Teaching Gaps Filled
With Grad Assistants

By BOB WESTWOOD
Lantern Staff Writer
Graduate teaching assistants are common in any college student's life as most freshmen will soon learn.
Ohio State, like most colleges in the country, uses its grad students to fill the teaching gaps and cut down the size of classes.
About 1,430 graduates served as teaching assistants last year, according to George W. Baughman, director of Administrative Research and Data Processing. They came from the ranks of some 7,500 grads attending Ohio State.
In addition, some 600 educators from the Columbus area were teaching assistants, Baughman said.
During Autumn Quarter, 1969, about 19,000 students (of 32,100 undergraduates at Ohio State) had at least one class taught to them by a grad student, according to Charles A. Bauer, president of the Council of Graduate Students.
Baughman said that graduate assistants are paid an average of $300 a month. In addition, they receive fee waivers which entitle them to free student fees.
Most teach one class and are recitation instructors in large lecture-type courses, he added.
The departments of English, mathematics philosophy and the hard sciences have the most assistants, because more lower division students take these courses, Baughman said.
"For example, Biology 100 and 101 which cover over 3,500 students, involve three full-time faculty, two part-time faculty, and 60 non-faculty," Baughman said.
"Another case would be the basic English course (101) which had in (Autumn Quarter, 1969) 235 sections of roughly 30 students each which were taught primarily by nonfaculty lecturers."
Baughman said a student in a lower division course (first and second year) had a 61 per cent probability of having a faculty member as his instructor. In the case of an upper division course, a student had an 89 per cent chance, and overall an undergraduate had a chance of 83 per cent of being in a course taught by a faculty member.

HELPING HAND—Richard Helms, Arts and Sciences-4, a teaching assistant for Biology 100, advises Karen Amberg, Arts and Sciences-2.

—Lantern photo by Kathy Devaney
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Graduate Associate Stipends</th>
<th>Autumn 1978</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>UNIVERSITY SUMMARY</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Graduate Associates</td>
<td>3294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low)</td>
<td>1700/300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>407/561</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low)</td>
<td>300/400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>342/372</td>
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</tbody>
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| **COLLEGE OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 118  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 417/560  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/400  |
| Average  | 347/372  |

| **COLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND HOME ECONOMICS** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 244  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 300/580  |
| Average  | 381/700  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/372  |
| Average  | 372/372  |

| **COLLEGE OF THE ARTS** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 188  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 300/372  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/372  |
| Average  | 318/372  |

| **COLLEGE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 240  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 300/372  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/372  |
| Average  | 381/381  |

| **COLLEGE OF EDUCATION** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 264  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 100/300  |
| Average  | 300/410  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 100/410  |
| Average  | 400/410  |

| **COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 413  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 444/600  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/420  |
| Average  | 420/420  |

| **COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 261  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 300/410  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/372  |
| Average  | 347/372  |

| **COLLEGE OF MATHEMATICS AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 207  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 200/300  |
| Average  | 300/372  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/372  |
| Average  | 372/372  |

| **COLLEGE OF MEDICINE** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 121  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 100/300  |
| Average  | 300/420  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/420  |
| Average  | 400/420  |

| **COLLEGE OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES** |             |
| Number of Graduate Associates  | 245  |
| Actual Monthly Salary (High/Low) | 100/300  |
| Average  | 300/420  |
| 50% FTE Monthly Rate (High/Low) | 300/420  |
| Average  | 420/420  |

**FOOTNOTES**

1. The total number of graduate students holding graduate associate appointments during Autumn quarter 1978 was 3,415. Of these, 331 graduate students were excluded from their respective fields and the following reasons.

2. The graduate student and joint appointments administered by different employing units. Graduate students with appointments administered by the Research Foundation or the Engineering Experiment Station were counted as if their appointments were administered by their enrollment units unless a different employing unit could be identified.

3. The appointments included room and board which were not reflected in the actual stipend.

4. The appointment amounts were supplemented to fellowships or travel grants.

5. The actual monthly salary is based on the number of dollars paid to each individual student for the month of October 1978. The actual monthly salary is based on the total dollars paid divided by the number of graduate associates. All stipends include a waiver of both in-state and out-of-state tuition.

The average 50% FTE monthly rate divided by the number of graduate associates equals actual FTE.

The average 50% FTE monthly rate for an employing unit

4. Other Employing Units include the National Center for Research in Vocational Education regional campuses, HRC, University Hospitals, and 72 other small employing units.

Adapted from the Graduate Associates Stipend Report of January 31, 1979, compiled by Dean Givens, Graduate School
TAs' walkout to protest low salary, neglect

By Robert Hust
9 Feb 1979

A one-day Teaching Assistant (TA) work stoppage scheduled for Feb. 13 is an action by TAs throughout the College of Humanities, not just the English Graduate Organization (EGO).

"EGO just got the ball rolling," said David Caldwell, a TA in the Department of German. Caldwell said that TAs from other departments in the humanities are as involved with the work stoppage as EGO, but that other departments have fewer TAs.

Caldwell said the TAs in the German department have voted to support the work stoppage. Of 18 TAs, 15 voted for the stoppage, two were opposed and one abstained.

The history TAs also have voted on whether to support the stoppage but Beth Litwak, a TA in that department, said the results have not been determined.

Litwak said she believes the history TAs are divided on the issue. Litwak, who favors the stoppage, said it will be an individual decision by each TA whether to walk out on the 13th.

Caldwell said the purpose of the stoppage is not only to get higher TA pay but also to call attention to the plight of the humanities.

"We find it interesting that the state complains Johnny can't read when they neglect (funding) the humanities," Caldwell said.

Caldwell said the College of Humanities is the most important in teaching students to formulate and communicate ideas effectively.

Caldