) wrote, “they [GTAs] are more interested in being respected by the majority of students than in being liked by every single one” (p.

72). At this stage, the GTA firmly realizes their control of the curriculum and pedagogy. As a junior colleague, the GTA is less emotionally vulnerable to the behaviors of their students. At this time, the GTA realized that education is a two-way street, in which the students must be willing to learn and the GTA must effectively provide learning experiences for their students.

Summary of GTA socialization and development. As noted earlier, the development of GTAs is a progression from senior learner to junior colleague. It is highlighted by rapid changes in the way GTAs see themselves as instructors, articulate aspects of the disciplines, and form relationships with supervisors and students. Researchers such as Sprague and Nyquist (1998) have laid the foundation for our exploration of GTA development and point out several important aspects of the model to take into consideration: (a) each stage has an essential role in development, (b) GTA development is not linear or smooth, (c) the role of affect is vitally important to consider in GTA development, and (d) meaningful GTA development includes the development of reflective practices and strategies.

Research on Collegiate Physical Education/Activities Programs

Several studies have been conducted in the fields of health and physical education that examined the instructional training and concerns of GTAs. Carleton and Strand (1991) who conducted one of the few studies on GTAs in the area of physical education found that four major areas of concern that confront GTAs were: the dualistic role of being a teacher-student, individuality, money, and education. Cost (1997) explored and described the experiences and needs of 16 GTAs who taught introductory health courses. She found that the initial experience of teaching was frightening and often

overwhelming for new GTAs; however, with time, the GTAs were able to perceive themselves as effective instructors. Secondly, the orientation programs provided by the department were inadequate for the demands and responsibilities of the GTA position.

Savage and Sharpe (1998) wrote about their research in physical education and concluded that for GTAs, “minimal attention is typically paid to ensuring effective matches between the basic skill classes GTAs are responsible to teach and the various teaching competencies and subject matter familiarities the GTAs bring to the position” (p. 130). They examined the manner in which 198 GTAs in 70 different Research I and II graduate physical education programs typically acquired their teaching skills. Also, they studied the effectiveness of a behavioral practice protocol on the daily teaching practices of one struggling GTA. Findings from the study suggested that there was a notable lack of formal teacher training for GTAs in physical education graduate programs, and there are possible positive effects of behavioral approaches to GTA teaching effectiveness training. The authors noted that further exploration should be made in the areas of: a) implementation of a behavioral approach to GTA teacher training across varied participant characteristics, b) comparing the variable effects of differential GTA teacher training practices, c) determining the long-term effects of formal GTA teacher training once they have accepted faculty positions, and d) identifying the achievement gains of students who are taught by GTAs with more rigid and structured training in comparison to those without.

Book and Eisenberg (1979) and Darling and Dewey (1990) found beginning GTAs to express more self-concerns than task or impact concerns but as the semester progressed, the number of task concerns increased. Myers (1995) conducted a

longitudinal study that showed consistently that GTAs expressed more task concerns than self or impact concerns. Pottee (1993) found that an additional concern, role conflicts were expressed by GTAs as well. She defined this concern as the GTA's ability to perform multiple roles effectively. Myers (1995) suggested that for novice GTAs, role conflict maybe the most salient teacher communication concern.

Jones (1993) explained that "several training directors have been praised for their new programs, and numerous faculty evaluators have been questioned about present successes and future improvements in TA training. Few researchers, however, have asked the TAs themselves to evaluate training programs in which they participated" (p. 147). One such study that utilized the voices of the GTAs themselves was a Master's thesis study conducted by Russell (1999). As noted earlier, very little research on GTAs have been conducted in physical education settings. The purpose of this research was to identify the concerns of physical education graduate teaching assistants in a basic physical education program. A second purpose was to obtain recommendations on ways to address these concerns in relation to the GTAs' roles as instructors. Nineteen GTAs took part in the study. The research was guided by four primary research questions:

- 1) What concerns did the physical education graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) have about their assistantship responsibilities?
- 2) In what order were the concerns ranked/measured in degree of concern?
- 3) What recommendations did they have to improve their work conditions?
- 4) Were there any significant relationships between the GTA's terms of experience, program of study, degree aspirations, courses taught, and their expressed concerns or the rank/measure of those concerns?

The primary research instrument was a modified version of George's (1979) Teacher Concerns Questionnaire, which listed twenty-four survey items related to teachers' concerns. Along with the survey items geared towards concerns, there was an open-ended question section, which asked:

1. Do you feel you were adequately prepared to teach the PEDB or FFL course you were assigned in past terms?
2. How can administration and the GTA supervisor support you as a GTA to better fulfill your teaching responsibilities?
3. If any thing, what aspect(s) of GTA orientation were most beneficial to you and why? What was least beneficial and why?
4. Identify any additional concerns and recommendations you may have in relation to your current role as a GTA.

The overall findings from this study indicate that GTAs had high concerns about the impact of their instruction on students. A low degree of concern was shown for the majority of items on the survey, especially in regard to task-centered concerns. Another finding of the study indicated GTAs to be prepared to instruct their students due to training and experiences primarily outside departmental training and orientation. In general terms, the data showed that the GTAs viewed the departmental orientation and training program to be inadequate for their instructional duties and responsibilities and that they were not adequately prepared by the department for their assigned courses as instructors. Ways to improve the GTAs' work environment included: increased communication between the GTAs and their supervisor; more instructional resources; and the development of a new GTA orientation. Two practical implications from these

findings were: the department needed to redesign the GTA orientation program and a library of resources was needed for GTAs to improve their instructional techniques and responsibilities.

Summarization of Review of GTA Research Literature Section

After a thorough review of the GTA research literature several aspects of the research methodology seem to be consistent. First, the areas of focus have been GTA socialization and development, GTA program development and implementation, and issues related to the experiences of international GTAs. Second, the primary methods of inquiry are interviews, observations and surveys; subsequently the research has been mostly qualitative in nature. Third, much of the literature has been focused on “how-to” aspects of the GTA experience (example, how to be an effective supervisor). With this being the case, little empirical research has focused on the application of these “how-to” checklists in the instructional setting (example, how effective are various supervisory strategies?)(Carroll, 1980) and the subsequent instructional outcomes. This has led to an absence of theoretical models from which GTAs can be examined.

The last critique of the literature will serve as the focus of my research. First and foremost, very little research has examined GTAs in physical education (Russell, 1999; Savage & Sharpe, 1998; Rikard & Nye, 1997; Trimble & Hensley, 1984; Mondello, Fleming, & Focht, 2000). This research will continue to expand the discourse on GTAs and their experiences in the physical education literature. Secondly, throughout the GTA literature aspects of William Tierney’s organizational culture model (1991) have been explored, although not systematically or purposively. This study will utilize the model to form a holistic portrait of a GTA program in higher education. The model itself will be

described in detail in the next chapter. Next an examination of the concept known, as organizational culture will be discussed as it relates to business and educational literature primarily that which is found in higher education.

Review of Organizational Culture Literature

Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

The study of organizational culture has become one of the major domains of organizational research, and some might argue that it has become the single most active arena, eclipsing studies of formal structure, or organization-environment research, and of bureaucracy (Ouchi & Wilkins, 1985, p. 458).

The quote above highlights the prominent position that organizational culture occupies in business and educational literature since its theoretical and conceptual inception into mainstream scholarly research in the early 1900s. Early scholars' insights and contributions initiated the development of a line of inquiry that has stretched from early research of administrative principles in corporate organizations to the current emphasis of symbols and rituals in the analysis of contemporary higher education programs (Taylor, 1911; Gulick & Urwick, 1937, Blau & Scott, 1962). Researchers' initial efforts to examine cultures of organizations as they relate to that organization's effectiveness of accomplishing its mission and the individual performance (an organization's labor force) of its members finds its conceptual and methodological foundations in corporate organization research. A myriad of definitions exists that seek to delineate the exact meaning of organizational culture. As Cameron and Ettington (1988) pointed out, "the lack of precision and consensus regarding the definition of

organizational culture has a long tradition. Ambiguity has existed in the fields of anthropology and sociology for decades [and continues to exist]” (p. 360). Many authors have tried to define organizational culture:

- * A core set of assumptions, understandings, and implicit rules that govern day-to-day behavior in the workplace (Deal & Kennedy, 1982).
- * A relatively enduring, interdependent symbolic system of values, beliefs, and assumptions evolving from interacting organization members that allows them to explain and evaluate behavior and ascribe common meanings to it (Schall, 1983).
- * The taken-for-granted and shared meaning that people assign to their social surroundings (Wilkins, 1985).
- * A set of commonly held attitudes, values, and beliefs that guide the behavior of an organization’s members (Martin, 1985).

Kuhn (1974) defined cultural content as: “... artifacts, sociofacts (social structures and behavior patterns including rituals), language and its conceptual structure, performance skills, and the value attached to any of these” (p. 156). Schein (1985) defined organizational culture as:

... a pattern of basic assumptions – invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration – that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (p. 9).

Denison’s (1990) definition of organizational culture focuses on “the underlying values, beliefs, and principles that serve as a foundation for the organization’s

management system as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce basic principles” (p. 2). He further mentions that an organization’s culture primarily persists due to the members of that organization attaching meaning to communicated practices and principles (Denison, 1990). This being the case, any theory of organizational culture must take into account values, beliefs, and meanings that underlie an organization in relation to member motivation and the coordination of activities by individuals. Pasmore (1988) points out the significance of culture to organizational thinking and why it has been a focus of research in both corporate and education business management and leadership research:

First, it is important to recognize that all organizations possess cultures, whether or not they are apparent or well articulated. Therefore, outcomes of sociotechnical systems design are always affected by culture and, in turn, affect the culture as design features bump up against basic beliefs, values, norms, expectations, and ideologies. Thus, organizational culture can set constraints on what changes are acceptable. Second, design changes may influence culture in desirable or undesirable ways. Design features are more likely to affect the culture of new organizations than existing organizations since the new culture in new organizations is only partially determined by the background and beliefs of individuals. In established organizations where the culture is more fully developed, achieving success in organizational redesign requires that the culture be assessed carefully to determine the fit between the culture and suggested changes (p. 36).

Cameron and Ettington (1988) wrote a comprehensive examination of higher education and its conceptual and theoretical roots. Their research reviews previous works, which allowed them to develop a comprehensive review of the development of organizational culture in education. The concept of organizational culture emerged from two distinct academic disciplines: cultural anthropology and sociology. Due to the mixed heritage of organizational culture, there has existed confusion on a precise definition of the concept, which has been noted as a concern by scholars in the field. Cameron and Ettington (1988) concluded that: “without a precise definition, the development of a well-conceived nomological network that forms the basis for a theory of organizational culture is unlikely.” Both authors noted the lack of a clear-cut definition of the concept might hinder the scholarly development and theoretical contributions that can be made via research in this area of inquiry

The concept of organizational culture has its roots in cultural anthropology and sociology. Within these two academic disciplines further division occurs. Within the cultural anthropology arena, two schools of thought have emerged. The first, can be characterized by a functionalist perspective and focuses on “the group, the organization, or the society as a whole and considers how the practices, beliefs, and values embedded in that unit function to maintain social control” (Cameron and Ettington, 1988, p. 358). From this perspective, the researcher is the central figure in the research and the construction of a meaning of the organizational phenomenon under study is left to the researcher. Highlighting this field of inquiry has been works by researchers Deal and Kennedy (1982) and their analysis of the cultural activities and rituals of corporations, which included Hewlett Packard and the Digital Equipment Company. Additional

researchers such as Ouchi (1981), Schein (1983), and Kilmann, Saxton, and Serpa (1985) have also made significant contributions to this area of investigation.

The second school of thought, the semiotic tradition is in cultural anthropology and focuses on languages, rituals, and symbols found in the cultural setting and their meanings to the participants. As Cameron and Ettington indicated (1988), “this tradition is represented by Goodenough (1971) Geertz (1973), in which obtaining the ‘emic’ or insider’s point of view’ and ‘thick description’ predominate” (p. 358). The researcher’s role is to obtain interpretations of a cultural phenomenon from group members through complete immersion through participant observation. Van Maanen (1979), Barley (1983), and Evered (1983) highlighted this line of inquiry.

Cameron and Ettington (1988) pointed out the two distinct differences between the two schools of thought. First, the semiotic perspective or the insider’s view, and not the researcher’s, of the organizational phenomenon is most legitimate. Second, the functionalist perspective dictates that a researcher is better served by analyzing organizational phenomenon from an organizational context rather than examining individual perspectives. As Cameron and Ettington (1988) concluded,

The functionalist tradition views culture as a component of the social system and assume that it is manifested in organizational behaviors; the semiotic tradition views culture as residing in the minds of individuals. The former relies on researcher-based data and the latter on the native’s data (p. 359).

The second divergent perspective of organizational culture is firmly rooted in the foundation of sociology. Selznick’s (1949) analysis of the Tennessee Valley Authority

and Clark's (1970) analysis of colleges have been significant contributions to the field. As Cameron and Ettington (1988) recognized, the resemblance between the functionalist tradition in anthropology and this sociological perspective, "this second group of sociological researchers resemble the functionalist tradition of anthropology. Culture is analyzed as an integral part of social (not individual) activity and behavior, and the interpretive schema is generated by the researcher" (Cameron & Ettington, 1988, p. 359). However, an important difference exists between the sociological and anthropological standpoints on culture despite the similarities. The sociological perspective treats the concept of organizational culture as an independent rather than dependent variable, as opposed to the anthropological perspective. According to Cameron and Ettington (1988) "in sociology...culture is often used as a predictor of behavior or performance. In anthropology, culture is usually the object of prediction or explanation" (p. 360). A second difference between the two traditions of inquiry is the fundamental view of the place of culture within an organization. From an anthropological viewpoint, culture is something that an organization is and from a sociological standpoint culture is something an organization has (Cameron & Ettington, 1988). Cameron and Ettington (1988) summarized this distinction when they wrote that:

In the former tradition [cultural anthropological], culture is treated as a metaphor for organizations in the same way that *open system*, *loosely coupled system*, or *force field* is a metaphor used for describing organizations. The latter tradition [sociological] treats culture as one attribute in a complex of attributes possessed by organizations that help

explain effective organizational performance. The former treats culture *as* something, the latter treats culture *for* something (p. 360).

Cameron and Ettington (1988) pointed out that the literature tends to describe culture as something that an organization "has" as opposed to something that an organization "is". Furthermore, contemporary definitions are primarily of the anthropological functionalist paradigm. In addition Cameron and Ettington (1988) categorize definitions in the literature into one of three types: (1) social interpretation definitions, which focuses on the interpretation of meanings and frames of reference; (2) behavioral control definitions which focuses on the defining of shared organizational behavior through patterns of interaction or activities; and (3) organizational adaptation definitions which focuses on ritualistic, routine, or habitual problem-solving activities to commonly encountered organizational problems (Cameron & Ettington, 1988). Throughout the literature, the definitions for organizational culture have primarily focused on attributes of culture that are unwavering, enduring and centered on beliefs, assumptions and values.

Along with a myriad of definitions, researchers have also struggled with developing dimensions that allow for the organization of core attributes of organizational culture. Cameron and Ettington (1988) wrote, "the importance of dimensions is that they serve as a groundwork upon which a theory of organizational culture may be built in the future" (p. 362). Six dimensions were found by Cameron and Ettington (1988) as being most cited and utilized: (1) cultural strength (the power to control behavior); (2) cultural congruence (the fit or homogeneity among cultural elements); (3) cultural type (the examination of certain cultural elements); (4) cultural continuity (the duration of cultural

consistency over time); (5) cultural distinctness (the uniqueness of the culture); and cultural clarity (the level to which the culture is unambiguously defined, understood, and presented). Strength of culture and cultural congruence has been noted as the most critical in the literature (Kotter, 1980; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Tichy, 1982; Quinn & Hall, 1983).

Research on Corporate/Business Organizational Culture

In the field of corporate culture and organizational effectiveness works such as Ouchi's (1981) *Theory Z*, Pascale and Athos' (1981) *The Art of Japanese Management*, Deal and Kennedy's (1982) *Corporate Cultures*, Kanter's (1983) *Change Masters*, and Peter and Waterman's (1982) *In Search of Excellence* have formed the theoretical and methodological foundation for the area of inquiry. This research serves as the basis for much of current thought and philosophy of organizational culture research methodology in business management and education. The study of organizational culture has its roots in the symbolic interactionist perspective (Mead, 1934; Blummer, 1969) and the socio-anthropological approach (Levi-Strauss, 1963). To date, organizational culture research has focused on several areas mainly: socialization, business strategy, and methodology of research. The issue of socialization is the dominant avenue that educational researchers have utilized to examine organizational culture from a cultural or symbolic interactionist perspective by Van Maanen (1977), Siehl and Martin (1981), and Schein (1985).

The use of stories to convey meaning and culturally based values and assumptions has been a particular area of inquiry of Alan Wilkins (1978). From a business standpoint, authors such as Phillips and Kennedy (1980), Starbuck (1982), and Deal and Kennedy (1982) have examined the role of organizational culture and its relationship with business

strategy. Lastly, the works of Garfinkel, (1967), Knorr-Cetina and Cicourel (1981), and Jones (1988) have examined the epistemological and methodological assumptions and issues, as well as aspects of organizational culture research and have advocated a naturalistic approach to research. Denison (1990) asserted that outside of the study of socialization, academics have neglected to explore the functional aspects of organizational culture and focused on the social constructionist dimensions of the concept, thus leading us into the discussion of how corporate and business organizational culture research has influenced cultural studies of higher education institutions.

Corporate/business and organizational culture: Research methods. Traditionally, methods utilized to conduct research on organizational culture have been primarily ethnographic. Bryman (1989) noted that the dominant methods of data collection in organizational research have historically been semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and surveys. Pasmore (1988) noted that traditionally the methods utilized to conduct sociotechnical organizational analyses are role network analysis, open-ended interviews, and surveys. He also indicated that each of these methods has a weakness and that it is more effective to combine and feature two or more of these techniques to research a setting. Pasmore (1988) describes role network analysis as the depiction of interaction frequency among members of an organization. He further (1988) explained that, “role network analysis has the advantage of revealing how the organization actually works versus how it was intended to work; communication patterns evolve to simplify task accomplishment and often fails to follow official channels” (p. 45). Depending on whether or not investigators decide to use a quantitative or qualitative approach to their research, the methods have remained the same throughout the literature. Traditional

research designs have been: experimental, survey, case study, or action research (Opren, 1979; Burgelman, 1985). Methods of data collection have traditionally been: self-administered questionnaires, participant observations, structured or unstructured interviews, and/or document analysis (Siehl & Martin, 1988).

Organizational culture vs. climate. A significant aspect of organizational analysis research has been the debate between cultural versus climatic based research. This debate is echoed through organizational culture research whether in corporate or educational settings. As Denison stated, (1990) “the debate over organizational culture and climate is in many ways a classic example of methodological (and epistemological) difference obscuring a basic substantive similarity. The argument is not so much about what to study as how to study it” (p. 22). Based on the literature, organizational climate research tends to be more positivist, due mainly to its historical reliance on survey research. On the other hand, organizational culture has focused more on the qualitative aspects of human behaviors through an examination of values, beliefs, and patterns of behavior. Denison (1990) and Black and Stephen (1988) asserted that method and approach are secondary in importance to the underlying phenomenon. As Denison (1990) wrote, “an integration of the research on culture and climate is necessary if we are to combine both rational and intuitive approaches to the understanding of organizations as social systems” (p. 23). Just as authors such as Cherryholmes (1992) noted, Denison (1990) proposed that it is best to focus on the similarities of both issues and see where they can be synthesized. According to Denison (1990) the integration of both perspectives is possible on three points:

1. Both concepts focus on behavioral characteristics at the organization-level.

2. Examinations of both concepts provide a comprehensive view of the phenomena.
3. Lastly, both concepts share a similar problem in relation to explaining the means by which behavioral characteristics of a system affect the behaviors of its members.

The study of organizational climate has gone hand and hand with the popularity of institutional culture and in some regards is far more extensively examined in the literature. This is mostly due to the difference in methodological approaches and the depth of examination needed to research these concepts. The study of climate calls for a relatively superficial and short-term analysis of organizational characteristics than the analysis of organizational culture. Primarily, organizational climate research has focused served as a quick means of designing and developing instruments to measure student, faculty, and administrative views of organizational phenomena (Peterson & Spencer, 1991).

Research on organizational missions and goals (Clark, 1970; Davies, 1986), academic workplaces (Austin and Gamson, 1983), organizational functioning (Blau, 1973), academic images and reputations (Heverson, 1987), and student, faculty, and administrator environments (Blackburn, Horowitz, Edington, and Klos, 1986) have examined elements of organizational climate. Historically there has been a debate between whether or not it is most appropriate to analyze an organization from a climate or culture standpoint. Perhaps, the two can be implemented together to produce a more holistic and in-depth analysis of organizational culture. I would argue that the two concepts examine the same phenomenon just at different level of depth. Climate is

actually a sub-level of culture and not a separate entity, thus negating the “either-or” argument.

In the language of pragmatics, Denison (1990) noted the compatibility of both a climate and culture based research approach and offered a solution to the conflict. According to Denison (1990), "one way [to synthesize the approaches] would be to use hybrid designs in which an inductive and qualitative method suggests ideas that a quantitative method eventually tests"(p. 34). Several authors noted that the use of different perspectives might also be appropriate for explaining different aspects of the same phenomenon (Joyce & Slocum, 1984; Boehm, 1985). Denison (1990) explained that: "... a Lewinian climate metaphor might be most appropriate for explaining the short-term impact of an organizational setting on an individual, while the long-term creation of that setting might better be understood through a culture metaphor" (p. 35). Just as in the paradigm debates, the issue of utilizing the climate or culture approach is based more on the types of methods used rather than the proposed areas of inquiry. It can be argued that the concept of climate is more superficial than culture and therefore can be viewed as a sub-category of organizational culture. The following sections examine organizational research and its methods in higher education.

Higher Education's Use of Organizational Research

All organizations exists in the context of other organizations and larger systems: systems of government, systems of nations, ecological system, transportation systems, systems of cultural beliefs, systems of trade, monetary systems, and the solar systems, to name a few. It is convenient to speak of the totality of systems surrounding and influencing a focal

organization as that organization's environment, realizing, of course, that the environment of any organization is immensely complex and continuously changing (Pasmore, 1988, p. 7).

Knowledge obtained from Ouchi's *Theory Z* (1981) and Deal and Kennedy's *Corporate Cultures* (1982), transformed the United States of America's approach to business management and reconceptualized the perception of organizational effectiveness. The impact of this knowledge shift was not lost on U.S. institutions of higher education. Chait (1982), Dill (1982), and Wyer (1982) noted that traditional administrative practices and strategies common in U.S. institutions of higher education are similar to Japanese management styles. As Masland (1991) explained,

Shared governance and collegiality are participatory management. Academic departments, in discussion of future direction, quality control, and problem resolution, function like quality circles. Tenure traditionally provides the economic and psychological benefits of lifetime employment (p. 119).

The study of culture in higher education is not a new concept, however, seminal works were most often case studies of single institutions, as for example, Foote, Mayer, and Associates (1968), Clark (1970), and Riesman, Gusfield, and Gamson (1970). These case studies primarily examined the student cultures and their role in instruction and curriculum development. Research has long supported the notion that the organizational cultures of institutions of higher education have distinctive and unique characteristics that are not readily found in other social organizations (Veysey, 1965; Martin, 1985). Several comprehensive studies of institutions conducted by Chaffey and Tierney (1988), Tierney (1988), and Peterson, Cameron, Jones, Mets, and Ettington (1986) assert that the culture

of an institution of higher education is pivotal in determining the possible success of organizational improvement effort. In recent years, the study of organizational culture has shifted from identifying the loyalty and belief in college organizations to defining managerial techniques based on effective strategic planning, marketing, and management control.

Two studies that focused on the examination of organizational culture indicated how it influenced the socialization and development of professionals-in-training, and examined their experiences within the organization. The first study was Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss' (1992) study *Boys in white: Student culture in medical school*. This study examined changes in the views of the organizational culture, socialization, perspectives and professional training of sixty-two (62) first-year medical students enrolled at the University of Kansas Medical School from 1958 to their graduation in the early 1961. The researchers utilized semi- and structured interviews, participant observations, and surveys to gather information about the perceptions of the culture and the influence that social interaction had on the students in an effort to better train and educate the future generation of physicians that graduate from the university. Observations took place within the classrooms, wards, laboratories, and operating theaters of the University of Kansas Medical School.

The sociologist sought "to discover what medical school did to medical students other than give them a technical education" (p. 17). The researchers used a social psychological theoretical perspective that specifically focused on the concept of symbolic interaction. The medical school was seen as an organization in which the values, norms, and basic perspectives of the profession were communicated to the medical students. Of

great importance was the process of learning (how) that took place rather than just the intellectual product (what) of their time in the medical school. According to Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss (1992),

... we were interested, at this time, in analyzing not only the collective forms of social action that made up the medical school as an institution, but also in the effects on the medical student of living and working in this institution...(p. 19).

This allowed the researchers to gain a holistic view of the inner and outer workings of the organization from multiple levels within the organizational structure and the product of the interactions between these varied elements. In addition the researchers in this study noted that, “such phenomena would aid us in building an over-all model of the organization we were studying, a model which would abstract from the mass of concrete events the recurring elements in that organization” (p. 22). A mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods was utilized to collect and analyze the data. Two research questions guided the study:

- 1) How much academic effort did students put forth and in what direction?
- 2) Why were students' level and direction of academic effort what they were and not any of the other things they might have been?

The findings from this study were grouped into four themes: (a) student culture, (b) student autonomy, (c) pragmatic idealism, and (d) situation and conduct. Students collectively determined the level and direction of their academic efforts based on personal perspectives on their future occupations as physicians (area of specialty, etc.) and their personal and academic backgrounds. The authors wrote, “these levels and

directions are not the result of some conscious cabal, but that they are the working-out practice of the perspectives from which the students view their day-to-day problems in relation to their long-term goals” (p. 435). Collectively these actions developed into what is called the student culture. The authors define this concept as “the body of collective understandings among students about matters related to their roles as students” (p. 46).

Secondly, the students achieved a remarkably high level of autonomy in relation to the level and direction of their academic effort. The success of a student’s actions was found to be the primary means of legitimizing and differentiating between acceptable and unacceptable behavior. The researchers noted, “medical students have very little autonomy in many areas of their activity; but with respect to the setting of levels and directions of academic efforts they have a great deal” (Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss, 1992, p. 439). It was found that within the medical school, there was a definite collective identification of behaviors and actions that were deemed acceptable by the students and administration based on their application in a variety of settings. As a student expressed, their own autonomy in dealing with the demands and culture of medical school, the success of their deviation or acceptance of the “standards and norms”, were the meter by which their actions would be criticized or praised by their peers and administration. The research found “the ideas one uses to order one’s work seem justified by their success in practice” (Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss, 1992, p. 437). They continued by writing, “reforms in medical education will be most effective when they take into account the collective character of student behavior and recognize that fact that students, as a subordinate echelon in the medical school, have a certain degree of autonomy...” (Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss, 1992, p. 439).

The outlook that the medical students had about their future as medical professionals remained relatively positive and as the authors suggested “pragmatically idealistic”. The researchers noted that, “students retain an idealistic view of medicine even when they reorient it in the direction of greater realism and adaptation to the immediate situation and to the medical practice they envision for themselves” (p. 439). Through their matriculation, barriers to a positive experience as a professional were identified and the students felt that they were prepared to overcome those hindrances adequately. Although idealistic long-range perspectives that were developed during their freshmen years were found to be unrealistic by graduation, participants still held onto their positive views of post-graduation life as physicians.

Lastly, the conduct of the students was influenced tremendously by their immediate situation throughout studies as medical students. The development of the students' decision-making processes was influenced by opportunities, situations, and options considered reasonable and in the best interest of the students themselves. In an effort to better train and develop future physicians, the researchers concluded that “the most effective way of altering students’ behavior with respect to levels and directions of academic effort would be to alter the situation which students face that they would have different problems to deal with” (Becker, Geer, Hughes, and Strauss, 1992, p. 442). The authors called for the institutional practices to be altered and for those in power (i.e. administrators) to show the courage and strength to break conservative tradition. They also stressed that administrators foresee the consequences of change and be resilient in the face of the effects of his or her actions. This research calls into question the true education of medical students and what messages they are receiving from the

organizational culture of the institution. The authors' goals were to better the professional training of these students by examining the influence of the norms, rituals, and accepted behaviors exhibited by students and administration. By using a variety of methods of data collection and analysis, the sociologists were able to pinpoint significant social and organizational themes in the education of students at the University of Kansas Medical School.

The next example of the examination of organizational culture and its impact on the preparation of future professionals within a given academic discipline was Guinier, Fine, and Balin's (1997) work *Becoming gentlemen: Women, law school, and institutional change*. The researchers examined the differing experiences and proposed pragmatic means of changing instruction in law school for the betterment of all students especially females and students of color. They wrote:

We believe that our data documenting the differing experiences of male and female law students offer an opportunity to reconsider the educational project of law school.... Indeed, changes to the existing structure of the law school might improve the quality of legal education for all students (p. 29).

A multiple-method research design was developed to assess "the comparative status of women and men when they enter, as they participate in, and when they leave law school" (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997, p. 30). The initial database of student information from 366 participants was compiled via data gathered by a mailed survey. The survey consisted of a multiple-choice questionnaire and one open-ended question that were designed to obtain narrative responses. A second database was developed using

data relevant to the academic performance of 981 students who were enrolled in the law school from 1987 to 1992. Along with the academic performance data the law school furnished the researchers with anonymous demographic data including gender, race, undergraduate grade point average, Law School Admission Test (LSAT) score, undergraduate rank, undergraduate institution, and law school GPA for each year in law school. Lastly, a database was constructed using qualitative responses from the participants. The database included the narrative responses of 104 participants' answer to the open-ended question about student experiences of gender discrimination, focus-group data from twenty-seven (27) male and female students, and observation data from classroom sessions and significant student and student-faculty meetings. The researchers' wrote, "by triangulating our databases-that is moving back and forth among the three sets of data collected during our research-we have developed a number of observations regarding the divergent experiences of many men and women at the University of Pennsylvania Law School" (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997, p. 32).

The primary finding from this study was "despite identical entry-level credentials, this performance differential between men and women is created in the first year of law school and maintained over the next four years" (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997, p. 28). It was found that by the end of the first year in law school, men were three times more likely to be in the top 10% of the law school class than their female counterparts. Secondly, the tremendous differences in attitudes and perspectives about future career specialty, and issues of sexism and gender between men and women were minimal by the third year of school. Guinier, Fine, and Balin (1997) explained that,

...over three years of law school, women students come to sound more like their male classmates, and significantly less like their first-year 'selves'. One could conclude that women become more 'like men' over time in this particular school, at least in terms of their reported attitudes toward gender, sexism, and career goals (p. 46).

A third finding was that the Socratic method of instruction that dominated the first-year classes, was in fact alienating and marginalizing female and students of color. They wrote, "our data suggest that many women do not 'engage' with a methodology that makes them feel strange, alienated, and 'delegitimated' (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997, p. 28). Lastly, the researchers concluded that female law students suffered a "crisis of identity" during their matriculation through law school and subsequently, their credentials were minimized upon entering the work force. The researchers noted that, "these women graduate with less competitive academic credentials, are not represented equally within the law school's academic and social hierarchies, and are apparently less competitive in securing prestigious and/or desirable jobs after graduation than their male peers" (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997, p. 29). The authors described three hypotheses to explain their central empirical finding, which was that males outperformed females at the University of Pennsylvania Law School. Guinier, Fine, and Balin (1997) concluded that a significant percentage of the women felt excluded from the formal educational structure and informal educational environment of the law school. Second, some women suffered unfavorable psychological outcomes and had limited employment opportunities individually due to the gendered stratification within the school (Guinier, Fine, and Balin, 1997).

In conclusion, the researchers offered several recommendations to improve the educational process for female students and students of color. They called for a re-evaluation of the Socratic Method commonly used in first-year law courses and the possible implications for its use as the primary method of instruction. In addition, the apparent negative effects of “litigation-as-combat” culture within the school should be removed or in the least alternative forms of litigation should be introduced to provide balance. Faculty-led mentor and support groups should be developed to provide interaction with students outside of the classroom in a non-hostile or competitive atmosphere. Lastly, the use of smaller classes was deemed necessary in order to provide more opportunities for meaningful interaction between students and instructors. Both of the aforementioned studies indicate the typical research methods used to analyze organizational culture in institutions of higher education and professional development as well as provided pragmatic recommendation and strategies for institutional improvement.

Higher education organizational culture: Research methods. This section will identify the practical ways that multimethods research has been used to analyze organizational culture within institutions of higher education. The concept of multimethods research has been used in qualitative-oriented research for many years in a practical sense. However, it has most commonly been referred to as triangulation or corroboration. It is necessary to describe the impact of corporate organizational research in order to indicate its place in educational research, specifically that which is conducted in higher education settings. Historically, organizational culture researchers have utilized similar standard methods of inquiry as researchers in what has been traditionally termed “naturalistic” research. In fact, researchers of culture in general utilize similar methods of

inquiry. The methods of inquiry typically utilized surveys, interviews, observations and document analysis. In a practical sense research methods that have been utilized in higher education organizational research have not been identified explicitly as being theoretically that of the “multimethods or pragmatic” paradigm. Masland (1991) asserted that uncovering the culture of organizations in higher education has not been an easy task. According to Masland (1991) “the difficulty in studying cultures arise because culture is implicit, and we are all embedded in our own culture. In order to observe organizational culture, the researcher must find its visible and explicit manifestations” (p. 120). It is the researcher’s responsibility to search for explicit influences of culture at work and from that evidence deduce a view of the culture itself.

Masland (1991) noted that four “windows” on organizational culture exists for the researcher to “peek” through and collect cultural data. The first is organizational saga, which has its foundation in an organization’s history and often describes the unique accomplishments of the organization. It is the organizational saga that sets a particular program, department, or institution apart from others either similar or different from it. Secondly, the examination of heroes associated with the organization play a key role in understanding how the present culture emerged. In most cases the heroes of an organization are the founders or someone who received tremendous honor while part of the organization. These individuals serve to represent ideals and values that the organization stands for in a humanistic form. Individuals typically tell stories about heroes and the examples they set and often these stories are passed down to newcomers as part of the socialization process. Dill (1982) analyzed the culture of a small college

and found that heroes played a central role in an institution's saga because they made crucial decisions and who exemplified behavior suitable the college.

The third window of organizational culture consists of symbols. As Masland (1991) explained, "a symbol can represent cultural values and beliefs, thus, making them tangible (p. 121). Symbols can also take the form of metaphors and are primarily used to make explicit cultural values and beliefs normally expressed implicitly. The power of symbols lies in their ability to also communicate to the general public knowledge normally known by only those within the organization. Often symbols are found in "Walks of Fame" or "Instructor of the Year" plaques, which frequently line departmental hallways. Lastly, rituals as Masland (1991) wrote are, "another means of identifying cultural values, beliefs, and ideologies. Rituals are useful tools for uncovering culture because they translate culture into action" (p. 121). Rituals can communicate the value of the past into the present. As Masland (1991) noted, "... daily rituals of interaction between faculty and administrators illustrate the relative importance of each group and the ideologies surrounding their roles" (p. 121).

The strategies utilized to collect cultural data are remarkably similar to those found in basic multimethods or for the unconverted basic qualitative research. Semi-structured and structured interviews, document analysis, and observations are the three primary means of analyzing organizational culture as found in the literature (Masland, 1991; Merriam, 1998). The use of interviews has been noted as being possibly the most powerful tool for data collection. As Masland (1991) indicated, "... because culture is implicit, interview questions cannot ask about culture directly. Instead, the researcher should probe the four cultural windows..." (p. 122).

Participant observations can be used concurrently with interviews. It is essential the researcher observe the participant in their daily routine, in order to ascertain what issues receive careful attention and close scrutiny. As Masland (1991), “such issues are often central to the organization’s culture” p. 122). Furthermore, through observation the researcher may detect rituals, symbols, or heroes that the participants take for granted and may not acknowledge. The last method of data collection is document analysis.

Documents such as program handbooks, policies, school newspapers, mission statements, self-studies, demographic information, instructor syllabi, or any other publication that is found in the setting are suitable for analysis. In Masland (1991) he wrote, “historical accounts provide past examples of cultural influences while also illuminating the development of values, beliefs, and ideologies” (p. 122).

The complexity and sheer volume of data collected via methods associated with the pragmatic research approach is to be expected. The researcher must analyze data as they collect it and identify themes and trends in what participants say and observe about the organization. The basic technique for analyzing cultural data is thematic analysis- finding the recurrent themes in the data (Schatzman & Strauss, 1973). Masland asserted (1991), gradually, the analyst refines the principle ideas that recur throughout and begins to develop the central ‘story line’ on the institution’s culture” (p. 123). Lastly, the investigator looks for repeated symbols and rituals that may appear in different contexts but point to fundamental cultural features (Ortner, 1973).

In summary, in order to achieve triangulation or corroboration, the three methods of data collection utilized throughout organizational literature are: interviews, observations, and document analysis. In addition, I would suggest the addition of another

method, the self-administered questionnaire. Researchers such as Brewer and Hunter (1989) and Masland (1991) summarized the benefits of using mixed methods of data collection over the single-method approach:

Each technique can confirm, disconfirm, or modify data obtained using the other two. Differences among the data must be investigated and the reasons for inconsistencies uncovered. In organizations with a strong culture, data from each source should confirm the other two because written statements, actions, and oral descriptions all form a coherent whole. Discrepancies among the data sources may indicate a weak or fractured culture” (p. 123).

Research Purpose and Questions

The study of organizational culture as an essential topic of discussion in contemporary higher education literature in relation to the preparation of professional to become professors in the academic workforce and to ensure quality undergraduate education. Higher education research has its roots in the study of the preparation of lawyers, doctors, and the development of culture in high performing corporate organizations. Deal and Kennedy’s (1982) *Corporate Culture*, Schein’s (1985) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*, and Guinier, Fine, and Balin’s *Becoming Gentlemen* emerged as significant contributions and resources for those who study organizational management, effectiveness, and the professional development and training.

However, GTA training and development research has yet to examine the role of the organizational culture of its GTA programs within the context of the greater

departmental and institutional missions and influences. The absence of an effort to examine such an important aspect of a GTA's professional preparation and given the growing charges of lack of quality undergraduate instruction as well as emerging labor issues between institutions of higher education and GTAs, is critical to consider. This study will seek to contribute to the discourse on GTA training, development and labor by interjecting the call for a closer investigation of GTA program's organizational culture in relation to the perceptions of key administrators, supervisors, and the GTAs themselves. The research questions that will guide my research are:

1. How is the culture of the GTA program defined and communicated throughout the organization by its constituents?
2. What is the effect of cultural/environmental factors on instructional performance?
3. How has time as a GTA prepared them for future career goals and aspirations?
4. What perspectives do GTAs offer on their experiences in the program?
5. What recommendations do the constituents of the GTA program have for its improvement?

Research with this focus is vitally important due to the need for effective professional development of the next generation of physical educators in higher education. The amount of instruction that GTAs currently provide is significant and it is in the best interest of universities and colleges for GTAs to be provided with the support and resources necessary to ensure that they are capable and willing to provide the highest quality of instruction for undergraduate programs (Wert, 1998). The purpose of this research is to describe the organizational culture of a basic undergraduate physical

activities program (BUPAP) and the manner in which the perspectives of key aspects of that culture are articulated or described by important constituents.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this ethnographic case study was to describe the organizational culture of a basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP) and the manner in which the perspectives of key aspects of that culture were articulated or described by important constituents. A mixed methods approach was utilized to conduct this research, which entailed both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The research findings and analysis sought to provide practical solutions and recommendations rather than test, support or develop a theory or hypothesis. William Tierney's (1991) organizational culture framework guided the exploration of the research setting and also the analysis of findings. In this chapter, the methods are discussed in the following order: a) design of the study, b) selection of participants, c) data collection, d) data analysis, e) validity and reliability and f) research limitations. The research questions that guided this research were:

1. How is the culture of the GTA program defined and communicated throughout the organization by its constituents?
2. What are the effects of cultural/environmental factors on instructional performance?
3. How has time as a GTA prepared them for future career goals and aspirations?
4. What perspectives do GTAs offer on their experiences in the program?

5. What recommendations do the constituents of the GTA program have for its improvement?

Design of the Study

This study employed a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection and analysis. More specifically, the ethnographic case study research design utilized was guided by William Tierney's (1992) organizational culture framework. Quantitative data were collected via a questionnaire that was disseminated to the participants in the study. Primary methods of data collection, which were qualitative in nature included: a) a two-part questionnaire with open-ended questions and a Likert-like survey component, b) semistructured interviews, c) a focus group interview, d) participant observations and e) document analysis. The following sections, will address: (a) the nature of qualitative research, paying particular attention to ethnographic and case study design, and (b) William Tierney's (1991) organizational culture framework.

Qualitative Research

Several characteristics of qualitative research provided evidence that these methods were compatible and well suited to answer the research questions that I had proposed. First, qualitative researchers consider reality to be constructed by the individuals interacting within the social surroundings (Merriam, 1998). According to Merriam (1998), "qualitative research can reveal how all the parts work together to form a whole. It is assumed by the investigator that meaning is embedded in people's experiences and that this meaning is mediated through the investigator's own perceptions" (p. 6). Secondly, qualitative research calls for the researcher to serve as the

primary instrument of data collection (Creswell, 1998). Lastly, qualitative research assumes there are multiple and dynamic realities (Merriam, 1998) from which interpretations can be drawn. Furthermore, qualitative research utilizes an inductive research strategy, which allows the researcher “to build theory from observations and intuitive understandings gained in the field” (Merriam, 1998, p. 7). Goertz and LeCompte (1984) asserted, “inductive researchers hope to find a theory that explains their data” (p. 4). This is contrary to deductive research, which utilizes theory to explain data. Lastly, the researcher utilizes the “voices” of the participants to communicate aspects of the findings (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992). Denzin and Lincoln (1994) provide a definition of qualitative research in the following statement:

Qualitative research is multimethods in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to subject matter. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomenon in terms of the meanings people bring to them (p. 2).

The use of an ethnographic research approach was also well suited to the research questions due to the emphasis on culture. Ethnographic research focuses on uncovering and describing beliefs, values, and attitudes that structure the behavior of a group within a cultural setting. Atkinson and Hammersley (1993) suggested that ethnographies call for an “analysis of data that involves explicit interpretation of the meanings and functions of human actions, the product of which mainly takes the form of verbal description and explanations with quantification and statistical analysis playing a subordinate role at

most” (p. 248). D’Andrade (1992) suggested criteria for defining what is cultural in the following statement:

To say something is cultural is-at a minimum-to say that it is shared by a significant number of members of a social group; shared in the sense of being behaviorally enacted, physically possessed, or internally thought. Further, this something must be recognized in some special way and are least some others are expected to know about it; that is it must be intersubjectively shared. Finally for something to be cultural, it must have the potential of being passed on to new members, to exist with some permanency through time and across space (p. 230).

In addition, a case study research design was appropriate based on the nature of the study. The research was designed to examine a particular sample of participants that are bounded within a specific setting. As Creswell (1998) explained, “this bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied-a program, an event, an activity, or individuals” (p. 61). It is important to note findings from this study are not expected to be transferable or generalizable to other settings with similar participants and conditions. Moreover, case studies are highly effective means of evaluating educational program (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Patton, 1987, 1990; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). Case studies provide the opportunity for researchers to produce a thick, rich description which is holistic and lifelike in nature (Merriam, 1998). Finally, it is important to note this study was not designed to test hypotheses or theories. The goal of this research was to examine and describe the organizational culture of the GTA program by collecting and representing the perceptions and viewpoints of those administrators and GTAs within it.

Merriam (1998) described the advantages of using a case study method in the statement below:

A case study design employed to gain an in-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved. The interest is in the process rather than outcomes, in context rather than a specific variable, in discovery rather than confirmation. Insights gleaned from case studies can directly influence policy, practice, and future research (p. 19).

William Tierney's (1991) Organizational Culture Framework

Tierney's model for analyzing organizational culture is divided into the following areas of inquiry: (a) environment, (b) mission, (c) socialization, (d) information, (e) strategy, and (f) leadership. This framework is effective at focusing this research and developing a holistic and representative portrait of the organizational culture of the GTA program. As Ennis stated (1999) theoretical frameworks, "organize a complex environment... and helps you to know where to look, what questions to ask, and which answers are more likely to provide new insights" (p. 133).

A Framework of Organizational
Culture

Environment:	How does the organization define its environment? What is the attitude toward the environment (Hostility; Friendship)?
Mission:	How is it defined? How is it articulated: Is it used as a basis for decisions? How much agreement is there?
Socialization:	How do new members become socialized? How is it articulated? What do we need to know to survive/excel in this organization?

Information:	What constitutes information? How is it disseminated?
Strategy:	How are decisions arrived at? What strategy is used? Who makes decisions? What is the penalty for bad decisions?
Leadership:	What does the organization expect from its leaders? Who are the leaders? Are there formal and informal leaders?

Selection of Participants

The most appropriate sampling strategy used in this study was purposeful due to the particularistic nature of the study. Merriam (1998) wrote, “purposeful sampling is based on the assumption that the investigator wants to discover, understand, and gain insight and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned” (p. 61). Specifically, this research utilized what researchers call “criterion-based” selection (Merriam, 1998; Patton, 1990; LeCompte & Preissle, 1993). The criteria for participation by GTAs were:

1. They had to be full-time graduate student in one of the academic department within the School of Health and Human Performance (HHP); and
2. Currently instructing an undergraduate class in the basic physical education program during the Fall 2001-2002 academic year.

Criteria for participation by departmental, BUPAP, and institutional administrators were:

1. They had to be currently or formerly employed by the University in an instructional or administrative position; and
2. Their current or previous employment has placed them in a position to make decisions concerning the selection, employment, retention, training and development of graduate teaching assistants.

Specifically, the current study allowed for the GTAs to take part in the research process to varying extents. Every GTA received Part I and II of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) in their departmental mailboxes. Surveys were completed and returned on a voluntary basis. GTAs were grouped on whether or not they returned one or Part I, II, or both parts of the survey. In order to achieve the goal of obtaining perspectives from administrators and GTAs the individuals were invited to participate:

- a) Every graduate teaching assistant (GTA) in the BUPAP;
- b) the current department heads of the academic programs within the School of HHP;
- c) the current and former School of HHP directors;
- d) the current BUPAP supervisor/coordinator; and
- e) the former head of the department of PESS.

Each was issued an invitation to participate via departmental mail and/or the GTA e-mail list-serve (see Appendix J). All administrators invited to participate that volunteered to do so were interviewed and comprised the Administrator Group of participants. It is important to note the administrators in this study were only identified by

the title “Administrator” and there was no mention of their official titles or designations with respect to their departments or institutional positions.

GTAs that volunteered to be interviewed and observed returned the letter of invitation indicating that they would do so. A total of twelve GTAs were selected to take part in this portion of the study out of a total of fourteen. The selection of these twelve GTAs was based on the following criteria: a) range of experiences, b) ability to allocate time to be interviewed, and c) willingness to engage in this phase of the research process. Patton (1990) suggested that the, “logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in the selecting of information-rich cases for study in depth. Information rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research...” (p. 169). In addition, all participants signed consent forms at the onset of the interview process (see Appendix K) giving permission to audiotape their interviews and/or observe their classes as they taught. The only incentive for participation in this study for participants was a synopsis of the findings available upon request. Lastly, pseudonyms were selected by the participants were used for the purpose of confidentiality.

Demographics of Participants

The participants of this study were grouped into four categories. This section illustrates demographic information about the participant groups and the types of data obtained from them. The first two groups consisted of GTAs who returned one or both of the two portions of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program’s Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) (please refer to Appendix B) that was administered to all GTAs in the School of Health and Human Performance

(HHP). Part I of the survey consisted primarily of open-ended questions while Part II was comprised of a Likert-like scale survey. It is important to note that the first three groups of applicants consisted of GTAs within the School of HHP; however the same GTAs did not take part in each phase of the study and thus are not represented in each group of participants.

GTA-Survey Group I comprised those GTAs who responded to the Part I of the SGP-BUPAPOC. The group consisted of sixteen participants, eight (8) males and eight (8) females. The PESS program had 12 participants while the EXRS program had four that took part in this phase of the study. No other academic department was represented in the sample. Overwhelmingly, the group consisted of Caucasian/non-Hispanics (11 out of 16) with the majority of them being in the doctoral programs (10 out of 16). The responses of these participants and the surveys are found in the Appendix C.

GTA-Survey Group II consisted of GTAs who responded to Part II of the SGP-BUPAPOC. This group consisted of 13 participants representing primarily two departments (PESS 12, EXRS, 2, and No Reply 1). The gender makeup of the group was seven (7) males and six (6) females. Again, the ethnic/racial makeup was majority Caucasian/non-Hispanic. Eight of the participants were in the doctoral programs of their respective departments. The majority of the participants in this pool were in their first term or semester of teaching in the program. The responses of these participants and the survey can be found in the Appendix C.

The GTA-Observation/Interview Group encompassed twelve GTAs who volunteered to participate in two semi-structured interviews, a focus group interview, and had their classes observed. Demographic information from GTA-Observation/Interview

Group was derived totally from interview data. Nine of the participants' academic program was the PESS department with the other three from EXRS department. In terms of gender, five (5) of the participants were females and seven (7) were male. Again, the ethnic/racial makeup was overwhelmingly Caucasian/non-Hispanic with two of the participants being from Asian and African-American decent respectively. Within the text of this chapter, those GTAs that were referred to or cited by a pseudonym were from this pool.

The administrative group for this study consisted of both current and retired administrators found both within the School of HHP and from the University campus. Only one department head chose to take part in the study. Both, the recently retired director of the School of HHP and department chair of the program, which houses the undergraduate basic physical activities program took part. The current program coordinator volunteered to participate. From the University campus, the director of the University TA Mentoring Program took part in the study. Lastly, several administrative support personnel in the School of HHP assisted in the research of this project via providing relevant documents.

Data Collection

Data collection lasted during the Fall semester of the 2001 academic year from early October to December. Multiple sources of data were gathered to investigate the perceptions of the organizational culture of the basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP). Multimethods research can be defined as the use of multiple models and methods of research inquiry in order to obtain a comprehensive and/or multilevel analysis or description of a social phenomenon. Brewer and Hunter (1989) defined

multimethods research as “any research that allows for a multimethods view of a social phenomena” (p. 27). Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) wrote, “mixed method studies are those that combine the qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of a single study or multiphased study” (p. 17). This research approach is commonly used throughout social science research, but often researchers refer to this concept as triangulation. Triangulation was attained due to the multiple sources of data collection thus aiding in the development of a more accurate representation of the basic undergraduate physical activities program organizational culture.

Triangulation is a strategy for enhancing the validity and credibility of the research or evaluation findings (Mathison, 1988). Creswell (1998) defined fieldwork as “gathering information through observations, interviews, and materials helpful in developing a portrait and establishing 'cultural rules' of the culture-sharing group” (p. 60). As the definition points out, a researcher is called upon to do any number of activities in the pursuit of what is called “rich, thick description” (Geertz, 1973). As stated earlier, the methods of inquiry were: a) semistructured interviews with administrators and GTAs, b) a two-part survey disseminated to GTAs within the BUPAP, c) a focus group interview with the GTAs, d) participant observations and e) an examination of institutional and departmental documents from institutional administrators and GTAs.

Semistructured Interviews

Semistructured interviews served as the primary source of data collection. Merriam (1998) wrote, “in qualitative research, interviewing is often the major source of the qualitative data needed for understanding the phenomenon under study” (p. 91). In relation to understanding the participants’ perceptions of the organizational culture of the

BUPAP, interviewing will allow the researcher to better engage in the meaning-making process (Seidman, 1998). Patton (1990) wrote:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe... We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter the other person's perspective" (p. 197).

The semistructured interviews with administrators and GTAs lasted approximately one hour. Each administrator was interviewed once during the research process, while the GTAs were interviewed twice. This study utilized basic interview processes as described by Seidman (1998). Seidman's interviewing process calls for the interviews process to meet three goals. Initially, the interview should shed light onto the life history or background of the participant, thus drawing allowing a "portrait" of the interviewee to be developed. Secondly, interviews should examine the details of the experience or phenomenon under investigation. This study addressed perceptions and experiences that GTAs has faced as instructors. Lastly, the interview process calls for the researcher to direct the interviewee into reflecting on their experiences and drawing meaning from those experiences. As Seidman (1998) wrote, "making sense or making meaning requires that the participant look at how factors in their lives interacted to bring them to their present situation" (p. 12). The interviews were conducted and scheduled at

the convenience of the participants between the months of October and December. Both the GTAs and the administrators within the School of Health and Human Performance were asked questions concerning their perceptions of the needs of GTAs within the school and the means by which they can best be prepared for their instructional responsibilities and future career goals. Please refer to Appendix I for the interview guides for this research study. Topics of discussion during both interviews included:

1. Instructional concerns and needs of GTAs;
2. Articulating the GTA program's mission and vision statement;
3. Articulating and defining the roles and responsibilities of GTAs; and
4. The perceptions of the GTA training and development program's effectiveness.

Survey

The Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) was administered to the GTAs in two parts (see Appendix B). Part I consisted of open-ended questions and survey items that addressed the respondent's demographic information and general perceptions of the BUPAP's organizational culture. The first section consisted of items that gathered background information, which included gender, current program of study and length of time that the respondent has served as a GTA within the program. Also, six open-ended questions were included to allow the participant to provide suggestions for the evaluation of their instruction, identify instructional concerns and needs, and provide their perspectives on the GTA orientation program. Part II was primarily comprised of forty-five (45) survey items that were combined with a Likert-like scale. The survey examined the perceptions of the GTA in relation to the extent to which they agree with specific comments about the organizational culture of the GTA program and other aspects of their GTA experience.

Part I of the survey was placed into the departmental mailboxes of each GTA in the BUPAP in a sealed envelope during the second week of October. An e-mail message was sent out over the GTA listserve notifying them of the questionnaire in their mailbox. The GTAs were asked to return the completed questionnaire within a week to the principal researcher's mailbox. A return envelope was included with the principal researchers departmental mailbox address on it to aid the participants in returning the questionnaire. Questionnaires did not ask for the GTAs name. After two weeks, Part II of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) was placed into the departmental mailboxes of the GTAs in the BUPAP. Again an e-mail message was sent out over the GTA list-serve and the GTAs were asked to return the survey to the principal researcher's departmental mailbox within a week time of receiving it. Overall, sixteen (16) of the twenty-one (21) GTAs employed in the BUPAP returned Part I of the SGP-BUPAPOC completed to the principal investigator within a week. This was a response rate of 76%. After two weeks Part II of the survey was placed into every GTAs departmental mailbox. A total of thirteen (13) of the twenty-one (21) GTAs employed in the BUPAP returned Part II of the SGP-BUPAPOC completed to the principal investigator at a response rate of 61%.

Participant Observations

Participant observations allowed the researcher to have prolonged contact with the participants within the natural settings (Patton, 1980). Each of the twelve (12) participants in the GTA pool were observed twice and field-notes were taken that highlighted various aspects of the instructional setting (i.e., classroom management, attendance, etc.). Before and shortly after each observation, the principal investigator met

with the participant to discuss the instructional episode. Observations of the GTAs allowed the researcher to describe the work environment of the participants and identify aspects of their instructional experiences that were possibly particular to their experiences as GTAs. Merriam (1998) noted the advantages of participant observation which consists of the following:

1. The observer may notice things that have become routine to the participants themselves.
2. Observations allow for a better understanding of the context in which the participant operates.
3. Specific incidents or behaviors can be used as reference points for subsequent interviews.
4. Emerging findings can be triangulated with other sources of data collection.
5. The observer has the opportunity to question the participant about issues that occur quickly and does not have to rely on once-removed accounts from interviews.

Document Examination

During the research process, the GTA participants were asked to provide samples of the instructional materials they utilize for instruction via a GTA electronic list-serve. Documents obtained took the form of pedagogical textbooks, rule sheets, instructional handouts, and forms of conceptual knowledge and skill evaluation or assessment. The focus group interview participants were asked to generate documents that articulate a proposed mission and vision statement for the BUPAP and a GTA job description. These documents allowed the researcher to understand the manner in which the GTA viewed their roles and responsibilities within the BUPAP. Administrators and departmental support staff were asked to supply any materials or documents that are disseminated to prospective or selected GTAs. These documents could be thought of as artifacts or

symbolic materials that signify what was considered important knowledge of the setting or culture (LeCompte & Preissle, 1993; Tierney, 1991) under investigation. The collection of documents allowed the researcher to better develop a context for the study and to also be enlightened about policies and regulations that may have had an influence on aspects of the organizational culture of the department that impact the GTAs, such as criteria for selection of GTAs to be employed, assignment of course to be taught, and compensation and benefits associated with each graduate teaching assistantship.

Data Analysis

This study consisted of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. The primary strength of a mixed methods research design is the ability for the researcher to use multiple sources of data in order to develop a holistic and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This type of research design provided a means of investigating the complexity of social units, which may include multiple variables that could be of importance to the research study (Merriam, 1998). Tierney's organizational culture framework (1991) was utilized to categorize and sort findings and subsequently aided in the identification of emergent themes in the data.

Qualitative Data

The data analysis process in qualitative research involved the systematic organizing of interview transcripts, survey responses to open-ended questions, and other documentation in an effort to enhance understanding and aid in the presentation of results to others (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). Data obtained from the open-ended survey, interviews, documents, and observations were analyzed by developing coding categories,

constant comparison between responses, and analytic induction (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Merriam, 1998; Dey, 1993). The goal of the data analysis was to develop a thorough and comprehensive description of the phenomenon under investigation (Dey, 1993). The product of this process is commonly referred to as developing a “thick description” of the phenomenon (Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 1978). Tesch (1990) provided guidelines for data analysis listed below:

- 1) Analysis is not the last phase of the research process; it is concurrent with data collection or cyclic;
- 2) The analysis process is systematic and comprehensive, but not rigid;
- 3) Attending to data includes a reflective activity that results in a set of analytical notes that guide the process;
- 4) Data are ‘segmented’ meaning they are divided into relevant and meaningful ‘units’ (yet the connection to the whole is maintained throughout);
- 5) The data segments are categorized according to an organizing system that is predominately derived from the data themselves;
- 6) The main intellectual tool is comparison;
- 7) Categories for sorting segments are tentative and preliminary in the beginning and they remain flexible;
- 8) Manipulating qualitative data during analysis is an eclectic activity (there is no right way);
- 9) The procedures are neither ‘scientific’ nor ‘mechanistic’; and
- 10) The result of the analysis is some type of higher-level synthesis.

Of particular importance is the notion that the data analysis process in qualitative research is a systematic and comprehensive process that is to be concurrent with data collection (Tesch, 1990). Rather than occurring after the conclusion of data collection, data analysis is integrated with data collection in a manner that allows each to go hand and hand in prompting the emergence of relevant findings grounded in empirical data (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). During the data collection process various types of data were obtained concurrently and as suggested by Bogdan and Biklen (1982) preliminary data analysis was conducted during the first stages of data collection. As Bogdan and Biklen (1982) wrote, “you do not have to prove ideas in order to state them; they must be plausible given what you have observed. Do not put off “thinking” because all of the evidence is not in. Think with what data you have” (p. 64).

As interviews were transcribed, surveys were returned, observation notes were taken, and documents were obtained these data were compiled into a case study base (Yin, 1994). The purpose of doing this was to pull together the voluminous data into a comprehensive resource package. Patton (1990) describes the role of the case study as being where, “information is edited, redundancies are sorted out, parts are fitted together, and the case record is organized for easy access either chronologically and/or topically” (p. 386-387). Each article of data was reviewed in order to identify certain words, phrases, patterns, events, or participants’ perceptions that were noteworthy. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) considered these words and phrases identified within the analyzed data as “coding categories” and for that reason, they served as a means of sorting descriptive data and facilitating data analysis. Typical categories were: a) instruction, b) concerns, c)

employment-related, and d) relationships. This initial step in the analysis process is critical to the overall analysis process.

After this initial step ‘coding families’ were developed (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). These codes were placed into the following categories based on Tierney’s model of organizational culture (1991): a) socialization, b) leadership, c) information, d) mission, e) environment, and f) strategy. Data was then analyzed to determine which specific “units” of data fit into which coding families the best. Additionally, diagrams and ideas were sketched out in the form of notes to identify various links and relationships between patterns and concepts (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and the development of tentative categories. Moreover, categories were broken down into various levels, which included subcategories and major categories. Major categories were comprised of concepts or ideas that were broken down when necessary into subcategories for further analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Ely (1991) provides several questions that helped identify which parts of the data comprised categories:

1. What is the smallest meaningful chunk of log narrative that can be called a category?
2. What concept does it imply?
3. What categories will help me to organize the essential aspects of what is written here? (p. 144).

The final analysis process consisted of the systematic reorganization of data collected. During this process identifying emerging themes in the data was of most importance. According to Ely (1991) Themes can be thought of as either a statement of meanings that a) flow throughout a significant portion of the pertinent data collected or b)

are in minority but nonetheless carry heavy emotional, or factual impact on the data collected (Ely, 1991). Ely (1991), outlined a process for data analysis as being:

- 1) Study and re-study the raw data to develop a detailed intimate knowledge;
- 2) Note initial impressions;
- 3) List tentative categories;
- 4) Refine categories by examining the results of Steps 2 and 3 and returning to the entire database of Step 1;
- 5) Group data under still tentative categories and revise categories as needed;
- 6) Select verbatim narrative to link the raw data to the categories;
- 7) Study results of Step 6 and revise if needed;
- 8) Write the theme statement for each participant from the best attempt to speak from his/her perspective by linking data in and across categories;
- 9) Integrate findings about each participant; and
- 10) Compare findings for patterns, and differences. (p. 150)

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data for this research were acquired via the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC). The data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Means, frequency counts, and ratios were drawn from the thirty-six (45) item survey and demographic data will be compiled. The goal was to develop a portrait of the characteristics, concerns, and perceptions of the graduate teaching assistants within the BUPAP in regards to their experiences, training, and development. For these results please refer to Appendix C.

Validity and Reliability

Internal validity or trustworthiness focuses on the question of how well research findings match reality. External validity is concerned with the extent to which the findings from one study can be applied to other situations. Reliability refers to, “the extent to which research findings can be replicated” (Merriam, 1998, p. 205). Qualitative research is concerned more with ensuring that the data make sense and results are trustworthy and consistent rather than transferable to other research studies. In the case of qualitative research, there exist multiple realities of phenomenon. Researchers assume that the experiences and perceptions of one individual will be different than the experience of another even while experiencing the same or similar phenomenon.

Qualitative researchers seek to interpret and represent the multiple realities of their participants and then examine connections between these interpretations in order to develop a cultural portrait of the phenomenon. In addition, qualitative researchers are more concerned with the dependability or consistency of the results obtained from the data and that given the data as well as the degree to which the data collected and the subsequent results make sense (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). The findings from this study are not meant to be generalized to another group of administrators or GTAs. As stated earlier, the individual perspectives of the participants are their own and as a unit are bounded by time, space, and their current perception of reality. Therefore, the uniqueness of the participants in their particular setting limits the transfer of findings from one situation to another. However, in order to best represent those perspectives, multiple strategies were utilized to ensure that the validity and reliability of the qualitative data: (a) triangulation,

(b) member checks, (c) peer reviews, (d) an audit trail, and e) researcher's subjectivity statement.

Triangulation

Triangulation can be thought of as being the use of multiple sources of data, multiple investigators or methods to confirm the emerging findings of a research study (Denzin, 1970). Creswell (1998) explains, "the convergence of sources of information, views of investigators, different theories, and different methodologies represent the triangulation of ideas to help support the development of themes". This study used multiple sources of data in the form of administrators and GTAs and multiple data collection methods in the form of interviews, surveys, document analysis and observations. The strength of a multimethods strategy is that convergent findings of multiple methods of inquiry can often produce findings that can be accepted with greater confidence than of any single method's findings could hope to warrant (Brewer & Hunter, 1989).

Member Checks

Member checks were conducted with the participants in the interviews in order to ensure that their words and perceptions were accurately represented by the transcription. At this time, the participants were allowed to view a completed transcript of their interview and make comments about information they may have wanted removed from the transcript due to confidentiality or personal issues. Member checks allowed for the revealing of factual errors due to miscommunication or misinterpretation as well as the possibility that by reading their interviews participants may reveal additional information. Merriam (1998) explained that member checks concerns, "taking data and tentative

interpretations back to the people from whom they are derived and asking them if the results are plausible” (p. 204). The goal of member checks were to accurately represent the “voice” of the participant while minimizing the influence of the researcher and thus diminishing the possibility that the participant’s words being taken out of context.

Peer Review

A peer review was conducted with an administrator involved with the study throughout the research process. This individual has special insights and extensive expertise in the field of GTA training and development and also served as a participant in this study. Their role in the research process was to aid principal researcher in analyzing tentative themes found in the data for understanding and clarity. Secondly, they provided sources of information from the literature that also shed light on the coding and development of tentative categories of themes.

The survey instrument was developed with particular attention to current instruments and topics of concern cited in the organizational culture and GTA development and training literature developed the survey instrument utilized for this study. Before disseminating the survey, the instrument was reviewed by several leading scholars in the areas of survey construction and GTA training and development to enhance validity. These individuals provided specific feedback on the construction and content of the survey. They also provided suggestions for survey items to include in the survey that would improve its reliability and validity and make it more effective at obtaining the stated research goals.

Audit Trail

The principal researcher kept throughout the research process kept a research journal. The goal was not to provide means for a replication of actual research setting and conditions, but to provide enough details about the experiences for those who wish to reconstruct the processes by which the researcher reached his conclusions (Morse, 1994). As Dey (1993) wrote, “if we cannot expect others to replicate our account, the best we can do is explain how we arrived at our results” (p. 251). Within the journal, raw data from observation, interviews notes, documentation of data collection methods and analysis, and fieldwork issues were compiled for later use if necessary. More specifically, the investigator reported decisions and insights directly related to the research process as well as the researcher’s rationale for methodological decisions were provided. By keeping a journal, the researcher was also able to gain insights into his research practices and experiences through the process of reflection.

Researcher’s Subjectivity Statement

In order to clarify my position as a researcher, it is necessary to clearly delineate my background and some of the perspectives I bring to the research process. My first degree was in Health and Physical Education from Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA in 1997. I entered the Health and Human Performance graduate program at the University in the Spring of 1997, to extend my knowledge in the area of pedagogy, curriculum, and research. At that time, I was awarded a graduate teaching assistantship within the basic physical education program and taught in the basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP). Secondly, I also was able to conduct research under the direction of my major professor and members of the Sport Instruction Research Laboratory (then Curriculum and Instruction Research Laboratory).

Throughout my graduate studies I have been employed as a GTA in the BUPAP and I have experienced the organizational culture of this program to a great extent. My interest in GTAs and their concerns first developed when I reflected on my own struggles and successes as a GTA. Personally, I have been at what could be considered both ends of the continuum as a GTA, struggling to learn how to teach skills and to conduct a class effectively early on in my graduate studies. Recently the department has recognized my teaching and I was awarded the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award for the GTA program. So what draws me to this area of research is need to help others who struggle or just want to improve their instruction and receive better training and development. As a TA Mentor I have been exposed to effective means of training GTAs and preparing them for not only their current instructional roles but also future occupational endeavors. It is my goal to bring this knowledge to my GTA program as a means of improving it and to extend the discussion of GTAs into the area of physical education. Historically, physical education has received little attention in relation to GTA training and development. As a Ph.D. student approaching the end of my graduate studies, I feel this research is significant not only towards improving the experiences of GTAs in the investigated setting but also advancing the knowledge concerning GTA development and training.

All researchers bring certain biases and assumptions to a study therefore it is important to provide triangulation as well as a subjectivity statement (Merriam, 1998). First, it is my opinion that an organizational culture does exist within the GTA training program and it does impact the GTAs. Secondly, I believe this culture can best be examined by exploring the perspectives and opinions of the primary participants of the program, the GTAs and administrators. Finally, my personal experiences as a GTA and

relationship with prospective participants provide me significant access and focus on behaviors, perspectives and insights related to happenings in the research setting.

Research Limitations

Qualitative research has several limitations to consider. First, the researcher must be conscious of his or her biases and assumptions and their impact on the research process. This is important to consider due to the researcher being the primary instrument of data collection and analysis. As Merriam (1998), explained, "...the investigator as human instrument is limited by being human-that is, mistakes are made, opportunities are missed, personal biases interfere. Human instruments are as fallible as any other research instrument" (p. 21). By stating upfront my personal biases and assumptions I hope to articulate to some extent the manner in which I will view the research process, especially data collection and analysis. Secondly, I assumed the participants that took part in this study were representative of the greater population and able to provide data that was relevant to answering the proposed research questions. It is the assumption of the researcher that the established sampling criterion will prove sufficient to select participants that are "information-rich".

The findings from this research are not meant to be viewed as generalizable to other settings or populations. Furthermore, the goal of this research was not to develop or test a hypothesis or theory but rather to investigate a particular phenomenon and the perspectives of the individuals who are situated in the research setting. As Merriam (1998) wrote, in qualitative research, a single case or small nonrandom sample is selected precisely *because* the researcher wished to understand the particular in depth, no find out what is generally true to the many" (p. 208). In the case of this research the findings

might shed light onto the experiences of graduate teaching assistants in similar settings at other institutions but those experiences are still particularistic to that setting.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The goal of this chapter is to explore and explicate the perceptions of graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and program administrators concerning the organizational culture of a basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP). An ethnographic case study research design was used in data collection. Secondly, an interpretive theoretical lens was utilized to analyze and interpret findings. The following research questions guided the study:

1. First, how is the culture of the BUPAP defined and communicated throughout the organization by GTAs and departmental administrators?
2. Second, what are the effects of cultural/environmental factors on instructional performance?
3. Third, how has time as a GTA prepared them for future career goals and aspirations?
4. Fourth, what perspectives do the GTAs offer on their experiences in the program?
5. Fifth, what recommendations do the GTAs have for the BUPAP's improvement?

Theoretical Framework

William Tierney's organizational culture framework (1988) was utilized to examine the basic undergraduate physical education program's (BUPAP) culture. The framework has six areas of focus and perspectives of the GTAs and administrators as pertinent to these areas were documented. Components of the framework are listed in Appendix A.

Demographics of Participants

The participants of this study were grouped into four categories. This section illustrates demographic information about the participant groups and the types of data obtained from them. The first two groups consisted of GTAs who returned one or both of the two portions of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) (please refer to Appendix B) that was administered to all GTAs in the School of Health and Human Performance (HHP). Part I of the survey consisted primarily of open-ended questions while Part II was comprised of a Likert-like scale survey. It is important to note that the first three groups of applicants consisted of GTAs within the School of HHP; however the same GTAs did not take part in each phase of the study and thus are not represented in each group of participants.

GTA-Survey Group I comprised those GTAs who responded to the Part I of the SGP-BUPAPOC. The group consisted of sixteen participants, eight (8) males and eight (8) females. The PESS program had 12 participants while the EXRS program had four that took part in this phase of the study. No other academic department was represented in the sample. Overwhelmingly, the group consisted of Caucasian/non-Hispanics (11 out of 16) with the majority of them being in the doctoral programs (10 out of 16). The responses of these participants and the surveys are found in the Appendix C.

GTA-Survey Group II consisted of GTAs who responded to Part II of the SGP-BUPAPOC. This group consisted of 13 participants representing primarily two departments (PESS 12, EXRS, 2, and No Reply 1). The gender makeup of the group was seven (7) males and six (6) females. Again, the ethnic/racial makeup was majority

Caucasian/non-Hispanic. Eight of the participants were in the doctoral programs of their respective departments. The majority of the participants in this pool were in their first term or semester of teaching in the program. The responses of these participants and the survey can be found in the Appendix C.

The GTA-Observation/Interview Group encompassed twelve GTAs who volunteered to participate in two semi-structured interviews, a focus group interview, and had their classes observed. Demographic information from GTA-Observation/Interview Group was derived totally from interview data. Nine of the participants' academic program was the PESS department with the other three from EXRS department. In terms of gender, five (5) of the participants were females and seven (7) were male. Again, the ethnic/racial makeup was overwhelmingly Caucasian/non-Hispanic with two of the participants being from Asian and African-American decent respectively. Within the text of this chapter, those GTAs that were referred to or cited by a pseudonym were from this pool.

The administrative group for this study consisted of both current and retired administrators found both within the School of HHP and from the University campus. Only one department head chose to take part in the study. Both, the recently retired director of the School of HHP and department chair of the program, which houses the undergraduate basic physical activities program took part. The current program coordinator volunteered to participate. From the University campus, the director of the University TA Mentoring Program took part in the study. Lastly, several administrative support personnel in the School of HHP assisted in the research of this project via providing relevant documents.

Methods

This research study utilized both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies. Quantitative data were obtained from two survey instruments that sought demographic information and responses to questions related to aspects of the perceived organizational culture of the department. Primarily, data were collected via a survey instrument that was comprised of items based on a Likert-like scale system. Along with the survey data, information from documents obtained from office personnel and departmental administrators allowed for the compilation of the number of courses offered by the department and GTA workload. Means, frequency counts and other descriptive statistics were generated using a SPSS program.

Qualitative data were also obtained via survey instruments through open-ended questions. However, the bulk of the qualitative data were gathered via field observations and semi-structured interviews with GTAs and administrators. Lastly, the GTAs took part in a focus group interview that included the development of documents that pertained to the perceived mission of the basic undergraduate physical education program and their roles as GTAs. Qualitative data were analyzed via traditional interpretive and ethnographic methods.

Presentation of Findings

The following sections highlight the themes that emerged from the analysis of the data. The themes are presented based on the perspective of the organizational culture that best represents the data (refer to Tierney's framework (1988) found in Appendix A). The themes are presented in the following order: a) environment, b) mission, c) strategy, d) information, e) socialization, and f) leadership. In each section, quotes were used from

the respondents across participant groups and quantitative data derived from both surveys to support the themes. Please refer to the appendices when necessary for clarity concerning data.

Perspectives of the BUPAP's Environment

The GTAs' perspectives on the environment of the BUPAP concerned relationships between peers, departmental faculty, and BUPAP administrators and motivations for being an effective GTA. They described the environment in three distinct ways: a) autonomous, b) collegial and supportive, and c) as a community-within-a-community. Also, the participants mentioned the lack of explicit expectations for instructional excellence. Lastly, findings revealed motivations that the GTAs used to seek for financial support from the BUPAP and to acquire skills and knowledge necessary for their future occupational goals and aspirations.

Autonomy of teaching. The GTAs (primarily of GTA-Survey Group II & GTA-Observation/Interview Group) in the study acknowledged that they were granted a significant amount of autonomy in their teaching. A lack of supervision and accountability was expressed as acceptable because they received lesser pressure from the administration on what they were teaching, how they were teaching, and on evaluation of teaching effectiveness. They also confirmed that the lack of supervision allowed them to be creative with their instructional strategies, selection of content, and allowed them to form a more meaningful relationship with their students. A participant in GTA-Survey Group I replied:

So you are kind of left out...not necessarily on your own but you are left to do what you feel is the most important thing to do in your class. There

is not a lot of oversight...the program coordinator is not looking at what you're doing and where you might want to make some changes. You are kind of left up to do what you want to do and for new GTAs that might not be the right thing to do (GTA-Survey Group I).

However, several GTAs also expressed that they would like to be observed and evaluated so that they could receive constructive feedback on their teaching. More specifically, formative supervision was seen as necessary and wanted in order to ensure the quality of their instruction. It was through this type of supervision that the GTAs thought they could grow as instructors and provide quality instruction. However, according to the program coordinator this type of supervision was not possible due to a lack of time and resources allocated by the department towards this endeavor. Luke, a doctoral student discussed the need for "growth-oriented" supervision and evaluation:

I would like to see evaluations working towards something to make you a better teacher. It would be nice once to get feedback from someone other than a mentor if there is a supervisor for the program or something like that. Maybe they can help with the goal assessment or they can do your first assessment and let you set goals with them and with your mentor you are working on reaching those goals. I think that assessment part plays a lot in the evaluation. Making it towards something and not just this is how you are doing here and this is how you are doing here. Make it kind of like a progression (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Overall, the GTAs described their relationships with departmental faculty and BUPAP administrators as somewhat detached and lacking within the context of

instructional support. This finding is supported by responses from GTA-Survey Group I to a survey item that asked them to describe their relationships with faculty and administration (open-ended question #6). Examples of GTA responses are as follows:

*Poor: Very hard to get in touch with supervision for materials, questions or innovative ideas are often looked down. I had some disappointments.

*Very little contact with Basic PE program supervisor. The only contact is when teaching assignments are being determined...

*My advisor is supportive- don't usually talk about classes I teach. I find other faculty (not my advisor) in the department often don't want to get involved with GA---only if it is for their personal benefit---helping teach classes etc.

As these findings suggested, interaction with departmental faculty was more focused on issues related to their academic or research obligations rather than their teaching in the BUPAP. BUPAP administrators interviewed described the posture taken by faculty in relation to GTAs as being one in which they were a resource that can be tapped by GTAs as needed. In general, very little guidance or energy was mentioned by the GTAs or administration as being directed towards GTA instructional support and supervision by departmental faculty of BUPAP administrators. A BUPAP administrator stated:

As far as course development I think the TA's have a lot of autonomy. I think our posture has been that the faculty and the administration are they're as a resource and that we can provide as much assistance or help as the TA would require. But beyond that and beyond just some very basic

policies that the department has the TA has a lot of flexibility
(Administrator Interview).

Collegial and supportive. The GTAs discussed the collegial and supportive atmosphere that permeated the department especially between GTAs. Survey responses from GTAs as well as interview data provided findings that support this description of the BUPAP's environment. The following table and statistics describe survey responses from GTA-Survey Group II. The GTAs expressed they had solid working relationships with faculty and could approach them for help when necessary. Secondly, the administration of the BUPAP was seen by the GTAs to be aware of their issues and needs but not necessarily helpful in addressing them as suggested by data represented in Table 1. The GTAs expressed that the administrators in the BUPAP understood the role and responsibilities of GTAs (item #33, $m = 2.15$) and that administrators acted on concerns and issues raised (item #35, $m = 3.69$). Lastly, the GTAs expressed ambivalence about whether or not the administrators would support creative instructional changes and ideas within the context of the BUPAP (item # 34, $m = 2.92$).

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviations of Responses to Survey Items 33-36 from the SGP-BUPAPOC

I perceive that the administrators of the basic undergraduate physical education program...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
33	Understand the role and responsibilities of being a GTA	2.15	.69
34	Are willing to support creative instructional changes and ideas from GTAs	2.92	.95
35	Do not act on concerns expressed by GTAs	3.69	.63
36	Will terminate GTAs who receives poor evaluations	3.00	.71

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree

Community-within-a-community. A third description of the BUPAP that was expressed in the responses was a “community-within-a-community” atmosphere. GTAs developed close relationships through creation of cliques or groups within their own department. For instance, several GTAs were part of a research groups that met weekly for meetings. These GTAs acknowledged that they had formed a tighter bond with each other than those GTAs who were not members of the Sports Instruction Research Laboratory. Alexander, one of the members of that group stated that:

It’s a nice little community. That’s how I’ve experienced it...it’s not a very close friendship with all the other GTAs. For instance, I am not trying to point at anyone but for instance, if I am talking about the exercise science people...if there are let’s say six or seven GTAs from the exercise science department I might know maybe two of them personally and the others I just know that they are GTAs too. I don’t even know their names and I never talk to them. I never interact with them or talk to them professionally or anything...It’s a group that there are subgroups as

closely related individuals or professionals but the entire group is not closely held together (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

John Anderson, a first-year GTA, credited the lack of communication and interaction he had with other GTAs outside of his department as being due in part to the location of his academic department. He stated:

I found most all the other GTAs to be very friendly and personal and willing to offer assistance or their help you know if I have any problems and questions whatever...some of the problems I have is just we are all kind of going at a hundred different directions at once. I don't have, especially being down here, people I am kind of away from some of the other people there is not many people down here that teach...that actually teach some of the stuff as much so I feel like sometimes I am not...I don't have as much access or just as much daily contact with other ones as I might if perhaps my office was up you know like where yours is or whatever (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The GTAs also expressed that the lack of interaction was not only between GTAs from different departments but between faculties from various departments as well. This lack of interaction between administrators and faculty of departments within the School of HHP was seen by GTAs as influential in their subsequent lack of interaction with GTAs from the same departments. A GTA stated that, "I am a little concerned about how separate the PE and EXRS graduate departments are and I think this rubs off on the TAs" (GTA-Survey Group I). A second GTA from the GTA-Survey Group I, expressed a more

negative outlook on the “community-within-a-community” atmosphere found within the program,

With some of them [other GTAs] good, even friendly working relation.

Helping each other out, discussing issues, support each other emotionally.

This group includes only a few other TAs. With the rest of the TAs, I have no relation. I don’t even know the names of most of them. Especially, TAs from EXRS department has no relation with us. Some of them look that they don’t even want to have any relation. They are mean and unfriendly (GTA-Survey Group I).

Most of the statements that were mentioned expressed of the lack of interaction between the PESS and the EXRS departments specifically. These two departments routinely have most of the graduate students on teaching assistantships and this was possibly represented in the number of volunteers for this research study as shown in the following table. An administrator acknowledged during an interview that the EXRS department gets about six approximately assistantships annually while the PESS department gets twelve and HPB and RLST both get 2-3 per academic year.

Table 3

Academic Departments of Participants

Department	GTA Group 1	GTA Group II	GTA Group III
EXRS	4	2	3
PESS	12	10	10
RLST	0	0	0
HPB	0	0	0

The GTAs asserted that they formed closer relationships with GTAs in the same academic department or those they shared an office with due primarily to the lack of structured contact with other GTAs. This was despite many of the GTAs teaching the

same classes through out the year. Although not the sole reason for the formation of “cliques”, the GTAs interviewed expressed that the physical separations (location of offices in building) that they had to overcome led to a lack of interaction between GTAs in different departments. Physically, the academic departments and GTA offices are spread over the three floors of the Student Physical Activities Center. Diagram 1 found in Appendix D illustrates this point.

Expectations for instructional excellence. The GTAs that took part in the interview and observation process (mostly from the PESS academic department) expressed that the atmosphere in the department was one that called for adequacy in teaching, rather than excellence. They asserted that the lack of supervision and formal evaluations outside of the end-of-the-semester student evaluations allowed too much leeway for those who did not want to do a good job of teaching. The following chart supports this assertion due to their responses being somewhat neutral in regards to the perceptions of the BUPAP promoting and recognizing excellence in teaching.

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviations of Responses to Survey Items 28 and 31 from the SGP-BUPAPOC

I perceive the basic undergraduate physical education program (‘s)...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
28	Recognizes excellence in teaching	2.85	.69
31	Does not promote excellence in teaching	3.38	.96

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

More specifically, GTAs who were in academic departments that did not emphasize teaching (in relation to research) were often singled out. The GTAs in the more traditionally teaching oriented programs expressed that those “lazy or rogue” GTAs

did a disservice to the students that they taught as well as the reputation of the basic physical activities program as a whole. Bob, a doctoral student acknowledged the BUPAP's unfavorable reliance on GTAs without competence in their assigned courses or willingness to be effective instructors:

I have personally witnessed several GTAs who were given courses to teach in which they had no or little experience! In my opinion, this cannot be allowed to happen...I understand that GTA class schedules and other factors need to be taken into consideration, but how can a department that advocates the need for specialist physical education teachers allow 'non-specialists' to teach their own courses. It doesn't make sense to me (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Across the participant groups, GTAs expressed that the administrators of the department did very little to "police" GTAs and to observe whether or not they were effective in the classrooms. Thus, they acknowledged, that although they were aware that it was their "job" and they needed to do an effective job, many GTAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group primarily) noticed that opportunities to "backslide" were numerous. As the following table suggests, the GTAs (GTA-Survey Group II) expressed ambivalence about the perception that inadequacy in teaching was acceptable and tolerated rather than dealt with accordingly. In particular, they acknowledged that the BUPAP did very little to remove GTAs who were not effective instructors. Please refer to Appendix C for the corresponding frequency counts for survey item #36 for clarity.

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviations of Responses to Survey Item 36 from the SGP-BUPAPOC

I perceive that the administrators of the basic undergraduate physical education program...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
36	Will terminate GTAs who receives poor evaluations	3.00	.71

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Agree

However, the department did recognize GTAs who did a good job of teaching. Excellence in teaching was rewarded by an award presented at an annual meeting. Despite a lack of an explicit statement of what the mission of the program was or what the GTAs were expected to do, the BUPAP administrators did express that instructional excellence was appreciated in the department. One manner of showing that appreciation was through the awarding of certificates and plaques of accomplishment. Currently, GTAs are recognized for their effectiveness as instructors at the departmental and institutional levels. Departments grant Outstanding Teaching Assistant awards annually during a reception held in May. The primary means of getting the award is through a nomination by the basic program coordinator. However, many of the GTAs replied that they were not totally aware of these awards or the process by which to become nominated for it. This finding confirms previous mentioned findings that suggested the GTAs were ambivalent about whether or not the BUPAP recognized or promoted excellence in teaching. On an institutional level, recognized GTAs are awarded with a framed certificate at a campus-wide honors day. Also, on an institutional level the graduate school offers The Graduate School Excellence in Teaching award, which carries a monetary award of \$1,000 is awarded at an annual Faculty Recognition banquet.

GTAs' perceptions of the assistantship. The findings from items 19–26 of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Education Program's Organizational Culture (SGP-BUPAPOC) suggest that the GTAs viewed the assistantship as providing more than just a cheap form of labor for the department (item # 24, $m = 2.08$; item #26, $m = 3.31$). They expressed that, although it was the primary means of financing graduate work (item #23, $m = 2.38$), it allowed them to develop skills that would prove useful in their future occupational roles upon graduation (item #21, $m = 2.46$). It would seem that the assistantship was a worthwhile experience (item #19, $m = 2.38$; item #22, $m = 2.23$). However, the GTAs pointed out that being a GTA did little to connect them with future employers (item #25, $m = 2.69$) (Appendix H)

In order to best ascertain how the GTAs experiences prepared them for their future career goals and aspirations, four questions were posed and examined:

1. Why are you a GTA?
2. What skills do you want to acquire as a GTA?
3. Do the GTAs feel that the skills they have obtained will transfer to future occupation?
4. How does the experience of being a GTA foster professional development?

In reference to the first question, the overwhelming response was that it was the only means of paying for graduate school. Chad, a doctoral student, reflected on why he was a GTA and the contractual obligations he had to meet when he said:

That was part of my contract for being a doctoral student here at the University. I was obligated to teach X amount of physical activity classes as part of my contract at the University. In order to get a tuition waiver I was hired as a GTA to teach activity classes (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Other GTAs echoed these sentiments when asked about the reasons for being a GTA. In addition to financing their graduate education, they also cited the rewards of gaining experience teaching on the college level:

I wanted to work on my M.A. I have just finished my undergraduate not too long ago and I wanted to come to the University and I had to work...I had to make some money somehow. So they said this would be an opportunity. I love to teach and I have never taught at the college level so I figured why not? It would be a good experience (Marie, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The main reason is that it was the only way I could come to school. My assistantship pays for me to be able to live and that kind of thing. So the main reason was so that I could keep coming to school and...but I do want to teach so it is kind of a teaching type experience. I want to teach at the university level (Luke, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

When asked what skills they would like to acquire during their time as a GTA, the responses were consistent across the participant groups of GTAs. Many of them focused on acquiring college level teaching knowledge that would allow them to interact better with students of the college age. As Lisa, a doctoral student stated:

I think the key is working with this age student, being able to know where this particular group comes from of course it's generalizing based on what we have right now. But working with this age group, relating to them, what are their needs, why are they here, why are they in that class. Is it

because they have to be or do they actually want to learn? So that is something that I hope to gain (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Chad, a doctoral student, replied in similar fashion by stating that they wanted to acquire college level teaching knowledge that would aid them in being more effective teachers as professionals. He stated the following:

I would like to acquire basic people skills. That would be one. Just...I always come back to the having a passion for teaching. Being sensitive to your students, because they all have dilemmas. Somewhere along the line just about every one of your students is going to have something happen during the semester whether its' academic or family-related. To be sensitive to that and treat each student as an individual and get to know your students. Get to know where they are from, get to know what year they are at the University, what are they studying, why are they taking your class, what are their goals for taking your class, and find out a little bit about maybe what are their career aspirations, what are their hobbies (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Developing and practicing a repertoire of instructional strategies, means of effectively presenting information and relevant teaching skills was seen as important by the GTAs. Secondly, the GTAs expressed that through evaluations of their teaching they would improve as instructors in relation to future career aspirations. Marie and Bob stated that:

I really want to use my opportunity here to implement different instructional strategies that I have learned through maybe sport education or some different levels of...maybe Mauston's work, stuff like that. Use

the classes that I have and being able to teach college students make it a little bit easier to do that because they are more cooperative and they...you don't have to explain as much to them. So it is good for me to practice...you know out there with them. And to just get more comfortable teaching everyday. Just to be...the more times I teach the better it is. It has to get better, you know what I mean? I love it. I have positive feelings about my teaching and I am confident in it and it just grows everyday that I am out there (Marie, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Teaching skills would be the major thing if I am going on to be a teacher, which I am. Then I believe that if I learn how to teach better not just by experience but also by someone coming in and saying, "you might want to try this or here is a suggestion or a strategy that may work in that case" or overall "here is how you may want to pace your course through the semester". That would be very helpful. So learning good teaching strategies would be good for me (Bob, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Along with people and instructional ability, the GTAs wanted to acquire skills that would help them to be "professional" in their later career opportunities. David a first-year GTA stated that:

It has been very rewarding or a valuable learning... Just the classroom management type skills that you learn on the job even if you were taught them it's nothing like on the job training. Mainly those three: organization

skills, classroom management skills, and being assertive (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

In terms of skills that GTAs have obtained, overall, they were confident that their experiences as GTAs and the skills they acquired would prove helpful to them as they moved into their future career opportunities. However, the administrators were not as convinced that these experiences would transfer as readily as the GTAs envisioned. When asked, “How does the experience of being a GTA foster professional development?” an administrator stated upfront that:

I am not necessarily sure it does. It may...not in the basic program per se. Most of the people who are in that program will not teach basic courses once they leave the University. So in terms of professional development I think that it is limited. They don't invest the time in making any innovations that might result in them giving conference presentations or publications. I don't think the experiences that they get in that program are necessarily going to translate into any usable skills or experience once they leave here. It is possible but I am not sure that is a reality. I am really not sure that it does not in any meaningful way (Administrator Interview).

However, other administrators provided more contexts for the discussion of the possible transfer of skills into future jobs. An administrator discussed the need to take into account what types of jobs the GTAs were moving into and to make a distinction between public and academic sector jobs. He stated that:

My general view is that if you are teaching in the basic instruction program and you are here as a M.A. student and you may go on and

teach in the public school sector it will have much more carry over value for you. Much of what we do here in terms of organizational structure and meeting the students, the relative age of those students, the activities involved, dressing out and all that sort of thing is going to be very much like you would encounter in the public school sector (Administrator Interview).

He continued by pointing out that the transfer of skills would not necessarily be as valuable to those students going into higher education. For instance, he expressed that:

For those people who are going on and getting PhDs and working for positions probably in higher education, the immediate carry over in terms of what actually goes on in an hour of instruction may not have quite the value that it would be if someone was going into the public school sector. But the value there and the appreciation...you gain some insight and appreciation that is as an undergraduate that you didn't have of yourself (Administrator Interview).

Although they differed with the GTAs on the issue of transfer of skills, the administrators did support the perspective that being a GTA could help graduate students become more professional overall. As one explained:

I think that any person who's in a graduate study in physical education should really have that experience. I think they will learn that the experience will be probably equal to any class that they will take because you are interacting with college students; you're dealing with a variety of

different personalities; you are dealing with many times issues, sometimes stressful issues; you're having to evaluate, which I think is a very important skill. I think the next student who would come into a graduate physical education program and not have that experience I think would really be shortchanged (Administrator Interview).

One institutional administrator pointed out the need for GTA experiences to prepare them for future roles in higher education as well as in the public sector when she stated that:

I think the whole concept of the way that we use GTAs is a valid and useful role on our campus. But we have to make it an integral part of what we can give during a graduate experience. So I think everybody should have that opportunity in stages to move along in their graduate experience. To have more and more responsibility in the teaching area so that they can develop as teachers and who they want to be in their careers (Administrator Interview).

The GTAs expressed that the assistantship was a worthwhile endeavor. The majority of the GTAs interviewed (GTA-Observation/Interview Group) and those that replied to a previously displayed survey item described the graduate teaching assistantship as the only means of financing their graduate education. The GTAs and BUPAP administrators differed somewhat on the transferability of skills acquired as a GTA in relation to future occupational goals and aspirations. The GTAs expressed that many of the skills they wanted to acquire (college level teaching knowledge, instructional strategies, management skills) would transfer into their future occupations. However, the

administrators expressed that unless a GTA went into the public school sector very little of the skills that they obtained during their time as a GTA would prove useful.

Perspectives of the BUPAP's Mission of the BUPAP

The mission of a program, institution or organization, forms the basis for its' functioning. More importantly, the employees and administrators base their actions and decisions on what is in the best interest of the organization in relation to its implicit or explicit mission. In the following section, a discussion on the mission of the basic undergraduate physical activities program (BUPAP) as well as the role of the GTAs within it is provided. More specifically, the manner in which the mission was defined, articulated, and the amount of agreement between the constituents of the program will be examined.

BUPAP's implicit mission. After searching through departmental documents, no written statement was found that indicated a mission statement. Although there was no mission statement identified that specifically focused on the basic physical activities program or the role of the GTAs, both the School of HHP and the department of PESS had statements that alluded to the purpose of the program and provided some context for identifying the instructional role of the GTAs:

The mission of the School of HHP is to advance the goals of, as reflected in the title of the School, Health and Human Performance so as to enhance the quality of life through knowledge, understanding and physical activity of the students, faculty and staff of the University community; the citizens of State; and the people of our nation (School of HHP Website).

The department of PESS emphasized in their mission statement the following: “...the mission is to provide educational opportunities to enhance personal fitness and sport skills for all University students...” (Department of PESS Website). However, the GTAs themselves did not refer to these statements when asked about the mission, purpose or role of the basic physical education program and their place in it. This lack of explanation was pointed out as a concern by GTA who wrote that the department offered an, “inadequate explanation of what the overall objective of the basic physical education program is...teaching, fitness, sportsmanship, etc.” (GTA-Survey Group I). They alluded to the stated mission only due to their assumptions of what the program should offer in relation to its size and the type of institution that houses it. Along with this indication, the GTAs referred to their perspectives on what the mission and purpose of the basic activities program should be based on their personal roles. As Lisa, a doctoral student explained:

I just assumed my role was to teach the students the skills, and the strategies, techniques, etc they need to be able to perform this sport of whatever it is to allow recreation when they complete the class. That’s basically what I do. I don’t remember something specific that I was told to do because I don’t know if that ever was specified. My thing is that it should be that they leave there at the recreational level so that they will be active as adults (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

During the focus group session, the GTA-Observation/Interview Group developed several mission statements that are consistent with the stated mission of both the School of HHP and the department of PESS:

To provide fundamental principles and basic functions of exercise and sport to allow individuals to develop and maintain a healthy lifestyle. This will be done through a variety of activities that allow individual students to work and develop in an area of interest (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The mission of the basic physical education program at the University is to provide students with a variety of opportunities to participate in physical activity through classes, which are introduced by, trained professional, therefore promoting a healthy and physically active lifestyle (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Both statements seemingly suggested that the GTAs were aware of the mission and purpose of the basic physical education program as it relates to the mission of the School of Health and Human Performance and the department of PESS. This awareness was despite not having anything in writing or any instance where it was openly verbalized to the GTAs. It would seem that the GTAs developed their perspective of what the mission of the program was based on: a) their past instructional experiences, b) what they assumed it should be and c) comments and actions of their peers. Interview comments from administrators supported the perspective offered by the GTAs:

The purpose is to present to the students of the University physical activities of skill or fitness which we hope would enhance their ability to be fit or perform the skill and to give them something to do in their leisure time (Administrator Interview).

The purpose was to provide an opportunity for students to learn new skills and activities they could utilize throughout their careers and personal lives (Administrator Interview).

As defined by the participants in this study (primarily GTA-Observation/Interview Group & departmental administrators), the mission of the basic undergraduate physical activities program was to provide an opportunity for undergraduates to participate in various athletic activities. Moreover, the goal was to promote lifelong participation in those activities in order to perpetuate a healthy lifestyle well beyond their time as students. These conceptions of the mission of the School of HHP, the department of PESS directly reflected on the mission of the BUPAP. However, there were no written statements that supported this perspective rather the participants explained it was “understood” to be the case.

Perceptions of the role of GTAs. When asked to define or describe the role of the GTA within the context of the BUPAP, both departmental administrators and the GTAs themselves focused primarily on the delivery of information to the students and the teaching of skills with the hope of making the activity appealing to the student over a lifetime. This perspective was consistent with those of the BUPAP administrators. One administrator expressed that the role of the GTA was simply, “to teach their classes”. Other administrators focused on the role of the GTAs as being that which is outlined in their assistantships. As an administrator explained:

To fulfill the responsibilities that were outlined in the offer of the graduate assistantship and frequently those were defined individually by the various departments. But one would be safe in saying that it was primarily

teaching and teaching in the basic instruction program in physical education (Administrator Interview).

Apparently, the GTAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group) were not provided with an explicit statement of what their roles should be and instead they relied on previous experiences, personal and instructional backgrounds to develop perspectives which, were was consistent with administrators'. Primarily, they saw their role as one of student facilitator and motivator. Examples of what the GTAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group) offered as their perspectives on their role within the context of the basic physical education program were:

I see my role as teaching in the basic program getting students interested.

Giving them knowledge about the class they are taking and getting them motivated to get to class and be at least active while they are there and hopefully beyond (Luke).

My role would be to be a person that provides them with the instruction and the encouragement and motivation to continue to be active or to be involved in the sport that I am teaching (Marie).

My role as a GTA is to provide leadership and knowledge in a skill area for the students that have chosen to take that skill area...To either develop skill or refine skill for the students that take various activity classes (Chad).

Perspectives of the BUPAP's Strategy (Decision-making) Processes

The participants in this study expressed four factors that impacted the overall BUPAP culture. The first concerns the manners in which GTAs were initially selected for

assistantships. Secondly was the method in which GTAs were evaluated on their teaching effectiveness. Next was the input the GTAs stated concerning issues related to the number of students allowed to enroll in their courses and the time allocated to each class. Final comments concerned the amount of control the GTAs had that affected their instruction from a departmental (policy issues) and classroom perspective. In the following sections, the process by which the administrators of the BUPAP decided who should receive teaching assistantships and the perceptions of the GTAs concerning the manner in which assistantships were handed out to graduate students.

GTA selection process: Academic promise and teaching ability. The participants of the study saw the administrative process by which GTAs were selected for their jobs initially was seen as important to the overall quality of the BUPAP instruction by, especially the GTAs. In reference to the assistantships, the administrators were questioned on the criteria used to select graduate students for assistantships. It is important to acknowledge that the assistantship went only to graduate students who were first admitted to the graduate program and whether or not the administrators were aware of whether or not the applicant could teach effectively played no role in whether they were accepted or not. One administrator detailed his perceptions on the criteria for the selection of GTAs who receive assistantships:

Two major criteria. One, the academic promise of the individual and there, we are looking at not wishing to extend an assistantship to someone who can simply teach in the program and use them as cheap labor. The idea is that you recruit excellent students and you tend to reward those excellent students and to ensure that they come to your institution with the

opportunity to help support them in their graduate program and by doing that they can teach in the basic instruction program. Given that they would do that then we look at could they help us teach in the basic instruction program. Then the next thing we look at if we want to try and help that person is can they in fact make a contribution immediately to the program (Administrator Interview).

The above administrator shared a balance between two major criteria for choosing an applicant to be a GTA, academic promise and teaching ability. This mindset was not consistent among other administrators. For the most part, the administrators put a premium on academic promise and the ability to expand the program. This information could readily be found on paper. There were no interview processes or teaching episodes to ascertain whether or not the prospective GTA could teach or even wanted to teach now or in the future. During the application process, the applicant was asked to fill out the Personal Rating of Teaching Competency (PRTC) that identified whether or not the individual could teach particular activity courses offered by the BUPAP (see Appendix E). This portion of the application was the only real estimate that the administrators used to determine the ability of the GTA to teach well. Thus, more was placed on the academic transcript and standardized test scores. In fact, few of the administrators expressed that an applicant's extensive experience in or interest in teaching was necessary to get an assistantship. Several other administrators who expressed their understanding of the criteria for the selection of graduate students to receive assistantships supported this assertion. Their responses included the following:

We took all of the applications and we had a panel of three people reviews the applications. And each of us independently looked at all of the applications...one of the major criteria was the versatility of the person to teach a variety of different activities...His [The BUPAP program coordinator's] major role in this was to look for people who could staff the activities and the programs that were very popular and students were very interested in registering for (Administrator Interview).

In PESS...our department [we] select twelve, EXRS selects six they select theirs differently than we do. [In] PESS our primary concerns is to select GTAs who can teach activities that will expand and enhance our offerings in the program. Opposed to that EXRS [which] strictly looks at their academic workload. They could care less whether they could teach anything or not and they have told us this. "We are looking at their academic credentials first. If they can teach that's ok. If they can't teach that's ok" (Administrator Interview).

GTA perceptions of the BUPAP selection criteria. The GTAs did not seem to have a clear understanding of how they were selected to be GTAs but based on the answers provided by the administrators, they seemed to have a general idea of the process. GTAs had four main criteria for selection: a) teaching experience or experience working with that age group, b) willingness to go into teaching of some sort, c) the ability to expand the program, and d) ability as a student. For example, David, a first-year GTA stated:

I think those TAs who have aspirations of teaching in some form or another... Other than that...I just think students that apply that have...I don't even count past experience as important as what your future goals are. Are you doing just to have your school paid for or are you aiming for other reasons? So I think that future aspirations would definitely be weighted heavily and of course competitive qualifications or what have you...To make sure that you have competent and qualified candidates or TAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

These perspectives or guidelines of the GTAs are in line with those utilized by the administrators; however the GTAs did call for a more thorough application process to screen out those graduate students who did not have an interest in teaching or had low skills as instructors, thus maintaining a level of proficiency and consistency in the teaching. Teddy and Alexander, both doctoral students discussed the lack of a more rigorous application process:

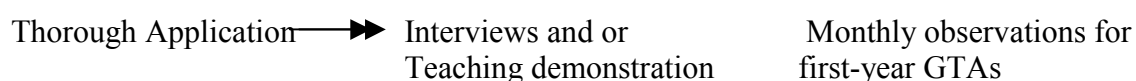
I am surprised they don't have interviews. I'm surprised they don't ask about your philosophy of education. I am surprised they don't try and find out a little bit more about you. There is only so much you can put on a survey or an application form. For my undergraduate we were...even for us to be accepted into the university we had a formal interview, a practical interview...it doesn't have to be that extensive (Teddy, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The GTAs expressed that anything more than what they had experienced would be unrealistic due to time demands and the nature of the graduate school application

process. As the following diagram shows, the perception of the selection process and criteria for GTAs by GTAs was more comprehensive than the administrators. The following diagram indicates their perceptions of a thorough selection process, which include interviewing, teaching demonstrations and monthly observations for first-year GTAs.

Diagram 1

GTA Perceptions of Application and Selection Process for BUPAP Graduate Assistantships



The GTAs realized that because of the need for students in graduate programs, such a rigorous screening and interview process was unrealistic. However, they did feel that if the program truly wanted to provide effective instruction to the hundreds of undergraduates taking their courses, it was imperative that a more thorough process be put in place. This process was also seen as a means of “weeding” out those graduate students who received assistantships but had no interest in teaching and that were not providing adequate instruction thus damaging the reputation of the BUPAP, PESS department and the perceptions of physical education in general. Luke, a third-year GTA provided a summary of what he suggested the application process should entail in an idealistic situation:

Applicants are applying from basically all around the world and most of them never come to the University before they actually are accepted. So realistically I think all applicants would need to submit a more detailed application form. There were questions on the application form but I don't

think it was a thorough questioning or a thorough survey asking about our experiences...More detailed and longer questionnaire and even recommendation letters specifically about teaching are needed. The applicants would need to submit recommendation letters from professors or from whoever had actually observed the skills of teaching (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The GTAs had somewhat of a more comprehensive approach to what they expressed was necessary to select GTAs than what was stated by the administrators. However, both the GTAs and administrators were consistent in the fact that there was a need for GTAs who showed academic promise and had the potential to expand the course offerings in the basic undergraduate physical education program. Despite obvious financial and manpower (labor) issues, the GTAs offered their version of what the selection process should entail in the hope that it would help ensure that graduate students chosen to take receive an assistantship were competent in the courses they taught and passionate about providing effective instruction.

GTA evaluation. One of the more influential administrative strategies that the GTAs discussed was the process of teaching evaluation. Findings indicate the GTAs to believe that students were effective evaluators of their teaching (item, #10, $m = 2.69$; item #16, $m = 3.46$). However, the findings also suggest that other means of evaluations were necessary (item # 11, $m = 2.23$) beyond just student or the basic coordinator (item # 12, $m = 3.38$). The findings indicated that peer or faculty evaluations could be useful (item # 14, $m = 2.08$) along with periodical administrative evaluations (item # 15, $m =$

2.54). Overall, the GTAs expressed that evaluation of their teaching was necessary (item #13, $m = 4.38$) and should be done using multiple sources of information.

Currently, student course evaluations are the primary means for the BUPAP coordinator to assess the instructional effectiveness of the GTAs. The form itself asks the student to rate the GTA in several categories as well as provide demographic information about themselves. A copy of the form can be found in Appendix F. Also, the students are provided a blank sheet for written comments to the instructor and subsequently, the BUPAP coordinator. As suggested by the findings, the GTAs acknowledged that student course evaluations were effective measures of their teaching effectiveness. When asked how and who should evaluate their instructions. Rak, a doctoral student supported the use of student evaluations by stating that:

Based on my kids' reaction. It's...if you're late they going to know it and they are going to write it down. If you're not active enough in class, if it's boring, they're going to know it and they're going to write it down. The students...I think so (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Another GTA tied in the use of student course evaluations to ascertaining whether departmental and BUPAP goals were being met:

Did the students get out of the course what they expected to? Did they have fun? Will they carry through...the sport through lifelong pursuit to give them something to do that they are comfortable doing? So student evaluations are important (GTA-Survey Group I).

David, a first-year GTA pointed out the need for the evaluations by the students and a shortcoming of the evaluation process itself. He expressed that there should be more ways of students voicing their opinions by stating the following:

I think those [student comments] are helpful but I don't know that they should be...I think student evaluations should be done...the normal questionnaire is fine but that doesn't necessarily give them a real say-so on or a lot of times those evaluations are busy work. It doesn't give them an opportunity to express the full impact of their experience whether it is positive or negative. But I believe that is the most efficient format and if they did feel so strongly about expressing their opinions then they would have had opportunities to do so during the year (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Multiple sources of evaluation data. However, along with the student evaluations, the GTAs communicated a need for additional sources of evaluations data such as those obtained from observations, peer reviews, and faculty involvement. Several quotations that support this assertion and provide details on how the evaluative process should occur are as follows:

Evaluations should be done in two ways. One, we should have student evaluations of our teaching...I also believe that we need somebody in the faculty...whether it is a specific person hired for that process. We need someone to monitor the GTAs. Somebody that knows what good teaching is, somebody that understands all the activities, whether its racquetball or volleyball or golf. Whatever it is this person needs to understand those

activities also. So they need to be a specialist in a variety of sport activities but I believe they need to come in and watch a GTA teach at least twice. Maybe once in the beginning once in mid-semester to see if they are doing the things that our program says it is suppose to be doing (GTA-Survey Group I).

I think my instruction should be evaluated through observation and class evaluation. There should be either by the department head or the person who is in charge of the department for the GTAs himself or a designated group of people or committee or other TAs should evaluate other's work. All the GTAs should be evaluated on a regular basis. Regular basis I mean at least once a semester if not more often. Maybe once a month or even more often. I think this evaluation would be very, very important (GTA-Survey Group I).

Validity and reliability of student course evaluations. Administrators also questioned the validity and reliability of using the student evaluations as the sole measure of teaching effectiveness. An administrator stated:

I don't think that the students' evaluation forms are particularly effective because most of the students don't even know the names of their teaching assistants. They don't take the subject matter seriously enough to do that. So I don't think that is necessarily a fair evaluation and also I don't necessarily think the students take the evaluations seriously enough to give credible feedback (Administrator Interview).

However, another administrator pointed out the validity of student evaluations if used properly within the context of multiple evaluations:

I very strongly feel that student evaluations should be part of an evaluation process because research has shown that over time they are accurate in showing someone's ability to teach and convey information. The problem with student evaluations that are just given one time and decisions that are made based on one set of evaluations is that it is not enough information.

It needs to be over time to be valid. So I think there needs to be other criteria including classroom assessment procedures, peer evaluation, faculty observations of their teaching. That sort of thing. It should be on multiple aspects (Administrator Interview).

Most importantly, the GTAs and administrators expressed that the evaluation process should be one that led to stronger teaching not as a means of getting rid of bad teachers. An administrator acknowledged the need to take the stance of a mentor to help them be better through evaluation and supervision. He stated:

How would I like to see them evaluated? Either through peer analysis or if we had the administrative time, the basic instruction coordinator could do that. But he simply doesn't have that time in his schedule. That is how I would like to see it done. I would like to see it done not so much to try to determine if they are doing a good job or a bad job. I would like to see it more as a mentoring type of thing. Here is what you do well. Here is what you might consider doing to improve (Administrator Interview).

Interviews and survey data revealed the GTAs and administrators to think that multiple techniques for their evaluations should be used. The GTAs wanted to be observed at least once a semester by an administrative superior or peer because they expressed feedback from such an observation could be helpful in their development as instructors. However, the GTAs also asserted that evaluations and observations could best help them if they were formative in nature and not done to purely determine whether or not they would be allowed to keep their assistantships from one semester to another. Further, an improved supervision/evaluation process could help remove ineffective GTAs. As one GTA pointed out:

A TA receiving poor evaluations should be warned and after repeated warnings, assistantship should be withdrawn and given to others who are willing to teach professionally. I really feel that graduate students once they receive an assistantship can easily keep it; there is no apparent “danger” of losing it, therefore no reinforcement of teaching properly. It is really only up to the TA’s honesty (Survey Response, GTA-Survey Group I).

Class-structure issues. One particular aspect of the BUPAP’s decision-making process that the GTAs would like to have more input into was the structuring and format of the BUPAP courses. This was especially important to them in relation to the number of students allowed to sign-up for their classes and the time allocated per class for instruction. The students-to-teacher ratio found in the classes was cited as very detrimental to the instructional performance of the GTAs. The GTAs expressed that they were very satisfied with the facilities that they had to work in but that too often

administration “packed-out” their classes in an attempt to use the facilities to their capacity, primarily in the racquetball and tennis courses. Marie, a first year GTA remarked:

Decisions to put 38 people in a tennis class are definitely one that affects my instruction. I have 38 students and nine courts...so it's very hard to give instruction...I rely more on instruction at the beginning, just quickly reviewing and then trying to give feedback. Trying to walk around to work individually with them all. But I would kill myself trying to give really great, specific help to them every day because it is a lot of students to try and teach tennis to (The GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Based on field observations, GTAs spent a considerable amount of time moving from one instructional area to another during instruction (for example, racquetball or tennis courts). They expressed that the loss time spent moving among thirty-five to forty students stretched out over multiple courts influenced their skill development, especially in the case of beginning level students. The following diagrams [next page, Diagram 1 and 2] represent the layout of the tennis and racquetball facilities. When asked to list instructional concerns, a respondent to the SGP-BUPAPOC wrote, “My badminton class—not enough room/courts. We have had to play doubles the entire semester” (GTA-Survey Group I). The GTAs suggested that if the numbers were cut, they would provide greater instruction and meet the individual needs of their students. This was seen as a better alternate to having eight to nine smaller groups spread out.

Of similar contention was the set-up of classes in relation to the number of students of the racquetball courts (see corresponding diagram). The GTAs had difficulty

fitting students onto playing areas in order for them to receive enough practice time to gain skills. For example, in racquetball, there were six courts allocated for BUPAP courses. However, the GTAs explained that they would always have thirty or more students in their classes. With just six courts to use, students would have to wait and sit out of activities due to lack of space. The maximum number of students that could safely play racquetball at any one time was four (the game of cutthroat). In practice situation, only two students could safely be on the court at a time. During observations, the GTAs emphasized that this was obviously a situation that needed to be addressed by administration.

Diagram 2

Layout of Tennis Courts taken from Observation Notes

Court 1	Court 2	Court 3	Court 4	Court 5	Court 6	Court 7	Court 8	Court 9
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Note: Approximately 100 meters from C1 to C9

Diagram 3

Layout of Racquetball Courts taken from Observation Notes

Court 1	Court 2	Court 3	Court 4	Court 5	Court 6
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Many of the GTAs expressed that they were unable to give each student the time and attention that they needed in order for them to have sufficient skill development. Many of their frustrations centered on not reaching students in a meaningful way during class time. To sum up, the frustrations of the GTAs with the large numbers of students in their classes, Lisa, a doctoral student stated that the following:

The way that they seem to determine how many they put in a class is based on the facility not on learning... You could do a whole lot more if the numbers were smaller but when you take something like racquetball, tennis, etc when they are signing four per court and then give me then 30-40 students when it is so individual... I find it very frustrating because I want to teach these students and they want to learn it and they need a lot more individual attention than you can give with the numbers that are there and the time set-up (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Course meeting schedule. Again, Lisa discussed the time issues that affected her ability to provide individual instruction to students in order for them to see results when she stated:

You only have forty minutes of actual teaching and when you figure that up it's a minute a student. Two minutes a week if you really just want to look at it number wise. So I think there are too many students in class and I don't think the class set-up time is adequate for instruction... summer classes were great I would tell you that. I really feel like I had gotten somewhere with them and that they had learned and from day 1 to the end there was major difference (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Basic activities courses in the BUPAP program either met Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday for approximately one hour for fifteen weeks. Fitness for Life courses traditionally met Monday, Wednesday, and Friday for one hour over ten weeks. Observations showed that GTAs allocate roughly 5 to 10 minutes before and after class for students to arrive late from their previous classes and to leave for their

next classes. A respondent to the SGP-BUPAPOC expressed displeasure for the necessity of the practice and the need for more time for classes when they wrote: “I feel that in some courses more time should be allowed for class. For example, weight-training meets only twice a week for 40 minutes (subtract 10 minutes from 50 minutes to change) (GTA-Survey Group I).” A discussion as to why this happened indicated that the GTAs routinely started classes late due to their students having to travel from their classes to various parts of the University’s campus via campus transit buses. Secondly, the GTAs allowed the students to leave early so that they could make it to their next class on time. Overall, roughly 10 to twenty minutes were taken away from instruction and given to the students for their travel from previous class to the BUPAP course and again to their next class. This practice was especially true for those courses taught off-campus on the intramural fields (tennis, softball, etc.) or at the bowling facility.

The GTAs had the opportunity to teach their courses in state-of-the-art facilities. In fact the facilities, especially the student activity center, were mentioned in several media sources in recent years as one of the best in higher education. However, the GTAs expressed that due to these large and high-tech facilities, the program administrators “pack-them-out” and allowed the number of students to get too large to manage and instruct effectively. Several of the GTAs expressed that given more time with the students per class period or with smaller students, they could have seen better skill acquisition in even the students with initial low level of skills; however, with the current set-up this was nearly impossible.

Program Decision-making Opportunities

The GTAs had very little input into the decision-making processes of the program at the macro level. Most of their control was at the classroom level where they had relatively complete control of the content and instruction. The following table provides evidence of this perspective.

Table 6

Mean and Standard Deviations of Responses to Survey Item 18 of the SGP-BUPAPOC
I perceive in relation to the GTA evaluation process...

Survey Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
18	Allows me to have a voice in decision-making processes as they relate to the GTA program	2.54	.78

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Teddy, a doctoral student, discussed the differences between departmental and classroom control as follows:

Teaching level, I do what I want. Decision-making in the teaching level is mine. There are no restrictions. There are no boundaries. There are no checks. How ever I want to teach it is how I am going to teach it. Contrary to the program, I have very limited decision-making on what I teach, when I teach, where I teach, apart from how it [course assignments] goes around my academic schedule...I have no decision on what I teach, when I teach or how I teach it. Unless I really go lobby and then make enemies that way. So apart from my academic schedule that's it (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Interviews and observations suggested that, although limited in scope, the GTAs were able to influence at least the courses that were offered by the department. An administrator explained:

In so far as course offering...if I have a graduate student that comes to me and says, "we aren't offering judo or karate and I can teach that". I will put judo or karate in for him. I had one come to me this semester and requested that we put in an advance weight-training for next semester that he felt very comfortable in teaching. So I did cancel one of the beginnings weight-training and put in the advance class in. So they have input that way (Administrator Interview).

Further, the data point out GTAs to have little or exercise little input in the decision-making process of the program such as course schedules, who taught what, and the extent in which they could control what courses they were required to teach. The GTAs stressed that outside of the submission of their academic schedules each semester and the initial application sheet that listed the classes they felt comfortable teaching, they had little input or decision-making power. However, they emphasized that on a class level they had total control of how their class was structured, grading, course content, and other aspects of the instruction. They expressed that the administrators did not supervise or monitor their instruction and that they were, for better or worse, left to their own devices as far as running their classes. The administrators did express that the GTAs were allowed a lot of autonomy in how they conducted their classes but that they also had the opportunity to ask for the inclusion of new courses that they were interested in teaching and so forth.

Perspectives of the Information of the BUPAP

In this section of the paper, the focus is on communications relevant to BUPAP, as well as the types of information that were expressed as being important by the participants in this study. The lines of communication in the BUPAP were primarily top-down from the administration to the GTAs. Secondly, GTAs communicated significant amounts of information between themselves. Two primary types of information were seen as important within the context of this program. The first was the initial application materials that were used to not only decide who would be allowed to receive an assistantship but also who would teach which courses. Lastly, the course evaluations of each BUPAP class, which were utilized to rate the overall instructional effectiveness of the GTA, were expressed as being important.

Lines of communication. The first line of communication consisted of placement of memos in the GTAs' mailboxes as well as mass e-mails sent via a departmental list-serve. The information consisted of messages traditionally concerned with logistical matters such as deadlines for submission of grade reports or academic schedules for the following semester. An example of a typical e-mail and departmental memo can be found in the Appendix G. Usually, the information was sent from the administrative staff through the secretary to the GTAs. Specifically, the academic schedules of the GTAs were seen as important information communicated between the GTAs and the BUPAP coordinator. Combined with their responses to the PRTC checklist, the academic schedules of the GTAs were used to assign courses for the upcoming semester. The basic program coordinator asked for the GTAs' academic schedules in early October via a mass e-mail and written notice in the GTAs' departmental mailboxes. GTAs saw

academic schedules as the primary source of information between themselves and the administration. Other than the submission of their academic schedules, the GTAs explained that they had very little interaction with the BUPAP's administration, especially the basic program coordinator.

The second line of communication was found to be primarily informal and between GTAs. Seemingly the information relevant to instruction was the primary content communicated. Issues such as the availability of equipment for classes or changes in the instructional settings were quickly communicated to GTAs that would be affected via e-mail or notes in their departmental mailboxes. Secondly, informal discussions between GTAs in respective academic departments and office spaces were vital to information being exchanged and providing needed instructional support.

Application materials. The application for admission to a graduate program in the School of HHP contained a section called the Personal Rating of Teaching Competency (PRTC) that inquired about the ability of the applicant to teach in the BUPAP (Appendix E). Whether or not the applicant could teach in the BUPAP had little to no weight on whether or not they would be admitted to the graduate program. However, it did affect to some degree whether or not they would be offered a teaching assistantship as explained earlier. What made this part of the application especially relevant was that it asks the applicant what physical activities they were most comfortable teaching (i.e. swimming, bowling, etc). The section listed fifty-four courses offered by the department and asks the applicant to score themselves on a scale of "0" meaning the applicant felt they could not teach the course to "2" meaning the applicant had the knowledge, background, and experience to teach the course effectively. From the applicant's responses to this portion

of the application, the basic program coordinator provided the graduate student with courses that the student would be comfortable teaching. The purpose of filling out the PRTC checklist along with having the GTA go to a departmental and university-wide orientation was to ensure that the GTA was prepared to teach their assigned courses. As the following table indicates the majority of the GTAs in the BUPAP expressed that they were prepared to teach their courses.

Table 7

GTA-Survey Group I: Responses to the Survey Item #7, Do you feel adequately prepared to teach your assigned courses?

Yes	No
14	2

However, this feeling of preparedness was found to be due to things other than the departmental and institutional orientations. These orientations were designed to serve as the primary socialization mechanisms into the departmental and university teaching culture. Through interviews and responses to survey items, the primary reasons that the GTAs (primarily from GTA-Interview/Observation Group) reasoned that they were prepared to teach were that their backgrounds provided information necessary to teach the courses. Secondly, the basic program coordinator assigned them courses that matched their instructional background and expertise.

Background provided adequate information to teach courses. Many of the GTAs described themselves as adequately prepared to teach their assigned courses due to their athletic or educational backgrounds rather than any training provided by the BUPAP. The GTAs in this study asserted that they had played an assortment of organized and recreational sports as adolescents and undergraduates. Secondly, many of them were

either currently or recently coaches of the sports they were asked to teach. Lastly, the GTAs expressed that many of them had a teaching experience in some capacity or were education majors. These experiences were seen as being most influential in helping them teach their courses despite a lack of instructional support and seemingly ineffective pre-semester orientation. For example, two GTAs affirmed that their previous teaching and coaching experiences were important to their feelings of preparedness as instructors. For example, one stated that:

Yeah I feel very prepared. I feel extremely comfortable with it. I did so much teaching and have been involved in teaching and coaching my whole life so I feel completely prepared. I didn't play competitively [tennis]...I was a tennis education instructor at a camp for two months and I have just been involved in the game for a long time (GTA-Survey Group I).

Another GTA explained that her previous teaching experience was vital to handling instructional duties and responsibilities. Lisa wrote:

I felt I was but only because of my teaching experience. As far as coming here those two days we spend I don't feel like there...I mean I could have read through the handouts we were given and figured out 90% of it...But I know when I came in the first year it was little things like where is the equipment, what do we have, what do we do. You are thrown to the dogs. I would like to say luckily I spent time with the dogs so it wasn't as detrimental to me as it might have been to some others. Even though not many people will probably voice that but I do think there is little or no

preparation. You are just put in there and you go for it. I mean the logistics of the paperwork is explained but as far as teaching, no (Lisa, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

BUPAP assigned courses matched background. Having an athletic or educational background from which to draw information or instructional strategies relevant to their assigned BUPAP courses was extremely helpful. The GTAs also expressed that it was important for the BUPAP coordinator to assign them course that were consistent with their backgrounds. For example, a GTA who played softball as an undergraduate found it particularly easier to teach softball course in relation to badminton course. As explained earlier, when a prospective graduate student applied to the graduate program, they were asked to fill out the PRTC that ascertained what basic activities they could comfortable teaching (see Appendix E). This instrument along with the academic schedule of the student was used to develop their teaching schedule by the basic program coordinator. The graduate students expressed that they are asked usually to teach courses they feel comfortable with and that matches their backgrounds. Again, despite the recognized shortcoming of the orientation and lack of instructional support the GTAs were able to bridge the gap due to being matched effectively with courses in line with their backgrounds. The following table demonstrates the point that the GTAs acknowledged that their teaching assignments matched their backgrounds and expertise

Table 8

GTA-Survey Group I: Responses to Survey Item #11, Do you feel that course assignments matched expertise and experiences?

Yes	Somewhat	No
12	4	0

Several GTAs corroborated the notion that they were assigned courses that matched their expertise and experiences by stating that:

Yes: I feel confident teaching fitness and weight training classes. They match both my academic and personal background. I do think that I could teach a few other classes, but I don't think the classes I was assigned were above me (GTA-Survey Group I).

Yes. Expertise for me means having been previously exposed to a skill. I find myself to be capable of teaching and more importantly demonstrating and analyzing the skills required for racquetball and several other sports and activities (GTA-Survey Group I).

Yes. I was given teaching assignments in areas where I felt comfortable/had prior experiences----I had asked to teach specific activity classes I was given those assignments. Communication with the basic program supervisor was important when teaching assignments were being determined (GTA-Survey Group I).

When their assignments did not match their expertise and background the GTAs relied on lobbying and exchanging with each other to ensure that they received classes they felt comfortable teaching. Once again, the connections between GTAs and the relationships formed were used to take away the pressure of teaching a class they were not comfortable teaching due to the lack of preparation or a mismatch in the teaching course versus their backgrounds. Alexander, a doctoral student, discussed the practice that ensured that he got courses he was confident in teaching:

The reason why I feel prepared, I would rather use the word confident is because I specifically take only those courses to teach that I am feeling confident with...I have felt that I have the teaching experience to do a good job. Confidence means I feel prepared and another thing is if I am just designated to or assigned to teach a course that I am not confident with...theorize that I would receive a basketball course to teach I would just say no or I would just trade it with someone who I know can teach basketball better because the way that I am thinking that I need to do a good job and if I know that I can't do a good job I would just give it to someone who I know would do good job. I can do a good job for another course. So that's the reason (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

However, several of the GTAs talked about times when they were not prepared to teach their courses despite help from other GTAs, backgrounds in sports and/or lobbying. This was consistently expressed by first-year GTAs. John Anderson, a first-year GTA reflected on what he would have liked to get out of orientation as follows:

I had little or no teaching experience prior to coming to University. I also had no teaching/education classes prior to coming to University. Even though I was placed in classes that I could based on my knowledge, teach it would have been much easier for me if I had been shown/told/demonstrated to what I was expected to teach, how class had been structured and taught in the past and other helpful information prior to beginning my teaching at University (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

As suggested by these findings, the PRTC formed the basis for the assignments of courses in the BUPAP by the basic program coordinator. However, another factor that influenced what courses were assigned to the GTAs were their academic schedules, which often restricted what courses could be given to the GTAs. More important to the perceived effectiveness of the GTAs in their teaching was how closely the assigned courses matched their teaching expertise, educational and athletic backgrounds, and ability of the GTAs to find instructional support primarily from their fellow GTAs.

Process of GTA course evaluations. The GTAs and the administrators saw course evaluations to be important sources of information. Students evaluated the GTAs at the end of the semester in the BUPAP. The evaluation form asked for demographic information as well as the student's perceptions of the effectiveness of the GTA's instruction in relation to the goals of the class as expressed by the GTA, the course description, and often the perceptions of the student. An example of the evaluation form can be found in Appendix F. The form itself consisted of eighteen questions, fourteen of which asked the student to rate the GTA on a scale of "excellent-outstanding-superior" to "poor-inadequate-unsatisfactory". Examples of the items were as follows: "your instructor criticized effectively and appropriately" and "your instructor demonstrated an apparent knowledge of material relevant to this course". Also, the students were given the opportunity to provide written comments in the teaching of the GTA.

Through observations and interviews, the GTAs and administrators expressed the reliance on student evaluations as the primary means of assessing the teaching effectiveness of the GTAs. The data point to student evaluations as being a necessary and effective part of the evaluation process by the GTAs. However, the GTAs expressed that

student evaluations should not be the only measure of their instructional effectiveness. The GTAs thought that additional formal observations and evaluations by peers, the basic program coordinator, and/or faculty were necessary as discussed earlier. Most importantly, the GTAs and administrators acknowledged that the evaluation process should be one that led to stronger teaching not as a means of getting rid of bad teachers. An administrator expressed, there is a “moral commitment” to help them to be better through evaluation and supervision by stating that:

Once we have made the commitment to them we are committed to them for at least the full year. There is kind of a moral commitment that if they are doing satisfactory work we are committed to take care of them and then try to continue to help us in some way for the two years for M.A. people, etc (Administrator Interview).

Most importantly, the GTAs expressed that they had difficulty understanding what exactly the statistics that were returned to them in the middle of the next semester meant (see Appendix H for example of data). The GTAs explained that by returning their evaluation in the middle of the following semester they could not grow as instructors because all suggestions or concerns were being communicated to them too late to make changes for the upcoming semester. They wanted an opportunity to meet with an administrator that could explain to them their strengths and weaknesses as instructors as well as provide them with suggestions for improvement. Several GTAs expressed that in its current form, the evaluation responses did very little to help them understand where they stood as instructors and to a lesser extent what areas of their instruction they should focus on to improve. The GTAs stressed that with at least one meeting with the

administrators concerning their evaluations, they could make significant changes to improve their teaching.

Perspectives on BUPAP Socialization

The socialization process of an institution or department is the primary means of communicating the unwritten rules and behaviors that govern the organization. Often, the perceptions of these messages provide a look into what is appropriate and inappropriate within the context of that organization. This section will first discuss the role of the BUPAP's pre-semester GTA orientation and recommendations from the GTAs for its improvement. Then a description of the perceptions of the GTAs and administration on what a GTA should know in order to do well in the BUPAP will be provided. Next, the perceptions of how an "effective GTA" is characterized will be examined. Lastly, the GTAs' perceptions of their instructional strengths and weaknesses will be highlighted.

Pre-semester BUPAP orientation format and content. The BUPAP holds an orientation for GTAs each Fall several days prior to the start of the academic year. It serves as the primary socializing mechanism for new GTAs and it is the only formal session that the GTAs and administrators meet. The format of the orientation is primarily lecture-oriented and focuses on logistical matters such as how to properly do grades and where to find equipment for classes. The BUPAP orientation runs concurrently with the university-wide orientation that is held on just one day. GTAs from the BUPAP program are strongly encouraged to attend the university-wide session.

The GTAs (primarily GTA-Observation Interview Group) acknowledged that the orientation was the primary means of preparing them for their instruction. The GTAs described the orientation as, although helpful, not effective at preparing them for the

instructional difficulties of the classroom as indicated by their responses to survey item #32 ($m = 3.46$). The primary information communicated in the orientation dealt with logistical matters. Lisa a doctoral student stated that:

Well, the first year it was somewhat helpful just as far as logistics go. I mean most of it was given in a notebook form that with common sense you could figure out most of it. I thought a lot of time was wasted on some things that could have been just said and moved on. A lot of things were repeated the second day that we talked about on the first. I do not see any sense in returning every year and taking the same thing over and over... I feel like more should be done on actually teaching the different areas, connecting you with resources, etc. to assist you. I think there are some people who could use just some basics in teaching (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Several GTAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group) mentioned how helpful it would have been to get more teaching related information during the orientations in the interviews. They asserted that the logistical information would come as they got acquainted to their surroundings but the issues within the classroom were not addressed in any depth. Secondly, they expressed that orientation was meant to be more than just getting to know the campus and the layout of the Student Physical Activities Center but it was also meant to be an orientation to teaching at the college level. John Anderson, a first-year GTA talked about his perceptions of orientation:

But we went over just kind of general procedures. Just kind of some up keep on you know what the attendance sheets looked like. The different

roll sheets, and when we get...you know we would have a preliminary, and a confirmation, and a second confirmation. We kind of went over those things and we talked about add. People that would add and people that would drop. Things like that. Just the kind of basic mechanics of getting into and out of class. Some very basic grading procedures (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

He continued by asserting that there was a definite lack in the content of the orientation being instructional strategies and issues within the classroom:

And I am trying to remember... I don't think we ever really talked much about what we were actually supposed to try and get across in each class. I would like to know a little bit more about that (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Via the open-ended questionnaire (Part I of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Education Program's Organizational Culture) another GTA discussed the weaknesses of the orientation and the need for more instructional information rather than just general logistical stuff:

The weaknesses are: it does not prepare new TAs for teaching and most related issues. I remember when I started here; I was assigned to teach two different courses. I didn't receive any information about what to cover in those courses/content/how to run the classes/instructional and management strategies/how to relate to the students, if practical and/or theoretical aspects should be involved, how and how much, no

information about what to write a syllabus, what to include, how to design the entire class (Survey Response, GTA- Survey Group I).

The respondent continued by discussing the differences in course development between their home country and United State higher education institutions:

In my country we don't use syllabus at the college level, so when first time in U.S.A. I didn't even know what a syllabus was. The only reason that I did not have significant difficulties with teaching at the very beginning at University is that I already had teaching experience/4 semester/from another American institution. Otherwise, I am sure I would have been in serious trouble. I don't see the way newcoming foreign TAs with no U.S. teaching experience can figure out what to do and what are the expectations. This entire issue, paying attention on each and every small detail should be covered by the GTA orientation. And as I mentioned, most of these things are not even mentioned (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The GTAs expressed that too much emphasis was placed on logistical matters rather than on more relevant instructional matters. However, the orientation served one vital role in that it allowed the GTAs to meet one another and develop relationships that would later be used to develop lines of communication for information and support. It was during the orientation and subsequent classes that the GTAs developed instructional support networks primarily along two lines: a) department and b) courses taught. However, these lines were seen as more readily developed based on departmental

connections and office co-occupation than the courses that were taught by the same groups of GTAs from different departments.

Survival advice. During the interview process and via an open-ended survey item (Part I of the Survey of GTA Perceptions of a Basic Undergraduate Physical Education Program's Organizational Culture) both GTAs and administrators were asked, "What information is necessary to excel/survive in this program?" Again, the GTAs and administrators were consistent with each others' perspectives on what information was needed for GTAs to survive/excel in the program. The findings suggest that both GTAs and administrators focused on: content knowledge and obtaining instructional resources. Two GTAs, both doctoral students stated that:

They need to know their subject matter. If they don't know it they didn't need to have checked it off on their little form or they need to feel strong enough about their teaching that they know that they know where to find subject matter to study and make use of it. I would tell them to connect with second-year students. Since there is not established mentoring program then create your own. These people are here to help, you know take advantage of them. Ask them and connect with them, etc (Lisa, (GTA-Observation/Interview Group)).

I think they need to know...have knowledge of the class that they are teaching or where they can get that type of knowledge...Sort of the basic of teaching especially for a skill type class. For fitness type classes understanding the basic concepts behind them. I had an exercise physiology background so I think that is a good step for somebody

especially teaching the fitness type classes to have some knowledge more than just what's in the FFL book. They need to know where they can get the information. Who the other GTAs are. I think they need to know who taught the class before like more specifically who taught the class before that way if they have questions they know who specifically they can go to (Luke, GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The administrators also voiced their opinions on what a GTA needed to know and they were consistent with the GTAs' perspectives. An administrator provided a summary of the general consensus of what the administrators thought was necessary to for GTAs to know:

I would think that they would have to have extensive subject matter knowledge and that allows them to have multiple ways to present that information. I would also think that they would have to have extensive knowledge of the students...motivating students in particular. By being able to connect the subject matter to the individual or at least group-oriented needs of the student...understanding how to teach the content. Knowing different activities that might be appropriate, different kinds of instructional aids or innovations that might be helpful. So yeah I would say those are the three areas: knowledge of the subject, knowledge of students, and knowledge of teaching the subject (Administrator Interview).

The following figure provides a summary of the comments and perspectives offered by GTAs and administrators in relation to how to excel in the program. It has been titled "Survival Advice" due to the respondents expressing that by doing these

things one could perform their job at a high level without sacrificing their academics or putting stress on themselves in the classroom. Often this advice was focused on information that novice GTAs should adhere to.

Figure 1

Survival Advice from GTAs and Administrators

SURVIVAL ADVICE	
1.	Have a plan
2.	Stay organized
3.	Recognize various levels of motivation and skill in students
4.	Be thorough (especially with grading and attendance)
5.	Take your teaching seriously
6.	Know that teaching is a process and others struggle also
7.	Treat the students like adults
8.	Keep academic demands and teaching demands in balance
9.	Develop a passion for teaching
10.	Take courses (from supervisor) that you can handle
11.	Know your subject matter
12.	Try new instructional strategies
13.	Locate and utilize instructional resources (don't reinvent the wheel)
14.	Connect with other GTAs and faculty for instructional support.

Perceptions of effective GTAs. Both the GTAs and administrators expressed characteristics of what an “effective GTA” was supposed to do or should perform. In consideration of what an effective GTA should do, the GTAs and administrators were consistent with respect to their characteristics. An administrator pointed out that an effective GTA would be:

A person who is highly organized, who has a definite plan. Who knows exactly what they want to accomplish throughout the semester. A person who knows how they would go about trying to achieve those objectives. A person who can distance themselves, since many of our teaching assistants are only a year or two older than some of the students they teach. I think a

person that's able to put themselves in a role of leadership, as opposed to just being one of another student, teaching students. And also I think one who gives a high priority to the teaching assignment along, with their academic program (Administrator Interview).

Another administrator expressed among other things, the need for "effective GTAs" to maximize the opportunities for learning in their classes. He explained that:

First of all, I think they would take their responsibilities seriously. That means they would come to class prepared. They would come to class on time. They would look for unique ways of conveying subject matter. They would get to know who their students were. They would teach the class until class was over. They would spend more time teaching and less time with the students playing an activity (Administrator Interview).

Lastly, an institutional administrator who served as a leader on campus-wide GTA related activities voiced her expectations of GTAs by articulating that:

In many ways our really good graduate assistants aren't distinguishable from our good faculty. A lot of undergraduates actually do not realize that there is a difference. So the traits that we expect in our good teaching faculty, graduate assistants ought to develop those traits by the time they leave the graduate program. Again it should be developmental because everybody has to start somewhere with teaching...Respect for students, high expectations, the understanding of the different learning styles and aspects. Interacting with students, respecting them as learners, all of those

traits I think graduate students and faculty should have (Administrator Interview).

The GTAs during interviews asserted that they were able to understand somewhat what it meant to be an effective GTA within this program from conversations with administrators and fellow GTAs. These conversations took place primarily during the pre-semester orientation and informal discussions with other (usually more experienced) GTAs over the course of the semester. Thus the GTAs echoed a lot of what the administrators said about an effective GTA. Willa, a second-year GTA commented on being an “effective GTA” by stating that:

I think the first thing is you have to view your job as part of your career development or part of your professional practice. That is very, very important. If you just view that kind of teaching work as the way that you make through your school or the way “I have to do it in order to get my degree. This is one of the last steps. I have to do it”. You won’t enjoy the teaching and also you won’t do your job very well...That is my work.

Also you need to create a learning environment more enjoyable so the student can really enjoy this class so they think, “this is really good”. They will tell somebody else, somebody else comes to your class and they still have that positive experience so they can continue to participation (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Lisa, a doctoral GTA, supported this perspective when asked what she thought an effective GTA should do. She described one as:

An effective GTA would be defined the same as an effective teacher. An effective teacher: a) should be prepared for class. Should have objectives of what they are trying to cover. They should be able to see what the students have when they come in. To be able to make them work rather than to make a blanket...this is going to be done in every class I teach.

You got to first know where your students are and be able to either through formal or informal assessment determine where your students are in regards to whatever that activity is. Then be able to find ways to meet the needs of these students. To make them progress to a level that they can and will hopefully be encouraged to participate in these activities later (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Effective GTAs as described by the participants were consistent across pools.

Below is a summary of the characteristics that the GTAs thought were necessary in order to be an effective instructor in the program.

Figure 2

Perceptions of the Characteristics of an Effective GTA

Effective GTAs Characteristics	
1.	Good planner of lessons and tasks for students
2.	Flexible in approach to meeting needs of students
3.	Personable
4.	Knowledgeable about activity they are teaching beyond basic rules and regulations
5.	Able to effectively communicate ideas, information, concepts, etc.
6.	Able to perform activity they are teaching to some extent
7.	Passionate about teaching
8.	Organized
9.	Able to be friendly with students without being their friend
10.	Willing to get to know the students
11.	Able to provide relevant and effective feedback
12.	Able to design effective learning experiences and relevant experiences in the classroom
13.	Patient
14.	Sensitive
15.	Professional
16.	High expectations for student learning

GTAs' rating of teaching effectiveness. When asked about their teaching ability the overwhelming response was that the GTAs were confident with their ability to teach their courses. The following table demonstrates this point.

Table 9

GTA-Survey Group I: Perception of Teaching Effectiveness

Average	Above-Average	Excellent
6	6	4

Overall, as responses to survey items 37-45 of the SGP-BUPAPOC demonstrate the GTAs were very confident in their ability to perform their jobs. They asserted that they knew what it took to be successful as a GTA (item #37, $m = 1.69$) and that they were a valued part of the School of HHP's instructional staff (item # 45, $m = 2.31$). From the semi-structured interviews and responses to Part I of SGP-BUPAPOC the GTAs were

asked what their strengths and weaknesses were as instructors. Their comments are summarized in Figure 3.

Figure 3

GTA Perceptions of Instructional Strengths and Struggles

What do you excel at as an instructor?	What do you struggle with as an instructor?
Planning course	Balancing personal experiences with expectation for students
Assessing skill levels of students	Paperwork, especially with the FFL classes
Developing relevant drills	Teaching and planning for various courses per semester
Being a resource not just a teacher	Developing effective drills and activities within the context of facilities, class size, student motivation
Showing patience and caring for students	Meeting the individual instructional needs of each student
Getting to know the students	Getting relevant information to my students (saturating them)
Controlling the climate of the class	Being too personable (close in age)
Instilling a sense of doing well into the Students	Motivating students to come to class on time and prepared
Individualizing the course	Balancing academic load vs. teaching load

Perspectives on the Leadership of the BUPAP

In relation to who was considered the instructional leader of the BUPAP, the GTAs (primarily GTA-Survey Group I & GTA-Observation/Interview Group) and administrators were consistent in that the basic program coordinator *should be* the leader. In fact, of the nine administrators asked to take part in this study, only five volunteered. The primary reason for the others to not take part was due to lack of knowledge about the BUPAP and the administrative processes associated with selecting, training, and

supporting GTAs within the program. However, as suggested by interviews and survey data, it was clear that the basic program coordinator was the instructional leader on paper but not seen as such by the GTAs via action. It was also clear that faculty had little interaction with the GTAs in relation to their instruction and did not take part in the pre-semester orientation that occurred annually. The GTAs viewed their fellow colleagues as the most important sources of support in the BUPAP and the primary means of gaining instructional support. The following section will discuss: a) the functions of the basic program coordinator, b) perceptions of the basic program coordinator as an instructional leader by the GTAs, and c) the GTA support network.

Basic program coordinator functions. The formal leadership of the BUPAP was primarily seen as the basic program coordinator. This individual's job responsibilities included developing the instructional schedules of the GTAs in the basic program as well as those of the faculty. The basic program coordinator also played a significant role in who is allowed to obtain an assistantship upon applying to the graduate program. Moreover, the basic program coordinator served as the primary socialization agent as a result of being responsible for coordinating of the pre-semester orientation as well as the primary resource distributor (i.e. equipment, classroom assignments). Other administrators who took part in this research study expressed that the coordinator was the individual responsible for the overall coordination of the BUPAP and the primary source of information about it. Further, fellow administrators concluded that the basic program coordinator was to supervise the GTAs, provide mentorship, take part in the formal evaluation of the GTAs, as well as provide instructional resources as needed.

GTA perceptions of the basic program coordinator. The GTAs expressed that although approachable and quick to provide assistance, the basic program coordinator had little interaction with them in relation to their instruction. They confirmed that there hadn't been any observations or conferences about their teaching between themselves and the basic program coordinator even in relation to discussing the results of their formal student evaluations. The findings in table 1 (found in Appendix C) illustrate that the GTAs characterized the basic program coordinator as not being their primary role model for their instruction (item #1, $m = 3.69$). However, they did mostly agree that the basic program coordinator was accessible for help (item #5, $m = 3.77$) and provided adequate instructional resources (item # 2, $m = 2.23$). Their responses also suggested that the GTAs wanted the basic program coordinator to take a more active role in supervising them (item # 3, $m = 2.38$) and (item #9, $m = 2.54$) and providing constructive feedback to improve their instruction (item #6, $m = 3.92$).

The GTAs confirmed that the basic program coordinator was there primarily to provide them with equipment they needed and to coordinate the pre-semester orientation, which did little to prepare them for instruction. When asked who the instructional leader of the program was, many cited the coordinator as the leader on paper but not in action. Chad, a third-year doctoral student expressed the lack of supervision and mentorship offered by the “instructional leader” of the basic physical education program. He articulated that:

It's got to be the program director. He is the one who sets up who is going to teach what but short of that there is really not a lot of what I would call leadership. You are given an assignment and you take care of that

assignment...that teaching assignment. It's kind of funny the way it works, where you have this leader who gives you this assignment but then there is really not a lot of feedback after you're given the assignment...as to what's working, what's not working. There are no visits to your class to see how things are going. So there is not a lot of evaluation that is taking place. There is not a lot of evaluation done by the program coordinator or by done by other experienced GTAs (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

The GTAs expressed that the basic program coordinator interacted very little with them in the context of instructional leadership, including mentoring, supervision, and/or evaluating their teaching. Lisa, a doctoral student noted the lack of a visible leader to which she or the other GTAs could turn to. She expressed that:

From my understanding, Mr. Z is the man. I haven't had any input with anybody else but him. I don't think we have any really. I don't see any leadership roles taking place from that. You [the interviewer] are the man right now on paper [TA Mentor], I know if I need to talk to you I can but actually I think there are individuals of us who take the leadership role and like I say I have had people come to me and ask...in some ways that could be my age or experience or whatever I think I take leadership with some people. In some ways Teddy has but as far as actually...people who are paid to be in that role I would say Mr. Z is just about it (GTA-Observation/Interview Group).

Marie, a first year GTA who faces the prospects of having to get a better paying teaching position for the upcoming academic year discussed the frustration of not having

formed a professional relationship with the graduate coordinator/supervisor. She explained that:

On paper I know who... I have to write down on all my applications who the supervisor is...that's another thing that I am concerned about is that on the applications that I am filling out now for school systems they want to know who my supervisor is now. So I put his name down...if they call him he doesn't know a thing about my teaching. He's never seen me teach before, ever. So I don't know what that is going to be like. I honestly get most of my information from other graduate assistants here and a couple of my professors. I don't interact with the supervisor at all unless I need equipment really. (GTA-Observation/Interview Group)

The GTAs expressed that their relationship with the basic program coordinator was distant and detached. Responses to a survey item that asked the GTAs (GTA-Survey Group I) to describe their relationship with the basic program coordinator included the following:

*Non-existent. I have absolutely no interaction with the program coordinator. I don't feel like he is accessible or very helpful.

*Distant—Don't know much about him. I have been to ask for equipment, though and it's been fine.

These findings suggest that, the relationship the GTAs had with the basic program coordinator was limited. This relationship was firmly based on interaction relevant to their ability and responsibilities associated with teaching their assigned courses. As they GTAs emphasized, they went to the basic program coordinator primarily for equipment,

to get instructional resources (books, etc.), and to deal with issues related to courses assignments. Along with this the finding the GTAs wanted to interact within the context of a supervisory role, which was seen as aiding them in developing instructional skills.

GTA support network. Based on the survey data, the GTAs were somewhat ambivalent about the role of the basic program coordinator and his impact as an instructional leader. However, the interview data made it clear that the GTAs thought that the basic program coordinator did not provide sufficient mentorship or instructional support outside of distributing equipment. The GTAs frequently used multiple sources of instructional support from within and outside of the BUPAP. The primary sources for instructional support were fellow GTAs and other graduate students. The following table illustrates this point.

Table 10

GTA-Survey Group II: Sources of Instructional Support

The Supervisor	Faculty (within dept.)	Faculty (outside dept.)	Non-GTA Graduate Students	Other GTAs	Multiple Sources	Other
0	1	0	1	2	9	0

Often, the GTAs mentioned especially the new ones, the need for mentoring and support from other GTAs as well as administration. In regards to mentorship, they expressed that the best mentorship and support came from more senior GTAs not faculty or administrators. When asked who the instructional leaders in the program were, Trix, a first-year GTA, stated that:

Ph.D. students definitely. They were the first ones who came to me and passed by my office on at least twice a week saying, “how are things going?” and “how can I help you?” I think that has been the most help so far. (GTA-Observation/Interview Group)

Bob, a doctoral student and a first semester GTA explained fellow GTAs served as a valuable source of information and instructional ideas:

One of the more significant factors in my perceived success during this semester was the contact with other experienced GTAs. They are a wonderful resource for knowledge and ideas, including how to reach students, what works and does not work, and behaviors that make life a little less hectic. (GTA-Observation/Interview Group)

The above quotations provided indicate that the GTAs, especially more experienced GTAs, served as the role models and mentors for the lesser experienced ones. They often exchanged syllabi and assessment tools with each other. The GTAs who were interviewed (GTA-Observation/Interview Group) expressed that they often discussed their teaching with each other during informal gatherings in their academic classes or during their free time. Annually, the department asks GTAs to submit their syllabi to be kept in a departmental folder for other GTAs to use. However, the GTAs interviewed acknowledged that more often than not, the folder has very little useable documents in it for their classes.

Summary of Findings

Using the organizational culture framework, various perspectives of the BUPAP were found. The environment in which the GTAs were employed was seen as being collegial and supportive primarily due to the instructional support network comprised of GTAs and fellow graduate students. No clear mission statement or expectations for instructional excellence were found within the BUPAP. Information within the BUPAP was communicated mostly between GTAs along this support network and it focused

mainly on instructional matters. Other forms of information seen as important within the BUPAP were the student course evaluations as well as the GTA application materials.

The pre-semester orientation was the only formal meeting between the GTAs, their peers, and BUPAP administrators. Due to its overall focus on logistical issues findings suggest the orientation was ineffective at preparing GTAs for their instructional responsibilities.

The instructional leader of the BUPAP was seen as the basic program coordinator due to the authority associated with the position. However, the GTAs looked to their colleagues and peers as sources of instructional support rather than the basic program coordinator.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this research was to further previous examinations of the perceived and constructed relationships between institutions of higher education and graduate teaching assistants (GTA). The results of this study both support and extend existing knowledge concerning the labor issues associated with being a GTA. More specifically, this research examined the manner in which the organizational culture (Tierney, 1988) of the Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Program (BUPAP) of a southern university impacted the attitudes and perceptions of its employees (GTAs) relative to their socialization, development, and instructional training. Of most importance is the balancing act of the BUPAP to ensure that it provides quality educational experiences to undergraduates who were taking courses directed by GTAs as well as providing a quality experience (i.e., training, preparation) for the GTAs as they matriculate through the university (Wert, 1998).

Graduate teaching assistantships are critical to the functioning of institutions of higher education and to the preparation of the future professorate of any academic field (Jennings, 1987; Curzan & Damour, 2000). Graduate teaching assistantships serve as a means of providing quality education to a growing number of undergraduate, and as a way of learning skills relative to their work as future scholars and/or practitioners of a chosen discipline (Rhoads, 1997; Bransetter & Handlesman, 2000). Graduate students viewed the assistantships to be primary means for them to adequately finance their

studies and to develop skills related to future their career endeavors (Sell, 1987; Poole, 1991; Smith & Kalivoda, 1998). Consequently, there is a complex relationship of “give and take” that has many institutions of higher education currently finding themselves reevaluating the role of the GTA and the obligations and responsibilities of graduate programs in meeting the developmental needs of graduate students. However, in recent years, a vast majority of the attention paid to GTAs has centered on their effectiveness as instructors and how that relates to the overall educational missions of colleges and universities.

Central to this discussion of the findings and the subsequent implications and recommendations is the question, “is the BUPAP a training program for GTAs or is it primarily an example of a labor organization designed primarily to meet the instructional needs of the University?” Findings from this study demonstrated that the BUPAP did not take an active role in the preparation and training of its GTAs and did not take the necessary steps to ensure the quality of instruction that they provided. As the findings show, few measures were identified as “adequate” with regards to the quality of undergraduate instruction that students encountered. In addition this lack of “quality assurance”, it was demonstrated that the GTAs were not exposed to training and developmental experiences that could go far in preparing them for their instructional duties.

The following sections will identify the measures taken by the BUPAP to meet the aforementioned objectives as acknowledged by both departmental and institutional administrators as well as by GTAs in the BUPAP. First, a brief summary of the major findings in relation to the guiding research questions will be presented. Then the

implications of these findings will be discussed in light of existing relevant literature. Specifically, three areas will be examined: a) BUPAP supervision practices, b) GTA training and preparation and c) GTA evaluation processes. Next will be implications for these findings and, finally, recommendations as well as future areas of research will be provided.

The first research question asked how the culture of the BUPAP was defined and communicated throughout the organization by GTAs and departmental administrators. GTAs provided several perspectives to describe the environment of the BUPAP. According to the participants, the environment was considered collegial and supportive. The GTAs expressed that they could find support for their instruction from fellow GTAs primarily and the administration and faculty of the BUPAP if necessary. GTAs also expressed that autonomy of teaching was the norm and considered an expectation of the BUPAP. The participants asserted that they were not formally supervised and that after the pre-semester orientation, they were left on their own to develop their courses. The BUPAP was seen as fostering “cliques” and a “community-within-a-community”. It was expressed that GTAs tended to group themselves by department and/or office location and primarily interacted with each other within their departments. Very little interaction occurred outside of these cliques during this research and the GTAs stated that very little ever occurred outside of the pre-semester orientation. This lack of interaction was due primarily to different teaching schedules, difficult academic workloads, and the location of each academic department.

The communication of information throughout the BUPAP consisted of two avenues. One was between the GTAs and the administration. This avenue consisted

primarily of logistical information and was often communicated through a top-down approach via memos in the GTA departmental mailboxes and mass e-mails. The second avenue was between the GTAs themselves and often took place in informal settings such as during academic classes they shared and between their teaching assignments as one GTA would be leaving and another would be coming in to teach. The information was primarily relevant to instruction and to a lesser extent focused on issues related to student's attendance or grading. Lastly, this informal conversation also communicated information received from administration that may not have reached all the GTAs especially in the case of submitting academic schedules and grade reports.

The second research question was, "What are the effects of cultural/environmental factors on instructional performance?" These participants' perceptions were characterized by the following assertions. Several factors were expressed by the GTAs that impacted their instruction. Although the GTAs considered themselves prepared to teach their courses they expressed that the pre-semester orientation did little to prepare them for instruction. The pre-semester orientation was seen as too logistically based, that is to say it focused on non-instructional issues such as equipment placement and the proper way to withdraw a student from a course. Although, both the GTAs and administrators saw this information as necessary, the GTAs expressed that they needed more help with the teaching aspect of their responsibilities. Supervision was non-existent based on the feedback from the GTAs. Participants emphasized that outside of the student evaluations, they received no feedback on their teaching. The GTAs wanted to engage in "growth-oriented" supervision with the administrators, especially the basic program coordinator. Without feedback on their instruction, the

GTAs expressed that they could do little to change ineffective teaching practices due to lack of awareness.

The GTAs taught in the state-of-the-art facilities; however, the GTAs acknowledged that too often, the administration “packed out” their classes so that they had little opportunity to interact and instruct effectively each student. The large numbers of students did not allow adequate time to meet the instructional needs of each student consistently. Secondly, the GTAs expressed that the teacher-to-student ratio along with the limited scheduled course meetings impacted the effectiveness of instruction, especially as it related to students’ skill acquisition. Lastly, the GTAs expressed that they received significant help from fellow GTAs in the form of instructional materials and informal conversations that centered on instruction. In the case of novice GTAs, these interactions provided to be especially significant due to the lack of explicit instructional support and preparation for instruction by the department.

Research question three was concerned with how the time as a GTA prepared them for future career goals and aspirations. Research from this study demonstrated that the administrators and GTAs were split on how much being a GTA aided the graduate students in preparing them for their future occupational aspirations. The administrators and GTAs expressed that being a GTA provided graduate students the opportunity to develop organizational and instructional skills consistent with jobs that were instruction-oriented. However, the administrators rationalized that unless the GTA would be going into elementary or secondary school environments, the experiences of teaching college students would be somewhat irrelevant. They asserted that due to the differences in age

groups, instructional needs and types of courses that were to be taught the transferability of instructional skills would be limited for those GTAs going into higher education.

The GTAs however, asserted that despite their future teaching aspirations, the experiences and skills they acquired as instructors in the BUPAP would be most helpful. They acknowledged that basic skills such as treating students with patience and kindness and getting to know the instructional needs of each student would be helpful regardless of the teaching population. Secondly, they expressed that as graduate students, they were currently training to be teachers of various age groups so they would be able to transfer any skills they acquired into the necessary instructional setting. The GTAs seemed to think that serving in that capacity would be beneficial to them particularly in the areas of appreciation for timeliness, accountability and other “professional traits”.

Research question four asked, what perspectives do the GTAs offer on their experiences in the program? Several perspectives were offered by the GTAs concerning their experiences in the BUPAP. They offered their idea of what an “effective GTA” was. From their standpoint, they conveyed that in order to be effective, one must, among other things, be timely, concerned with meeting the needs of each student, be organized, and show professionalism at all times. Moreover, the GTAs offered their perceptions of what was needed to “survive” being a GTA in the BUPAP. Their advice included developing a passion for teaching, recognizing various levels of motivation in the students, and balancing their responsibilities as GTAs and graduate students.

Overall, the GTAs asserted that they were prepared to teach their assigned courses and that they performed their duties well. However, the GTAs also acknowledged that they had weaknesses as instructors. These weaknesses included becoming too personable

with their students, handling the paperwork associated with the responsibilities of being a GTA, and meeting the individual instructional needs of the students. Lastly, the GTAs asserted that taking part in the study was positive and a necessary step in the possible improvement of the BUPAP for themselves as well as for future GTAs.

Lastly, research question five was concerned with what recommendations the GTAs had for the improvement of the BUPAP and several recommendations were provided. First GTAs expressed the need for the pre-semester orientation to be more instruction-based as opposed to primarily focusing on logistical issues. Also, participants wanted the more experienced GTAs to take part in the pre-semester orientation specifically as it related to sharing their experiences and problems within the classrooms to less experienced GTAs. The GTAs also discussed the need to change the student course evaluations process. Specifically, the GTAs wanted multiple sources of information to be taken into consideration for their evaluations rather than depending on only the student evaluations. Suggestions included observations by faculty and fellow GTAs as well as more direct supervision by the basic program coordinator. The student course evaluations were seen as necessary and reliable but in need of other sources of information in order to best ascertain the strengths and weaknesses of the instructor in the hope of improving the instructional abilities of GTAs.

As far as supervision was concerned, the GTAs expressed that the BUPAP did very little in the way of providing constructive feedback to the GTAs on their teaching. Of most concern to the GTAs was the lack of growth-oriented supervision in the BUPAP. They expressed the desire to be more effective instructors but lacked the information about their teaching and the necessary strategies for instructional change. According to

participants, the fact that there was no formal supervision or practices throughout the semester to ensure that they were being effective instructors the GTAs took that to mean that the administration did not care about their teaching effectiveness. Although, they did express a willingness to do an effective job of teaching the lack of timely and relevant instructional feedback jeopardized possibly making corrective changes in their instructional practices from semester to semester. Lastly, the GTAs wanted the BUPAP to make a stronger effort to improve relationships between themselves and the departmental faculty. Faculty and the administration of the BUPAP were seen as valuable resources and mentors for GTAs. According to GTAs, little effort had been made to establish as well as cultivate relationships outside of the advisor-advisee paradigm.

Discussion of Findings in Light of Existing Literature

The supervisory practices of the basic program coordinator, BUPAP evaluation procedures, specifically the student course evaluations, and the manner in which GTAs were trained and prepared for their instructional duties and responsibilities will be discussed in the context of the literature.

Supervision. The GTAs in this study brought into the BUPAP a variety of levels of instructional effectiveness and skills (Nyquist & Sprague, 1998; Jennings, 1987). However, similar to perspectives offered by developmental model advocates Nyquist and Nyquist (1991, 1989, 1998), little attention was paid to the developmental levels of the GTAs in terms of allocating them instructional assignments, preparing them for instruction, and providing them with the appropriate instructional support as they matriculated through the academic year. Darling (1986) pointed out that due to the lack of attention paid to developmental levels, many GTAs experienced difficulty making the

transition from student to instructor. Due to the various nationalities, educational and athletic backgrounds, and instructional skill levels of the GTAs who took part in this study, the basic program coordinator would have been wise to investigate the developmental needs of the GTAs as part of structuring a training and preparation program.

Supervision within BUPAP was seen as non-existent by the GTAs. The basic program coordinator took no part in their socialization and training outside of the initial pre-semester orientation. This situation is common in GTA programs despite attention directed towards ensuring the quality of undergraduate instruction by constituents of universities and colleges (Savage & Sharpe, 1998; Pruitt, 1996). In the case of the orientation, which represented the only socialization process that was led by the basic program coordinator, little attention was paid to taking into account the instructional demands that the GTAs would be under. This lack of attention towards preparing the GTAs for their instructional responsibilities highlights the GTAs' feelings that the orientation was non-informative and not helpful. Lambert and Tice's (1993) work indicated the lack of instructional information communicated to GTAs during orientation and the subsequent focus on logistical matters such as placement of equipment and grading procedures. This research echoes the sentiments of the GTAs when they asserted that too much time was devoted to non-instructional matters during their pre-semester orientation and thus they considered themselves inadequately prepared for their instructional responsibilities.

The GTAs and administrators saw the basic program coordinator as leader of the BUPAP on paper but voiced concerns to whether or not the requirements of that title

were met. In fact, several GTAs asserted that it was their peers that truly were “leaders” in the BUPAP. It was seen that fellow GTAs and graduate students provided instructional support, resources, and information much more readily than the basic program coordinator. This finding is commonly found in the literature. Joyce and Showers (1982, 1983) found that teachers tended to turn to each other for help with familiarizing themselves with their duties and responsibilities and also to obtain direct assistance with their teaching through peer coaching. Myers (1995) and William and Roach (1992) found that GTAs often depended on their peers for instructional support and resources initially, especially as novices. However, it was the supervisor that eventually was seen by the GTAs as possibly the primary instructional model and mentor (Bruce, 1996; Prieto, 1995; Zinnecker, 1986). Findings from this study suggested that the basic program coordinator’s “hands-off” style of supervision did little to encourage the GTAs to seek instructional advice or support from him. More often than not GTAs, especially novices, found themselves in a “sink-or-swim” situation upon which they were asked to perform multiple instructional duties without proper training or instructional resources. These situations negatively impacted the quality of their instruction and their experiences being a GTA as supported by the works of Prentice-Dunn and Rikard (1994) and Lowman and Mathie (1993).

Central to the role of being a supervisor is the decision of which supervisory style to choose. The basic program coordinator in this study chose a style that was detached and focused primarily on meeting the perceived administrative and logistical needs of the GTAs and the BUPAP as a whole. This finding goes against the developmental model of supervision that is commonly advocated in the literature (Sprague & Nyquist, 1998;

Rhoads, 1997; Sprague & Nyquist, 1989). Rikard and Nye (1997) wrote, “this model is intended to assist faculty in structuring intervention strategies for the enrichment of the GI teaching experience” (pg. 34). The model stresses the involvement of the supervisor and other faculty in evaluating the instructional needs of the GTA and then progressively putting the responsibility of being a GTA on the graduate student while at the same time providing on-going training and intervention. In the case of the BUPAP, GTAs were given the responsibility of four courses to instruct upon acceptance of the teaching assistantship. Along with the duties and academic responsibilities of being a graduate student, were the demands of teaching that were often a point of stress upon which the quality of the graduate experience for the GTA can be measured (Ferris, 1991; Kirk & Todd-Mancillas, 1989). No intervention or forethought was given to the developmental needs of the GTAs in relation to their course assignments and training and thus a “do the best you can” mentality permeated the BUPAP.

Nyquist and Wulff (1996) explained that the supervisor is often asked to fill the role of manager, educational model, and mentor. To neglect these duties is to perform a disservice to the GTAs as well as relinquish the title of instructional leader. The GTAs expressed that as an instructional resource distributor and manager, the BUPAP coordinator did a fine job; however, the GTAs voiced that they needed more supervisory and instructional support. This is not uncommon due to GTAs desire to be told what is expected of them and given suggestion on the manner in which they should conduct themselves (Rikard & Nye, 1997; Eison & Vanerford, 1993) as instructors and as students. Supervision is most effective when both the GTA and coordinator or supervisor collaboratively identify and work towards instructional and developmental goals. No

efforts were made by the basic program coordinator to interact with the GTAs in an instructional capacity despite the GTAs expressing that they were willing to take part in collaborative experiences.

Evaluation. The BUPAP's evaluation process was seen as necessary but limited in its ability to produce valid and reliable feedback that could in turn be utilized to facilitate the instructional development of the GTAs. The literature points out the importance of evaluating the instructional effectiveness of GTAs (Andrews, 1987; Nyquist & Wulff, 1992) to ensure the overall quality of instruction relative to its program. The respondents in this study also acknowledged the importance and necessity but stressed that the evaluation process was in need of changes to better ascertain their instructional effectiveness. Davis and Kring (2001) found that student evaluations provided an effective measure of the instructional effectiveness of GTAs if used as part of a longitudinal approach to evaluation. This was contrary to the findings in this study that indicated the student course evaluations to be the only means of assessing the instructional effectiveness of the GTAs.

The administrators expressed that students often did not take the course evaluations as opportunities to openly and honestly judge the effectiveness of their instructor thus limiting the ability of the course evaluations to be utilized for improvement in the GTA's teaching. The literature supports this finding and suggests that too often student course evaluations are seen as: 1) busy work, 2) hastily done with little attention being paid to the meaning behind evaluative items (survey), and 3) influenced by GTA traits that are non-instruction related such as ethnicity, gender, and nationality (Davis & Kring, 2001; Plakans, 1997; Bos, Zakrajsek, Wolf, & Stoll, 1980). Thus, as the

administrators in this study pointed out, the validity and reliability of student course evaluations were reasons for concern, especially in the context of using the data as the only measure of a GTA's instructional effectiveness, which they were doing. Overall the GTAs and administrators expressed some dissatisfaction with the current method of evaluation but asserted that change would be slow in coming. Piccinin and Fairweather (1996) and Duda-Biedermann (1993) found that generally GTAs and administrators were dissatisfied with evaluation methods utilized in their departments but did little to change the process due to the lack of incentive to allocate resources (i.e., manpower) to do so.

Despite questions of validity and reliability, student course evaluations were the only means of evaluating the instructional effectiveness of the GTAs in the BUPAP, which is consistent with findings from similar settings by Cashin (1995), Braskamp and Ory (1994), and Marsh (1984). Although the GTAs and administrators in this study expressed that the student course evaluations were important and should be taken into consideration, they advocated multiple sources of information being used to accurately assess their instructional effectiveness. Their suggestions were consistent with existing literature exploring the range of evaluative items and procedures in regards to instructional effectiveness: a) peer observations (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996; Black & Kaplan, 1998); b) supervisory observations (Staton & Darling, 1989; Weimer, Kerns, & Parrett, 1988); c) videotaping lessons (Buskist, 2000; Taylor-Way, 1988); d) faculty observations (Stodolsky, 1990; Carrol & Goldberg, 1989); and e) instructional consultation (Millis, 1992; Petrulis, Carroll, & Skow, 1993).

Acknowledging that academic departments and GTA programs differ from institution to institution, respondents in this study personalized what evaluative process

they thought would best fit the needs of the BUPAP. Most notably, the GTAs and administrators pointed out that a combination of peer observations from older, more experienced GTAs as well as faculty observations should be part of their evaluation process. Secondly, they stressed that the basic program coordinator should initiate any GTA evaluative process as suggested by Bordonaro (1995) and Zinnecker, (1986). Subsequently, the basic program coordinator (BPC) would ultimately need to serve as the primary evaluator of their teaching as well as the provider of corrective and supportive feedback. Based on findings from this research, the BPC was disconnected from the evaluative process and offered little in the way of corrective feedback and instructional advice on correcting weaknesses in GTA instruction. The GTAs wanted the basic program coordinator to be more than simply a distributor of student course evaluative materials and numerical data (student feedback). Participants preferred the basic program coordinator to be an active participant in the process of formal evaluation of their instruction, analysis of student feedback, and developer of corrective instructional strategies.

Lastly, once the evaluations are performed, regardless of the manner, it is necessary for clear, concise, and helpful feedback to be provided to the GTAs (Theall & Franklin, 1991). Two points were raised by the GTAs that draw attention to the usefulness of evaluative data and the manner in which it can be utilized to improve teaching. One, the presentation of data (student feedback) from the evaluation should be such that the GTA can readily ascertain their weaknesses and strengths as instructors. This was especially important to the GTAs in light of the lack of supervisory involvement. GTAs were often inadequately prepared to analyze and interpret the

meaning behind the numerical data provided to them as feedback prior to taking part in the evaluation process. According to Witherspoon & Gilbert (1996), this aspect of the pre-semester orientation is often overlooked among other instruction-oriented matters and replaced by logistical issues.

Moreover, in order to be more of an active participant in the evaluation processes the GTAs asserted that the supervisor should have an individual post-evaluation conference or group meeting with them to discuss the results of the evaluation(s) and to provide specific strategies for improving their instruction. To be more specific, the GTAs advocated a formative or growth-oriented process of evaluation (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2001). The process of formative supervision and subsequently the act of formative evaluation depends to a great extent on the willingness of the “authority” to take an active role in the development of the instructors by building trust and open communication. The BPC in this study had not made the effort to do this type of evaluation at the point of this research study. As Prieto and Myers (1999) found, often program directors and supervisors are not expected or are unwilling to put the substantial time and effort necessary and to take a more “hands-off” approach often common in GTA programs. The benefits of a formative evaluation and supervisory style has been documented in the literature and proven to be effective with GTAs (Brinko, 1993; Darling & Earhart, 1990). As the literature stressed, extensive evaluation processes are necessary but often overlooked in graduate programs (Black & Kaplan, 1998) McKeachie, 1987).

Training and preparation. The following sub-headings will highlight three areas:

a) the pre-semester orientation, which is the primary socialization activity in the BUPAP;

b) instructional support systems found in the BUPAP; and c) GTA role ambiguity. These three areas will draw attention to aspects of the BUPAP training and preparation process in light of existing literature and their impact on the effectiveness of the BUPAP to provide quality undergraduate education.

BUPAP pre-semester orientation. The primary avenue for the BUPAP to formally begin or continue the socialization process of the GTAs was the BUPAP pre-semester orientation. It served as the only formal gathering of the GTAs and BUPAP administrators during the academic year and thus was mandatory for all GTAs to attend. The pre-semester orientation was held several days before the start of the academic year and ran concurrently with the Universities GTA orientation. Research has shown that when the departmental and institutional orientations are linked, their common objective of preparing GTAs (especially novices) for the instructional responsibilities and duties are more readily met (Mintz, 1998; Ronkowski, 1998). The respondents in this study expressed that the resources and time put into developing and facilitating the orientations was seen as a positive reminder of the University's and BUPAP's attempt to ensure teaching excellence (Svinicki, 1995; Border, 1998; Buerkel-Rothfuss, 1993). The following comments on the pre-semester orientation will be relevant to the BUPAP or departmental orientation due to the fact that the majority of GTAs in this study did not attend the institutional meetings.

Topics of discussion during the BUPAP orientations were seen as overly focused on the administrative or logistical aspect of the GTA position. Findings suggest that the GTAs would have been better prepared for their instructional duties if more information and time was spent on discussing issues relevant to teaching the BUPAP courses such as

content knowledge, classroom management, and evaluating skills. Nyquist, Abbott, Wulff, and Sprague (1991) found that, traditionally, effective orientation and training programs focused on a myriad of issues (i.e. developing lesson plans, lecturing, departmental policies and procedures, etc.) not just administrative matters. However due to the short time frame in which the orientation was held, it is possible that only administrative issues could be effectively covered. Being that the orientation was the only opportunity for training and preparation to occur before the start of classes, it was expressed by the GTAs that it did very little to prepare them for their instructional duties. Findings that suggested the lack of proper training for the GTAs in the BUPAP to be commonly found throughout the literature and has been the focus of much attention in recent years (Davis & Kring, 2001; Rikard & Nye, 1997; Ronkowski, 1987; Sells, 1987). More specifically, in relation to this finding, Diamond and Gray's (1987) survey of 1,400 GTAs found that at least 25% of them received no training concerning fundamental tasks such as grading, lecturing, and facilitating discussions.

Instructional support system. Within the BUPAP, the primary sources of instructional support and resources for the GTAs were other GTAs and graduate students. Participants described the departmental faculty members and administrators as having a wealth of knowledge to offer the GTAs but the GTAs acknowledged that their peers were more approachable and readily available initially. This finding is consistent with the works of Myers (1995), Kirk & Todd-Mancillas (1991), and Darling (1987) who found that GTA communication strategies and patterns centered on their peers. It was their peers and fellow GTAs that were often selected to be instructional mentors and support systems rather than departmental faculty. This research found that although two lines of

communication existed in the BUPAP, the most active and relevant exchange of information took place between the GTAs and their peers. As the research suggests going to other GTAs and graduate students for instruction help was a viable option for GTAs due to the possible embarrassment of asking for help and/or lack of opportunity to connect with individuals in positions of authority in non-academic situations (Prieto & Meyers, 1995; Bomotti, 1994).

The departmental faculty was seen as focusing primarily on the GTAs' academic obligations and paying little attention to their instructional duties. Findings suggested that due to the lack of involvement in the administration of the BUPAP by the faculty, they had little insights into instructional issues and obstacles that the GTAs faced. Secondly, when GTAs expressed instructional issues to faculty members, they often directed them to the basic program coordinator who was seen as the final authority on issues relevant to the BUPAP. The primary reason for this was because the faculty was not responsible for taking part in the administration of the BUPAP and not asked to serve as instructional role models.

These findings are consistent with literature that asserts that faculty tends to be detached from the instructional aspect of the lives of graduate students due to instructional and research commitments on their part and lack of incentive to take on the burden of mentoring a GTA outside of the graduate student-advisor relationship (Showalter, 1999; Smith & Klaper, 1998). However, as Darling (1987) found, GTAs look to faculty members as role models and mentors for both their roles as GTAs as well as graduate students. Graduate programs that wish to facilitate the instructional development of their GTAs should call on departmental faculty members to pass on their expertise as

instructors in an effort to aid the GTA in balancing the demands of their instructional and academic duties as well as to serve as instructional role models. Such an act would be especially beneficial to GTAs due to the majority of professors having the experience of being GTAs themselves.

Role ambiguity. As expressed previously, the BUPAP had few effective socialization mechanisms such as GTA orientations, seminars, or training sessions to communicate the expectations of the department/program and provide strategies for fulfilling those responsibilities and duties effectively. Research findings from this research suggest that the GTAs did not have a clear understanding of their role as a GTA, as well as, the overall mission of the BUPAP in which they were employed. As a result participants identified a lack of consistency between the GTAs in reference to the instructional goals and objectives of their courses. This research's findings further corroborates Duba-Biedermann's (1994) research which highlights the need for faculty and GTA program coordinators to provide examples of what is expected of the instructors as it relates to course content coverage and pedagogical issues. GTAs that have an accurate understanding of what is expected of them as well as their place in the overall mission of their respective programs often experience greater success in fulfilling their duties and responsibilities (Rikard & Nye, 1997; Sage, 1984) as instructors.

The BUPAP lacked instructional support mechanisms to facilitate the socialization of the GTAs into their roles as instructors. However, the GTA were able to develop their own sense of what their roles were and the mission of the BUPAP based primarily on informal discussions with peers and faculty, observation of more experienced GTA, and a combination of their personal educational and athletic

backgrounds (Darling & Staton, 1989; Comer, 1991; Reichers, 1987). The finding that they had taken an active role in their own socialization process is supported by GTA socialization researcher by William and Roach (1992) and Bullis & Bach (1989) who determined that when left to their own devices, GTAs tended to develop their own interpretation of the organizational roles, expectations, and appropriate behaviors despite possibly coming into conflict with their peers and administrators.

Implications for Basic Undergraduate Physical Activities Programs

This study provides implications for both research and practice. This research challenges GTA training and development programs as well as those academic departments, which employ them to carefully select, train, and supervise GTAs as they perform their instructional duties and responsibilities. It is clear from this research that the GTAs in the BUPAP are not formally supervised or trained for their instructional roles. This study has added to the existing GTA literature as an examples of research focused on the perceptions of GTA and higher education administrators as it relates to administrative and supervisory practices. In addition, this study has added to the little existing research that has focused on collegiate physical education/activities programs from administrative and instructional standpoints. Furthermore, the research methods and theoretical framework utilized in this study have provided a means of investigating GTA experiences from an organizational culture perspective

Physical education/activities basic instruction programs can provide college students with an excellent opportunity to develop lifelong healthy lifestyle habits, acquire new skills, and improve their fitness levels (Mondello, Fleming, & Focht, 2000). According to the Surgeon General's Report on Physical Activity and Health

approximately half of Americans ages 12-21 years of age are not physically active on a regular basis (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). Secondly, research shows that levels of physical activity tend to decline significantly through high school and that roughly 60% of the United States adult population does not achieve the minimum amount of recommended physical activity and nearly 25% of the population do not engage consistently in physical activity (Dishman & Buckworth, 1997). Consistent physical activity has been shown to lower risks of developing various chronic diseases and health conditions such as obesity, hypertension, Type II diabetes, and cardiovascular disease when compared to individuals with sedentary lifestyles (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1996). In many cases, the courses that are offered by programs such as the University's BUPAP are the last opportunity to engage young adults in physical activity and thus attention must be paid to the manner in which the GTAs of these courses perform their instructional duties.

Historically, basic physical education/activities programs have served as the primary means of providing students with physical activity experiences (Mondello, Fleming, & Focht, 2000; Evaul & Hilsendager, 1993). The BUPAP offered approximately 90 courses the semester that this study was conducted. On average, 28 students took each course, which leads to roughly 2,500 students being exposed to the instruction and professionalism of GTAs. GTAs in turn represent themselves but also the University, School of HHP, department of PESS, and the BUPAP via their actions and instructional effectiveness. Findings from this research showed that the GTAs were concerned with being effective instructors in order to meet their goals of preparing their students for a lifetime of physical activity and to promote healthy lifestyles (Jewett, 1985,

Poole, 1991). These expressed instructional goals were in-line with the greater BUPAP and School of HHP's educational missions.

What is of primary concern however is the fact that a great responsibility has been placed on the shoulders of GTAs in the BUPAP without providing adequate instructional support and training. Ellis (1988) concluded that for many graduate students the purpose of the assistantships is purely to finance their education and more often than not GTAs have little or no previous experience teaching their assigned courses. Although this was not the case for the BUPAP several concerns are apparent. The lack of formal GTA instructional support, formal supervision and a formative evaluation process suggests that despite an implicit expectation of instructional excellence there are no program mechanisms in place to develop or evaluate effective and quality instruction. In order to ensure that GTAs deliver quality instruction and that the mission of the BUPAP, which includes promoting lifelong participation in physical activity, is consistent among all GTAs changes must be made in the manner in which the BUPAP is conducted. To not do so is to run the risk of failing the instructional purpose of the University, School of HHP, and the BUPAP and also contributes to the decline in physical activity participation in a significant amount of college students.

Implications for Graduate Programs

Higher education programs that employ graduate students as instructors have an obligation to meet two standards of managerial practice. The first is to train, support, and evaluate GTAs so that they provide quality undergraduate instruction. Secondly, the experiences of being a GTA should be applicable to their future career aspirations. Failing to meet both of these standards is a disservice to undergraduates, their parents,

other constituents of the institution, and the graduate students serving as GTAs. There is a potential labor issue that has manifested itself in recent attempts by GTA organizations along with labor advocacy groups to unionize. Most notably, coverage of their current efforts to obtain among other things just the *title* of “employee” and to secure the benefits associated with this distinction have shed light onto what many consider to be unfair treatment and exploitation of graduate students on campuses of higher education (Nelson, 1997; Wildavsky, 2000). Sinyai (2001) explained the rise in unionizing efforts to combat labor issues among GTAs across the country:

The main reason for the leap in organizing activity, however, is to be found in the changing nature of higher education. Universities, under pressure to reduce costs, are transferring more and more of their undergraduate teaching to lowercost graduate assistants and adjunct faculty (p. 10).

Standard One: Effectively Training and Supervising GTAs

Historically, the burden of meeting the first managerial standard has been that of the GTA supervisor/coordinator. GTA supervision is a complex and demanding aspect higher education administration. Due primarily to the various demands and expectations on the GTA, those who supervise or who serve as program coordinators are often called on to select, prepare, and support graduate students as they take on the role and responsibilities of “joining” the departmental instructional staff of a college or university (Curzan & Damour, 2000; Marting, 1987). Supervisors form the front-line of graduate programs for ensuring that GTAs meet the dual demands of their positions: to provide quality instruction and preparing themselves for future career aspirations. To say it

frankly, supervisors must get their hands dirty in order to ensure that they meet the aforementioned responsibilities as components of graduate programs (Nyquist & Wulff, 1996).

However, too often as in the case of the BUPAP, the supervisor does not fulfill these responsibilities thus throwing into question the true nature and purpose of the program itself (Russell, 1999). Any program in higher education that employs GTAs as instructors (or researcher for that matter) must successfully balance itself on the fine line of the exploitation of GTAs for cheap labor and providing a means of graduate students to finance their education and prepare for future jobs. Successfully navigating this tightrope is dependent upon the willingness and effectiveness of the supervisor to perform his or her duties. In relation to GTA training and development, the impact of the supervisor goes well beyond the initial recruitment, selection and orientation of GTAs as they move into their instructional roles. Their impact moves into the nurturing (or lack of) of effective instructors, future practitioners, and advocates of a given academic discipline. This, in of itself, is a tremendous responsibility that is often neglected.

Important to any supervisor performing his or her duties effectively is to receive support from their respective departments. The BUPAP coordinator and other administrators acknowledged that there were many demands and responsibilities that were unmet due to time allocation and financial compensation. For this coordinator, only 25% of his pay was earned in relation to GTA training and development. This would seemingly suggest that the instructional effectiveness of the GTAs was not seen as an important aspect of the overall instructional management of the School of HHP and the

BUPAP specifically. To effectively socialize, supervise, and support twenty plus GTAs was seemingly too much to ask for the amount of offered compensation.

Standard Two: Preparing the GTA for Future Careers (Ensuring Relevance of the Teaching Assistantship Experience)

The second standard of GTA managerial practice is that of preparing the graduate student for future career aspirations. The issue of training and preparation also calls attention to other issues that graduate programs must deal with as GTAs matriculate through their ranks, that of preparing the future scholars and instructors of a given academic discipline. As Bomotti (1994) wrote, “the higher education community is encouraged to refine its thinking about teaching assistantships. Most immediately, teaching assistantships should be upgraded from the level of convenience or necessity to the level of opportunity—an opportunity to improve undergraduate instruction and to nurture future professors” (p. 372). However, findings from this study suggest that the majority of GTAs in the BUPAP are not receiving training in relation to what is needed for careers in higher education.

The GTAs in this study expressed that the organizational and instructional skills that they were developing would prove useful in their future careers as secondary or post-secondary instructors. However, the administrators who designed the BUPAP seem to think that little if any transferability of skill would occur unless the GTA went to teach at the secondary school level. According to the administration this lack of transferability was due to the format and nature of the courses in the BUPAP resembling those commonly taught in middle or high-school settings. The problem with this perspective is that a significant number of GTAs in the School of HHP responded that they wanted

careers in higher education. This mismatch in professional development experiences between the GTAs and the administration leaves one to wonder to what extent the GTAs are prepared for their future careers.

To fail to take an active role in the preparation of the future professorate goes against the philosophical goals of the graduate teaching assistantship and runs the risk of sending unprepared doctoral students into higher education institutions without the necessary skills to do their jobs. The teaching assistantship is a viable means of not only providing graduate students with money for school but it also serves as a means of exposing them to the responsibilities, duties, and expectations of being faculty members. However, to do so will take a collaborative effort by administration, faculty, and the graduate students themselves. Not to do so is setting the stage for the questioning of the quality of instruction provided by GTAs. Thus, bringing the discussion back to the central question, what is the purpose of the BUPAP in relation to the GTAs? Is it part of a graduate experience that is meant to provide them with skills that can prove useful in future occupations? Or is a cost-cutting mechanism to free up faculty by exploiting graduate students? Regardless of the position taken by the BUPAP and the School of HHP the dual goals of providing quality undergraduate instruction (as demanded by students, parents, and institutional administrators) and preparing future instructors and scholars (as demanded by society) are still in effect and can only be overlooked for so long.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are in response to the findings from this research in light of the existing literature.

1. Provide adequate resources and compensation for the BUPAP coordinator. More importantly, a full-time faculty member should fill the position of BUPAP/GTA coordinator. This individual's responsibilities would include:
 - a. Interviewing and selecting prospective graduate students for teaching assistantships based on competency, willingness and skill as instructors as well as financial need.
 - b. Developing and implementing a comprehensive pre-semester orientation that provides adequate coverage of issues of instruction and administration in relation to the role of being a GTA.
 - c. Communicating regularly with all GTAs in the capacity as mentor, manager, and instructional role model.
 - d. Developing and coordinating instructional workshops and seminars during the academic year in which GTAs gain further knowledge and instructional skills in relation to their duties and responsibilities.
 - e. Coordinating the supervision and evaluation of the GTAs in the BUPAP so that they are consistently observed and given feedback on their teaching throughout the academic year.
2. Provide a permanent resource center, which contains materials (i.e., syllabi, handbooks, etc.), statements of departmental policies and procedures, and other instructional materials for GTAs.

3. Develop and maintain a web-based resource for GTAs that encompasses materials to be placed in the GTA resource center as well as provide an electronic forum for GTAs to seek out assistance from administrators and fellow GTAs.
4. Include the faculty in the department in the training and preparation process of the BUPAP. Faculty should take part in the supervision and mentoring of GTAs in an attempt to help them develop as effective instructors while in the BUPAP as well as when they graduate.
5. Restructure the pre-semester orientation so that it provides relevant instructional information and strategies, incorporates the perspectives of veteran GTAs and faculty, as well as provide sufficient time for novice GTAs to form relationship (no matter how tentative) with administrators, faculty, and their peers. It is recommended that orientation take place over four to five days rather than two or three.
6. The School of HHP should acknowledge their dual responsibility of preparing GTAs to be quality undergraduate instructors and the future professorate of physical education. To do so, workshops and seminars should be developed that focus on issues relevant to the dual role that GTAs are in, student as well as teacher.
7. The department should provide a college teaching course in order to better facilitate the GTA's transition from undergraduate students to undergraduate instructor for credit. This course would be especially relevant to international graduate students as well as first-year GTAs.

8. Qualitative and quantitative methods of research and evaluating are used to ascertain from the GTAs and their students the effectiveness of the BUPAP overall in meeting instructional goals.

Implications for Further Research

Future areas of research should continue to focus on a myriad of issues and concerns facing GTAs as well as those in charge of their development and training. The process by which GTAs develop and utilize supportive communication relationships and information seeking strategies has been explored in the literature (Myers, 1998; William & Roach, 1992). However, more insight into the extent that GTAs utilize gained knowledge and factors that hinder or facilitate the formation of such relationships is necessary. Secondly, the impact of various supervisory styles on GTA development an instruction is an area worthy of investigation. Research in this area would benefit those GTA supervisors who are given the responsibility of preparing their GTAs for instruction within respective undergraduate programs. In addition, issues of ethnicity and nationality have been proven to impact student's perceptions of a GTA's effectiveness (Hoekje & Williams, 1992; Nelson, 1991; Briggs, Clark, Madden, Aldridge, & Swales, 1997). More research could be done in this area relative to adequately addressing such issues within the context of GTA instructional development.

Scholars have overlooked several significant areas of research. Unfortunately, little attention has addressed the impact of motivation towards becoming an effective instructor relative to the GTA's career goals and aspirations. Subsequently, research should also address the degree of receptiveness that GTA's have towards their instructional supervision and training. Secondly, the style in which supervisory practices

are carried out in settings similar to the BUPAP have not been adequately investigated. Lastly, there is a need to research and develop guidelines for implementing training and development programs for physical education/activity based courses as they relate to pedagogical knowledge, content, and practices. Overall, scant attention has been paid to research that focuses on GTA training and development in physical education/activity settings. This is especially true in the areas of supervision and socialization.

Tierney's (1991) organizational culture framework was effective at exploring multiple aspects of the BUPAP. However, in light of the analysis of the findings no new categories were developed in order to extend the model. Perhaps, with the inclusion of the perspectives of students and possibly research that compares multiple settings new categories will arise. However, until then, graduate programs will be well served to continue this method of research inquiry to examine their programs from the viewpoints of the participants as well as through the lens of among other things, departmental policies, classroom settings, and socialization/training practices such as pre-semester orientations and in-service programs.

It is paramount that researchers extend their focus in the areas of GTA instructional development and training especially as it relates to the institutional and departmental resource allocation and training format. Subsequently, an investigation of GTA perceptions of training needs and responses to training programs can provide valuable information on the most effective means of preparing graduate students to perform their instructional duties as well as prepare them for future occupational responsibilities. Research focused in these areas should also take into account the impact of: 1) organizational culture, 2) prior training and experiences of GTAs, and 3) issues of

instructional self-efficacy. In addition, more longitudinal research studies should be conducted that focus specifically on GTA's training and development needs. These studies will help discern and document various issues, obstacles, and triumphs GTAs may face as they are socialized into graduate programs and pursue professional careers in their field of study.

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APPENDIX A
ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Framework of Organizational
Culture

Environment:	How does the organization define its environment? What is the attitude toward the environment (Hostility; Friendship)?
Mission:	How is it defined? How is it articulated: Is it used as a basis for decisions? How much agreement is there?
Socialization:	How do new members become socialized? How is it articulated? What do we need to know to survive/excel in this organization?
Information:	What constitutes information? How is it disseminated?
Strategy:	How are decisions arrived at? What strategy is used? Who makes decisions? What is the penalty for bad decisions?
Leadership:	What does the organization expect from its leaders? Who are the leaders? Are there formal and informal leaders?

APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

SURVEY OF GTA PERCEPTIONS OF A BASIC UNDERGRADUATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM'S (BUPAP) ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE (PART I)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research. Please take this opportunity to express your perceptions of the organizational culture of the basic undergraduate physical activities program; specifically this instrument is concerned with the graduate teaching assistant training (GTA) and development aspect of the program. I would ask that you answer the questionnaire items as thoughtfully and truthfully as possible. **Please return this questionnaire to Jared A. Russell's GTA mailbox in Rm. 324 of the Ramsey Center within three days of receiving this instrument. Promptly returning the questionnaire will greatly facilitate the analysis of the data.** Review each questionnaire item carefully before answering. The following definitions will be useful in relation to responding to the questionnaire items:

- 1. Basic Program Coordinator:** The supervisor or planner of teaching assignments and primary instructional resources manager.
- 2. Assistantship:** The contract between yourself and the University of Georgia, which calls for, you to teach in the undergraduate program within the School of Health and Human Performance.
- 3. Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation:** The one to two day process of introducing important elements of the University of Georgia's instructional policies and more specifically, the School of Health and Human Performance's policies and expectations of you as an instructor.
- 4. Organizational culture:** A pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered or develop by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration-that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985, p. 9).

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Jared A. Russell

8. Overall, how do you rate yourself as an instructor (**Mark only one reply**)?
Poor_____ Average_____ Above-Average_____ Excellent_____
9. The primary form(s) of support and assistance for your teaching is (are)(**Mark all that apply**):
- a) The supervisor
 - b) Other GTAs
 - c) Faculty within my department
 - d) Faculty outside of the department
 - e) Other graduate students (non-GTAs)
 - f) Other, _____
10. Approximately how many hours do you spend preparing for your instruction weekly (**Mark only one reply**)?
- a) 0 - 5 hours
 - b) 6-10 hours
 - c) 10 hours or more
11. Overall, I feel that I have been given instructional assignments that match my expertise and experiences (**Mark only one reply**):
- a) Yes
 - b) Somewhat
 - c) No

Please explain your answer in the space provided and/or on another sheet of paper.

SECTION II: Open-ended Questions

Please take the time to answer the following open-ended questions. If necessary write on the back of this paper or attach another sheet of paper to this instrument. Please write in manuscript or legible cursive.

Question 1: What are your suggestions for properly evaluating your instruction? Aspects of evaluation to consider include: who should evaluate, how many times, using what methods, what should be done with evaluations, and how much input or control should you have in relation to your evaluation.

Question 2: Please answer the following questions:

What were the strengths of the GTA orientation?

What were the weaknesses?

What suggestions or recommendations do you have for the improvement of the GTA orientation?

Question 3: Please list any instructional concerns, issues or recommendations that you have or had as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA) the School of Health and Human Performance's basic physical education program.

Question 4: Please discuss any previous instructional or professional teaching experiences or individuals (ex. coursework, workshops, clinics, coaching, athletic, professors, etc.) that you may have had that impact your role as a graduate teaching assistant?

Question 5: What advice would you offer a new graduate teaching assistant on how to survive/excel as a GTA?

Question 6: How would you describe your relationship(s) with:

A) Other GTAs,

B) Your students,

C) Faculty,

D) and the basic program coordinator (supervisor)? For example, are the relationships friendly, supportive, open, hostile, informative, collaborative, etc?

SURVEY OF GTA PERCEPTIONS OF A BASIC UNDERGRADUATE PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES PROGRAM'S (BUPAP) ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE (PART II)

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this research. Please take this opportunity to express your perceptions of the organizational culture of the basic undergraduate physical activities program; specifically this instrument is concerned with the graduate teaching assistant training (GTA) and development aspect of the program. I would ask that you answer the questionnaire items as thoughtfully and truthfully as possible. **Please return this questionnaire to Jared A. Russell's GTA mailbox in Rm. 324 of the Ramsey Center within three days of receiving this instrument. Promptly returning the questionnaire will greatly facilitate the analysis of the data.** Review each questionnaire item carefully before answering. The following definitions will be useful in relation to responding to the questionnaire items:

5. **Basic Program Coordinator:** The supervisor or planner of teaching assignments and primary instructional resources manager.
6. **Assistantship:** The contract between yourself and the University of Georgia, which calls for, you to teach in the undergraduate program within the School of Health and Human Performance.
7. **Graduate Teaching Assistant Orientation:** The one to two day process of introducing important elements of the University of Georgia's instructional policies and more specifically, the School of Health and Human Performance's policies and expectations of you as an instructor.
8. **Organizational culture:** A pattern of basic assumptions-invented, discovered or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration-that has worked well enough to be considered valid and therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems (Schein, 1985, p. 9).

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Jared A. Russell

NOTE: For some of you this is the second time you have been asked to complete the following background information. Please do so again in order to provide context for analysis of the data that you are providing at **THIS POINT** in the semester. Data will allow for comparisons to be made across participants and between this survey's administration and the previous one in October.

SECTION I: Background Information

1. Gender: ☐ Female ☐ Male

2. Racial/Ethnic Background (**Mark all that apply**):

☐ American Indian or Alaskan Native ☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ African-American (not Hispanic) ☐ Hispanic
☐ Caucasian/White (not Hispanic)
☐ Other, specify _____

3. Current program of study: ☐ PESS Master's ☐
 ☐ EXSS Doctorate ☐
 ☐ HPB Other,
 explain _____
 ☐ RLST
 ☐ Other, _____

4. In what age range do you fall? 18-23 ☐ 24-30 ☐ 31+ ☐

5. How many semesters/terms have you been a basic P.E. and/or Fitness for Life GTA? _____

6. What courses have you taught (**Please list**)?

7. At this point in the semester, do you feel you were adequately prepared to teach these courses **(Mark only one reply)**? Yes _____ No _____

Please explain your answer in the space provided and/or on the back of this sheet.

8. Overall, how do you rate yourself as an instructor currently **(Mark only one reply)**? Poor _____ Average _____ Above-Average _____ Excellent _____

10. The primary form(s) of support and assistance for your teaching is (are) **(Mark all that apply)**:

- a) The supervisor
- b) Other GTAs
- c) Faculty within my department
- d) Faculty outside of the department
- e) Other graduate students (non-GTAs)
- f) Other, _____

11. Approximately how many hours do you spend preparing for your instruction weekly **(Mark only one reply)**?

- a) 0 - 5 hours
- b) 6-10 hours
- c) 10 hours or more

12. As of this point in the semester overall, I feel that I have been given instructional assignments that match my expertise and experiences **(Mark only one reply)**:

- a) Yes
- b) Somewhat
- c) No

Please explain your answer in the space provided and/or on another sheet of paper.

Strongly Agree (SA) **Agree (A)** **Neutral (N)** **Disagree (DA)** **Strongly Disagree**
(1) **(2)** **(3)** **(4)** **(SD) (5)**

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I perceive, in relation to the GTA evaluations...	1	2	3	4	5
10. that student evaluations are the best way to evaluate my teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
11. additional formal evaluations are needed in order to better assess my instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
12. that the supervisor should be the primary evaluator.	1	2	3	4	5
13. evaluations of my teaching are not necessary.	1	2	3	4	5
14. peer or faculty evaluations should be considered.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I should be evaluated by an administrator periodically during the academic year.	1	2	3	4	5
16. students are not effective evaluators of my instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
17. that the submission of a teaching portfolio would be a good way to evaluate me in the role of instructor.	1	2	3	4	5
18. allows me to have a voice in decision-making processes as they relate to the GTA program.	1	2	3	4	5

MARK ONLY ONE ANSWER PER QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM.

Strongly Agree (SA) **Agree (A)** **Neutral (N)** **Disagree (DA)** **Strongly Disagree**
(1) **(2)** **(3)** **(4)** **(SD) (5)**

Survey Item	SA	A	N	D	SD
I perceive, the graduate teaching assistantship...	1	2	3	4	5
19. is worth the work I put in.	1	2	3	4	5
20. interferes with my graduate work.	1	2	3	4	5
21. has prepared me for future occupational choices and aspirations.	1	2	3	4	5
22. allows me to have a voice in decision-making processes as they relate to the GTA program.	1	2	3	4	5
22. outside of the monetary incentives, is worth the work I put into it.	1	2	3	4	5
23. is the only means of financing my graduate education.	1	2	3	4	5
24. has allowed me to significantly develop my skills as an instructor.	1	2	3	4	5
25. has not allowed me to connect with individuals who can help me find employment after graduation.	1	2	3	4	5
26. to be a form of “cheap labor”.	1	2	3	4	5

MARK ONLY ONE ANSWER PER QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM.

Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Neutral (N) Disagree (DA) Strongly Disagree
(1) (2) (3) (4) (SD) (5)

Survey Item	SA	A	N	DA	SD
I perceive, the GTA program...	1	2	3	4	5
27. has facilitated the development of strong relationships with faculty members within my department.	1	2	3	4	5
28. recognizes excellence in teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
29. and its administrators understand the role and responsibilities of being a GTA.	1	2	3	4	5
30. and its administrators are willing to support creative instructional change and ideas from GTAs.	1	2	3	4	5
31. provides adequate instructional resource materials.	1	2	3	4	5
32. and its administrators do not listen and act on the concerns of GTAs.	1	2	3	4	5
33. provides adequate training for instruction.	1	2	3	4	5
34. and its administrators will terminate ineffective GTAs.	1	2	3	4	5
35. promotes excellence in teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
36. orientation was adequate in preparing me to teach.	1	2	3	4	5

MARK ONLY ONE ANSWER PER QUESTIONNAIRE ITEM.

Strongly Agree (SA) **Agree (A)** **Neutral (N)** **Disagree (DA)** **Strongly Disagree**
(1) **(2)** **(3)** **(4)** **(SD) (5)**

Survey Item	SA	A	N	DA	SD
I perceive, that I...	1	2	3	4	5
37. know what it takes to be successful as a GTA.	1	2	3	4	5
38. have many areas that need improvement as an instructor.	1	2	3	4	5
39. relate well to my students.	1	2	3	4	5
40. do not present information clearly and precisely to my students.	1	2	3	4	5
41. am capable of meeting the needs of diverse populations of students.	1	2	3	4	5
42. find it difficult to maintain the appropriate degree of class control.	1	2	3	4	5
43. have a clear understanding of university and departmental instructional, grading, and safety policies.	1	2	3	4	5
44. can fairly and effectively assign grades to my students.	1	2	3	4	5
44. feel that I am a valued part of the instructional staff of My department.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX C
SURVEY RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics for SGP-BUPAP Survey Part I Respondents

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GTA	16	1.00	16.00	8.5000	4.76095
GENDER	16	1.00	2.00	1.5000	.51640
BACKGRD	16	1.00	5.00	2.8750	.95743
PROGAM	16	1.00	2.00	1.2500	.44721
DEGREE	16	1.00	2.00	1.6250	.50000
AGE	16	1.00	3.00	2.0625	.77190
TERMS	16	1.00	10.00	2.9688	2.32715
SUPPORT	16	1.00	7.00	4.7500	2.64575
HOURS	16	1.00	2.00	1.1875	.40311
PREPARED	16	1.00	2.00	1.1250	.34157
RATING	16	2.00	4.00	2.8750	.80623
CMATCH	16	1.00	2.00	1.2500	.44721
Valid N (listwise)	16				

Frequencies

Statistics

	GTA	GENDER	BACKGRD	PROGAM	DEGREE	AGE	TERMS
N Valid	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	8.5000	1.5000	2.8750	1.2500	1.6250	2.0625	2.9688
Median	8.5000	1.5000	3.0000	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000	3.0000
Range	15.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	9.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum	16.00	2.00	5.00	2.00	2.00	3.00	10.00

Statistics

	SUPPORT	HOURS	PREPARED	RATING	CMATCH
N Valid	16	16	16	16	16
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.7500	1.1875	1.1250	2.8750	1.2500
Median	7.0000	1.0000	1.0000	3.0000	1.0000
Range	6.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Minimum	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00
Maximum	7.00	2.00	2.00	4.00	2.00

GENDER

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	8	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Male	8	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

BACKGRD

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Amer.Indian	2	12.5	12.5	12.5
	African-Amer	1	6.3	6.3	18.8
	White/NH	11	68.8	68.8	87.5
	Other	1	6.3	6.3	93.8
	Asian/Amer.	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

PROGAM

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PESS	12	75.0	75.0	75.0
	EXRS	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

DEGREE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MA	6	37.5	37.5	37.5
	Doctorate	10	62.5	62.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-23	4	25.0	25.0	25.0
	24-30	7	43.8	43.8	68.8
	31+	5	31.3	31.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

TERMS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	6	37.5	37.5	37.5
	2.00	1	6.3	6.3	43.8
	3.00	3	18.8	18.8	62.5
	3.50	1	6.3	6.3	68.8
	4.00	3	18.8	18.8	87.5
	5.00	1	6.3	6.3	93.8
	10+	1	6.3	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

SUPPORT

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	supervisor	1	6.3	6.3	6.3
	Other GTAs	6	37.5	37.5	43.8
	Multiple	9	56.3	56.3	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

HOURS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5	13	81.3	81.3	81.3
	6-10	3	18.8	18.8	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

PREPARED

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	14	87.5	87.5	87.5
	No	2	12.5	12.5	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

RATING

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Average	6	37.5	37.5	37.5
	Above-Average	6	37.5	37.5	75.0
	Excellent	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

CMATCH

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	12	75.0	75.0	75.0
	Somewhat	4	25.0	25.0	100.0
	Total	16	100.0	100.0	

Descriptive Statistics for SGP-BUPAP Part II Respondents

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GTA	13	1.00	13.00	7.0000	3.89444
GENDER	13	1.00	2.00	1.5385	.51887
BACKGRD	13	2.00	5.00	3.1538	.68874
PROGAM	13	1.00	6.00	1.5385	1.39137
DEGREE	13	1.00	2.00	1.6154	.50637
AGE	13	1.00	3.00	2.0769	.75955
TERMS	13	1.00	6.00	2.8462	1.77229
SUPPORT	13	2.00	7.00	5.7692	2.04751
HOURS	13	1.00	4.00	1.5385	.96742
Valid N (listwise)	13				

Frequencies

Statistics

		GTA	GENDER	BACKGRD	PROGAM	DEGREE	AGE
N	Valid	13	13	13	13	13	13
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		7.0000	1.5385	3.1538	1.5385	1.6154	2.0769
Median		7.0000	2.0000	3.0000	1.0000	2.0000	2.0000
Std. Deviation		3.89444	.51887	.68874	1.39137	.50637	.75955
Range		12.00	1.00	3.00	5.00	1.00	2.00
Minimum		1.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Maximum		13.00	2.00	5.00	6.00	2.00	3.00

Statistics

		TERMS	SUPPORT	HOURS
N	Valid	13	13	13
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		2.8462	5.7692	1.5385
Median		3.0000	7.0000	1.0000
Std. Deviation		1.77229	2.04751	.96742
Range		5.00	5.00	3.00
Minimum		1.00	2.00	1.00
Maximum		6.00	7.00	4.00

GENDER

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	6	46.2	46.2	46.2
	Male	7	53.8	53.8	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

BACKGRD

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	African-Amer	1	7.7	7.7	7.7
	White/NH	10	76.9	76.9	84.6
	Other	1	7.7	7.7	92.3
	Asian/Amer.	1	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

PROGAM

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	PESS	10	76.9	76.9	76.9
	EXRS	2	15.4	15.4	92.3
	n/a	1	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

DEGREE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	MA	5	38.5	38.5	38.5
	Doctorate	8	61.5	61.5	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

AGE

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-23	3	23.1	23.1	23.1
	24-30	6	46.2	46.2	69.2
	31+	4	30.8	30.8	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

TERMS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	5	38.5	38.5	38.5
	2.00	1	7.7	7.7	46.2
	3.00	1	7.7	7.7	53.8
	4.00	4	30.8	30.8	84.6
	5.00	1	7.7	7.7	92.3
	6.00	1	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

SUPPORT

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Other GTAs	2	15.4	15.4	15.4
	Faculty(within)	1	7.7	7.7	23.1
	Other non-GTAs	1	7.7	7.7	30.8
	Multiple	9	69.2	69.2	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

HOURS

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	0-5	9	69.2	69.2	69.2
	6-10	2	15.4	15.4	84.6
	10+	1	7.7	7.7	92.3
	n/a	1	7.7	7.7	100.0
	Total	13	100.0	100.0	

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 1 – 9
I perceive the basic program coordinator...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	Is the primary role model for my role as instructor	3.69	1.11
2	Provides adequate resources for my role as instructor	2.23	1.01
3	Should evaluate and supervise my teaching more frequently and thoroughly	2.38	1.04
4	Is someone I often go to for support and help with my role as instructor	3.38	1.19
5	Is not accessible to me when needed	3.77	.73
6	Provides constructive feedback on my teaching	3.92	.95
7	Does not know my name	4.08	1.32
8	Has adequately prepared me for my instructional responsibilities	2.92	.86
9	Should stop by my class and observe periodically	2.54	1.13

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 2
Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 1 - 9
I perceive the basic program coordinator...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Is the primary role model for my role as instructor	0	2	4	3	4
2	Provides adequate resources for my role as instructor	3	6	2	3	4
3	Should evaluate and supervise my teaching more frequently and thoroughly	3	4	4	2	0
4	Is someone I often go to for support and help with my role as instructor	0	4	3	3	3
5	Is not accessible to me when needed	0	1	2	9	1
6	Provides constructive feedback on my teaching	0	0	6	2	5
7	Does not know my name	1	1	1	3	7
8	Has adequately prepared me for my instructional responsibilities	0	4	7	1	1
9	Should stop by my class and observe periodically	3	3	4	3	0

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 3
Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 10 - 18
I perceive in relation to the GTA evaluation process...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
10	That student evaluations are the best way to evaluate my teaching	2.69	.95
11	Additional formal and informal evaluations are needed to better assess my teaching	2.23	1.01
12	That the supervisor should be my primary evaluator	3.38	.77
13	Evaluations of my teaching are not necessary	4.38	.65
14	Peer or faculty evaluations should be considered	2.08	.76
15	I should be evaluated by an administrator periodically during the academic year	2.54	.88
16	Students are not effective evaluators of my teaching	3.46	1.27
17	That the submission of a teaching portfolio would be a good way to evaluate me in the role of instructor	2.85	.99
18	Allows me to have a voice in decision-making processes as they relate to the GTA program	2.54	.78

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 4
Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 10 - 18
I perceive in relation to the GTA evaluation process...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
10	That student evaluations are the best way to evaluate my teaching	1	5	4	3	0
11	Additional formal and informal evaluations are needed to better assess my teaching	3	6	2	2	0
12	That the supervisor should be my primary evaluator	0	2	4	7	0
13	Evaluations of my teaching are not necessary	0	0	1	6	6
14	Peer or faculty evaluations should be considered	3	6	4	0	0
15	I should be evaluated by an administrator periodically during the academic year	1	6	4	2	0
16	Students are not effective evaluators of my teaching	0	5	0	5	3
17	That the submission of a teaching portfolio would be a good way to evaluate me in the role of instructor	1	4	4	4	0
18	Allows me to have a voice in decision-making processes as they relate to the GTA program	1	5	6	1	0

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 5
Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 19 - 26
I perceive the graduate teaching assistantship...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
19	Equivalent in value to the work I put into my instructional responsibilities	2.38	.77
20	Interferes significantly with my other graduate work	3.54	1.39
21	Has prepared me for future occupational choices and aspirations	2.46	1.20
22	Outside of monetary incentives, provides me sufficient rewards to merit my continuing involvement	2.23	.73
23	Is the only means of financing my graduate education	2.38	1.04
24	Has allowed me to significantly develop my skills as an instructor	2.08	.76
25	Has not helped me connect with individuals who can assist me with employment after education	2.69	1.11
26	To be a form of "cheap" labor	3.31	1.25

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 6
Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 19 - 26
I perceive the graduate teaching assistantship...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
19	Equivalent in value to the work I put into my instructional responsibilities	0	10	1	2	0
20	Interferes significantly with my other graduate work	2	1	1	6	3
21	Has prepared me for future occupational choices and aspirations	2	7	1	2	1
22	Outside of monetary incentives, provides me sufficient rewards to merit my continuing involvement	1	9	2	1	0
23	Is the only means of financing my graduate education	2	7	1	3	0
24	Has allowed me to significantly develop my skills as an instructor	2	9	1	1	0
25	Has not helped me connect with individuals who can assist me with employment after education	2	4	3	4	0
26	To be a form of "cheap" labor	1	3	2	5	2

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 7
Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 27 - 32
I perceive the basic undergraduate physical education program ('s)...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
27	Has facilitated my development of strong relationships with faculty members within my department	2.69	.95
28	Recognizes excellence in teaching	2.85	.69
29	Does not provide adequate instructional resource materials	3.23	.73
30	Provides adequate training for instruction	2.92	.76
31	Does not promote excellence in teaching	3.38	.96
32	Orientation was adequate in preparing me to teach	3.46	.88

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 8
Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 27 - 32
I perceive the basic undergraduate physical education program ('s)...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
27	Has facilitated my development of strong relationships with faculty members within my department	1	5	4	3	0
28	Recognizes excellence in teaching	0	4	7	2	0
29	Does not provide adequate instructional resource materials	0	2	6	5	0
30	Provides adequate training for Instruction	0	4	6	3	0
31	Does not promote excellence in teaching	0	3	3	6	1
32	Orientation was adequate in preparing me to teach	0	2	4	6	1

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 9

Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 33 - 36

I perceive that the administrators of the basic undergraduate physical education program...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
33	Understand the role and responsibilities of being a GTA	2.15	.69
34	Are willing to support creative instructional changes and ideas from GTAs	2.92	.95
35	Do not act on concerns expressed by GTAs	3.69	.63
36	Will terminate GTAs who receives poor evaluations	3.00	.71

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 10

Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 33 - 36

I perceive that the administrators of the basic undergraduate physical education program...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
33	Understand the role and responsibilities of being a GTA	1	10	1	1	0
34	Are willing to support creative instructional changes and ideas from GTAs	0	5	5	2	1
35	Do not act on concerns expressed by GTAs	0	0	5	7	1
36	Will terminate GTAs who receives poor evaluations	0	3	7	3	0

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 11
Means and Standard Deviations to GTA Responses to Survey Items 37- 45
I...

Item #	Survey Item	Mean	Std. Dev.
37	Know what it takes to be successful as a GTA	1.69	.63
38	Have many areas that need improvement as an instructor	2.46	.97
39	Relate well to my Students	1.38	.51
40	Am not successful in presenting information clearly and precisely to my students	3.69	.75
41	Am capable of meeting the instructional diverse populations of students	1.92	.64
42	Find it difficult to maintain the appropriate degree of class control	4.38	.65
43	Have a clear understanding of university and departmental instructional, grading, and safety policies	1.85	.55
44	Can fairly and effectively assign grades to my students	1.92	1.12
45	Feel that I am a valued part of the instructional staff of the School of HHP	2.31	.85

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

Table 12
Frequency Counts for GTA Responses to Survey Items 37 - 45
I...

Item #	Survey Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Agree
37	Know what it takes to be successful as a GTA	5	7	1	0	0
38	Have many areas that need improvement as an instructor	2	5	4	2	0
39	Relate well to my students	8	5	0	0	0
40	Am not successful in presenting information clearly and precisely to my students	0	2	0	11	0
41	Am capable of meeting the instructional diverse populations of students	3	8	2	0	0
42	Find it difficult to maintain the appropriate degree of class control	0	0	1	6	6
43	Have a clear understanding of university and departmental instructional, grading, and safety policies	3	9	1	0	0
44	Can fairly and effectively assign grades to my students	5	6	1	1	0
45	Feel that I am a valued part of the instructional staff of the School of HHP	2	6	1	1	0

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Neutral 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

APPENDIX D
OBSERVATION NOTES: PHYSICAL LAYOUT OF DEPARTMENTS
AND GTA OFFICES

**Physical Layout of Departments and GTA Offices
3rd Floor of Student Activities Center**

Department of Recreation and Leisure Studies	
Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies	Department of Health Promotion and Behavior

2nd Floor of Ramsey Center

	Classrooms	Sport Instruction Research Laboratory
Adapted Physical Education Laboratory		Computer Laboratories

1st Floor of Ramsey Center

EXRS Faculty Offices		EXRS GTA Offices and Laboratories
		EXRS GTA Offices and Laboratories

APPENDIX E
PERSONAL RATING OF TEACHING
COMPETENCY INSTRUMENT

PERSONAL RATING OF TEACHING COMPETENCY

SCORE YOURSELF USING THE FOLLOWING SCALE:

- 0 - Cannot teach
- 1 - Some knowledge and/or competence. Feel comfortable in teaching.
- 2 - Knowledge, background and experience in teaching activity. In fitness activities could design individual fitness programs. In skill performance activities could teach on the intermediate or advanced level.

FITNESS RELATED ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aerobic Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Jogging | <input type="checkbox"/> Weight Training |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Body Conditioning | | |

SKILL PERFORMANCE ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archery | <input type="checkbox"/> Karate | <input type="checkbox"/> Springboard Diving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Backpacking/Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> Lifesaving | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming (Beg./Int.) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Badminton | <input type="checkbox"/> Lacrosse | <input type="checkbox"/> Synchronized Swim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball | <input type="checkbox"/> Racquetball | <input type="checkbox"/> Tag Football |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Billiards | <input type="checkbox"/> Riflery | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bowling | <input type="checkbox"/> Rollerskating | <input type="checkbox"/> Track & Field |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Canoeing | <input type="checkbox"/> Sailing | <input type="checkbox"/> Tumbling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fencing | <input type="checkbox"/> Scuba Diving | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Field Hockey | <input type="checkbox"/> Self Defense | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterpolo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Golf | <input type="checkbox"/> Sky Diving | <input type="checkbox"/> W.S.I. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics | <input type="checkbox"/> Snow Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Handball | <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer | <input type="checkbox"/> Judo |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback Riding | <input type="checkbox"/> Softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |

ARTISTIC/CREATIVE/DANCE ACTIVITIES

- | | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ballet | <input type="checkbox"/> Modern Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Jazz Dance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ballroom Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Tap Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Folk Dance | <input type="checkbox"/> Tai Chi | |

APPENDIX F

BUPAP STUDENT COURSE EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

Instructions for Answer Sheet

Instructor Code: Under the heading Identification Number indicate your instructor number under columns A and B. Please blacken in the appropriate circles - i.e., if your instructor's number is 10 write a 1 under column A and a 0 under column B. Blacken in the appropriate number.

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	0								
0	●	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
●	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

Your instructor will indicate his/her number.

Course Number: Under the heading Special Codes, indicate the course number of your present course - under columns KLMN. Under KLM indicate the course number, i.e., PEDB 103A, under K indicate a 1, under L indicate a 0, under M indicate a 3. Under column N indicate the level - beginning (A) indicates a 1, intermediate (B) indicate a 2, i.e., PEDB 103A would read 1031. Blacken in the appropriate course number.

SPECIAL CODES					
K	L	M	N	O	P
1	0	3	1		
0	●	0	0	0	0
●	1	1	●	1	1
2	2	2	2	2	2
3	3	●	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4	4

Your instructor will indicate the correct course number.

Sex: Under the portion identified as Sex, on the middle of the answer sheet, indicate (blacken) your sex. M - Male, F - Female.

College Identification: Under the portion identified as Grade or Education (in the middle of the answer sheet) indicate (blacken in) the appropriate college in which you are enrolled.

- | | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Arts & Sciences | 5 Law | 9 Vet Medicine | 13 Environmental Design |
| 2 Business | 6 Education | 10 Pharmacy | 14 Sonat |
| 3 Journalism | 7 Home Economics | 11 Graduate | 15 Special Studies |
| 4 Agriculture | 8 Forestry | 12 Social Work | 16 Physical Education Majors |

INSTRUCTIONS: On the answer sheet fill-in for each statement the appropriate response.

- Indicate your class level.

A. Freshman	B. Sophomore	C. Junior	D. Senior	E. Graduate
-------------	--------------	-----------	-----------	-------------
- Indicate the total number of college/university physical education classes, including the current, that you have taken.

A. one	B. two	C. three	D. four	E. five or more
--------	--------	----------	---------	-----------------
- Indicate the total number of college/university physical education credit hours you have completed, including the current course.

A. one	B. two	C. three	D. four	E. five or more credit hours
--------	--------	----------	---------	------------------------------
- How many of the following activities would you be interested in taking at UGA.

Badminton	Bowling	Golf ✓	Self Defense ✓	Scuba ✓	Volleyball	Dance ✓	Karate
Basketball	Canoeing	Racquetball	Softball	Tennis	Weight Training ✓	Fitness	Judo
A. one	B. two	C. three	D. four	E. five or more			

For the following statements fill-in a letter (number) for each statement according to the following scale:

- A (1) = Excellent - Outstanding - Superior
- B (2) = Above Average - Very Good
- C (3) = Average - Satisfactory
- D (4) = Deficient - Marginal - Weak
- E (5) = Poor - Inadequate - Unsatisfactory

If you have no basis for responding leave the space blank.

Your Opinions of the Instructor:

The degree to which:

5. Your instructor effectively communicated course objectives to you.
6. Your instructor explained class policies and course requirements.
7. Your instructor helped you to establish performance goals.
8. Your instructor was fair and impartial in dealing with you.
9. Your instructor appeared to be organized.
10. Your instructor started class on time.
11. Your instructor ended class on time.
12. Your instructor criticized effectively and appropriately.
13. Your instructor was able to keep you actively involved in learning during class time.
14. Your instructor provided individualized motivation and encouragement.
15. Your instructor effectively analyzed your performance and provided techniques for improvement when necessary.
16. Your instructor demonstrated an apparent knowledge of material relevant to this course.
17. Your instructor showed interest and concern for you as an individual.
18. Your overall rating of the instructor's ability in teaching this course.

APPENDIX G

EXAMPLE OF BUPAP DEPARTMENTAL MEMO

TO: PEDB Instructors

Russell

FROM: ~~Kan Russell~~

PLEASE READ THESE DIRECTIONS

SUBJECT: Grade Rolls

***PLEASE FOLLOW DIRECTIONS BELOW.** Also, record grade in grade column, AND bubble in grade. Sign at Bottom.

GRADE ROLLS ARE DUE MONDAY, DECEMBER 10th, NOON IN RM. 358

Please find attached the grade rolls for Spring. A few DO'S and DON'TS are identified in addition to a clarification of the WF grade.

CLARIFICATION: WF Grade

We will no longer give a WF grade for non-attendance. We will give a "U" grade for non-attendance.

GRADE ROLL - DO'S

1. On the official grade roll record grades for all students; "S", "U", "I". Use Number 2 pencil. Write S, U, or I grade and bubble in correct column. **[DO NOT bubble in preprinted W grades.]**
2. **Sign all grade rolls.**
3. **Make a copy of all grade rolls.**
4. If an "I" (incomplete) was recorded complete the incomplete form and attach to the copy of your rolls.
5. **Return original grade rolls and copy to Melanie's office by 12 NOON, MONDAY, DECEMBER 10th.**

GRADE ROLL - DON'TS

1. **[Do not record a "W" on the grade roll].** If you have signed a withdrawal form and a "W" is not indicated on the grade roll the students failed to have the withdrawal processed. Record a "U" grade. If you have a signed withdrawal form and a "W" is not indicated on the grade roll, make a copy of the withdrawal form, attach to grade roll, and record a "W".
2. Do not write "notes", "comments" on the official grade roll.

APPENDIX H
EXAMPLE OF STUDENT COURSE
EVALUATION FEEDBACK

OVERALL FREQUENCIES FALL 2001 4
14:48 Friday, January 11, 2002

The FREQ Procedure

ITEM2	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
1	1344	78.09	1344	78.09
2	227	13.19	1571	91.28
3	73	4.24	1644	95.53
4	34	1.98	1678	97.50
5	43	2.50	1721	100.00

Frequency Missing = 22

ITEM3	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
1	1320	76.97	1320	76.97
2	217	12.65	1537	89.62
3	76	4.43	1613	94.05
4	42	2.45	1655	96.50
5	60	3.50	1715	100.00

Frequency Missing = 28

ITEM4	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
1	141	8.21	141	8.21
2	221	12.86	362	21.07
3	356	20.72	718	41.79
4	280	16.30	998	58.09
5	720	41.91	1718	100.00

Frequency Missing = 25

ITEM5	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Frequency	Cumulative Percent
1	1358	79.05	1358	79.05
2	276	16.07	1634	95.11
3	65	3.78	1699	98.89
4	9	0.52	1708	99.42
5	10	0.58	1718	100.00

Frequency Missing = 25

APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW GUIDES

ADMINISTRATORS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

The purpose of this pragmatic ethnographic case study is to describe the organizational culture of a physical education graduate teaching assistant program and the manner in which the perspectives of key aspects of that culture are articulated or described by important constituents.

1. What are the duties and obligations of the GTA within the context of the basic undergraduate physical education program?
2. What is the purpose of the basic undergraduate physical education program as it relates to the institutional mission of UGA?
3. What criteria are/should be utilized to select prospective graduate students to receive graduate teaching assistantship?
4. In what manner should/are GTAs evaluated?
5. In what manner should/are they supervised? (**Basic Program Coordinator Only?**)
6. Describe an effective GTA (What would they do or look like)?
7. Identify instructional resources available for GTAs?
8. In what way does the experience of being a GTA foster instructional and professional development?
9. What does a GTA need to know or do in order to survive/excel in this institution?
10. In what ways are GTAs asked to participate in the decision-making process of issues that affect them?
11. How should a GTA prepare for instruction?
12. What advice would you give a novice GTA?
13. Do you have anything to add?

GTAs INTERVIEW GUIDE

The purpose of this pragmatic ethnographic case study is to describe the organizational culture of a physical education graduate teaching assistant program and the manner in which the perspectives of key aspects of that culture are articulated or described by important constituents.

1. What degree program are you currently enrolled in?
2. How many semesters have you been a GTA?
3. What courses do/have you taught?
4. What is your role as a GTA within the context of this institution?
5. Identify the purpose of the GTA program?
6. Why did you become a GTA?
7. What are your future career goals and aspirations?
8. How would you suggest the selection process for GTAs be administered?
9. In what ways should your instruction be evaluated?
10. How have you been supervised?
11. Do you feel you were/are adequately prepared to teach your assigned courses?
Why or why not?
12. What do you need to know or do in order to survive/excel in this program?
13. Who are your instructional role models or mentors?
14. What past instructional experiences impact your current instruction?
15. How did you feel about being observed?
16. Describe an effective GTA?
17. Do you have anything to add?
18. Describe the basic undergraduate physical education program (climate, people, resources).
19. In what capacity do you interact with other GTAs?
20. Describe the GTA orientation.
21. How does the GTA program's administrators recognize your instruction?
22. How has the GTA program supported you?
23. What suggestions would you make to improve program?
24. What skills do you want to acquire while being employed as a GTA?
25. Do you feel this program will allow you to develop skills relevant to your future career aspirations?
26. What issues and concerns do you have about being a GTA?
27. You have just received your course assignments...How do you prepare for instruction?
28. Describe your participation in decision-making processes that are relevant to you?
29. Who are the leaders of this program?
30. How did you feel about taking part in this study?
31. Do you have anything to add?

INSTITUTIONAL ADMINISTRATORS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

The purpose of this pragmatic ethnographic case study is to describe the organizational culture of a physical education graduate teaching assistant program and the manner in which the perspectives of key aspects of that culture are articulated or described by important constituents.

1. What is the role of the GTA within the context of this institution?
2. What criteria are/should be utilized to select prospective graduate students to receive graduate teaching assistantship?
3. In what manner should/are GTAs be evaluated?
4. In what manner should/are GTAs be supervised? **(Basic Program Coordinator Only?)**
5. Describe an effective GTA (What would they do or look like)?
6. Identify instructional resources available for GTAs?
7. In what way does the experience of being a GTA foster instructional and professional development?
8. What does a GTA need to know or do in order to survive/excel in this institution?
9. In what ways should GTAs participate in the decision-making process of issues that affect them?
10. In what ways are GTAs' instruction recognized?
11. How should a GTA prepare for instruction?
12. What advice would you give a novice GTA?
13. Do you have anything to add?

APPENDIX J
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

10/10/2001

Dear School of Health and Human Performance Graduate Teaching Assistant,

I am conducting a dissertation research study to better understand graduate teaching assistants' (GTAs) and administrators' perceptions of the organizational culture of the School of Health and Human Performance's basic physical education program. As a fellow GTA and TA Mentor I will use this information to aid in the preparation, training, and development of GTAs within the program. Currently, I am seeking a group of 10-12 GTAs to serve as a primary research group for my study.

Your participation in the study includes the following:

1. Three one-hour audiotaped interviews about your perceptions of the basic physical education program and your perceptions as a GTA in relation to the program's organizational culture and its impact on your instructional effectiveness.

2. Sharing of written artifacts (e.g. lesson plans, syllabi, etc.) from your teaching and/or teacher education courses that represent your perceptions of what is needed for you to perform your responsibilities as a graduate teaching assistant.

3. Participation in one hour-long focus group session in which you will take part in among other things the development of a GTA handbook and program mission statement.

4. Three observations of your teaching in which information will be gathered in "the field" to better stimulate conversation and insights into your work environment during interviews.

The above methods of data collection will require minimal interference in your teaching or course work. The interviews will be scheduled at your convenience and your discretion will guide the selection of written artifacts to include in the research study. The interviews and focus group activities will take place throughout the months of October, November, and the first week of December (at the latest). **There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. You will not be asked to provide incriminating or negative information. This research study is meant to be descriptive in nature and not intentionally evaluative.**

I hope that you will take this opportunity to participate in this research. If you wish to do so please indicate at the bottom of this sheet and return to my mailbox in the Ramsey Center, Rm. 324 or send an e-mail to jaredarussell@aol.com by **Friday, October 12th**. Your participation is important. If you have any questions please feel free to call me at (706) 542-4210, stop by my office Ramsey Center, Rm. 219 or e-mail me at jaredarussell@aol.com. Once again I hope to hear from you soon.

I look forward to working with you and thank you for your assistance.

Jared A. Russell, Dept. of Physical Education and Sport Studies

Yes, I would like to participate in your study.

1. My name is _____ and I can be reached by e-mail at _____ or phone _____.

2. I am a graduate student in the department of _____.

APPENDIX K
CONSENT FORMS

Consent Form for Graduate Teaching Assistants

I agree to participate in the research titled, An Examination of the Organizational Culture of a Physical Education Graduate Teaching Assistant Program, which is being conducted by Mr. Jared A. Russell, Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies, 219 Ramsey Student Center, (706) 542-4210. This research will be under the direction of Dr. Jepkorir Rose Chepyator-Thomson, Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies, Rm. 365 Ramsey Student Center, (706) 542-4434. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, and/or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1. The reason for this research is: to assess graduate teaching assistants' (GTAs) and administrators' perceptions of the organizational culture of the School of Health and Human Performance's basic physical education graduate teaching assistant (GTA) program. Mr. Jared Russell is involved in the mentoring of GTAs in the department and will use this information to aid in their preparation, training, and development.

2. My participation in the study includes the following:

- A) Three one-hour audiotaped interviews about my perceptions of the GTA program's organizational culture and its impact on my instructional effectiveness and development.
- B) Sharing of written artifacts (e.g. lesson plans, syllabi, etc.) from my teaching and/or teacher education courses that represent my perceptions of what is needed for me to perform my responsibilities as a graduate teaching assistant (GTA).
- C) The observation of two of my classes and my office. The purpose of the observations is to develop context for future interviews and to examine possible artifacts of my teaching.
- D) My participation in a one-hour focus group sessions in which I will take part in the development of among other things a GTA handbook and GTA program mission and vision statement. **During this focus group my confidentiality will be lost to those GTAs who participate but not to anyone outside of the focus group.** The focus group will only include fellow GTAs who are participating in the study in the same capacity as I am.
- E) The completion of a questionnaire concerning the organizational culture of the School of Health and Human Performance's basic physical education graduate teaching assistant (GTA) program.

3. The above methods of data collection will require minimal interference in my schedule. The interview will be scheduled at my convenience. **There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.** The benefits that I may expect from my participation are a copy of the completed summary of this research study upon request at the appropriate time that it is made available by the principal researcher. I understand that results of this study will not be sent to me automatically.

4. The results of this study will be utilized for the purposes of the researcher's dissertation research, presentations at national and international conventions, and manuscripts for journals. The individual identities of the participants in this study will be confidential, and will not be released in any identifiable form without prior consent unless required by law. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity and the identity of the academic departments. **Audiotapes, transcripts, and other collected data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Mr. Russell's office and will be kept for ten years for educational use which includes future publications in research journals and presentations at conventions and conferences.** Audiotapes will only be identified with pseudonyms, as will transcripts, which will also be kept in the filing cabinet. All participants will receive copies of their interview transcripts for review and member check, but the participants will not have access to other participants' interview transcripts.

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I consent to volunteer for this study. I have been given a copy of this form. Mr. Jared Russell will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached:

Phone: (706) 542-4210

E-Mail: jrussell@coe.uga.edu
jaredarussell@aol.com

Signature of Participant
Date

Signature of Researcher
Date

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write: Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.

Consent Form for Administrators

I agree to participate in the research titled, An Examination of the Organizational Culture of a Physical Education Graduate Teaching Assistant Program, which is being conducted by Mr. Jared A. Russell, Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies, 219 Ramsey Student Center, (706) 542-4210. This research will be under the direction of Dr. Jepkorir Rose Chepyator-Thomson, Department of Physical Education and Sport Studies, Rm. 365 Ramsey Student Center, (706) 542-4434. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary; I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, and/or destroyed.

The following points have been explained to me:

1. The reason for this research is: to assess graduate teaching assistants' (GTAs) and institution administrators' perceptions of the organizational culture of the School of Health and Human Performance's basic undergraduate physical education program as it relates to graduate teaching assistants (GTAs). Mr. Jared Russell is involved in the mentoring of GTAs in the program and will use this information to aid in their preparation, training, and development.

2. My participation in the study includes the following:

- A) An individual one-hour audiotaped interview about my perceptions of the School of Health and Human Performance basic undergraduate physical education program's organizational culture and graduate teaching assistant training and development.

3. The above methods of data collection will require minimal interference in my schedule. The interview will be scheduled at my convenience. **There are no foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study.** The benefits that I may expect from my participation are a copy of the completed summary of this research study upon request at the appropriate time that it is made available by the principal researcher. I understand that results of this study will not be sent to me automatically.

4. The results of this study will be utilized for the purposes of the researcher's dissertation research, presentations at national and international conventions, and manuscripts for journals. The individual identities of the participants in this study will be confidential, and will not be released in any identifiable form without prior consent unless required by law. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms to protect their identity and the identity of the academic departments. **Audiotapes, transcripts, and other collected data will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in Mr. Russell's office and will be kept for ten years for educational use which includes future publications in research journals and presentations at conventions and conferences.** All participants will receive copies of their interview transcripts for review and member check, but the participants will not have access to other participants' interview transcripts.

My signature below indicates that the researcher has answered all of my questions to my satisfaction and that I consent to volunteer for this study. I have been given a copy of this form. Mr. Jared Russell will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project, and can be reached:

Phone: (706) 542-4210

E-Mail: jrussell@coe.uga.edu
jaredarussell@aol.com

Signature of Participant Date

Signature of Researcher Date

For questions or problems about your rights please call or write: Chris A. Joseph, Ph.D., Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-6514; E-Mail Address IRB@uga.edu.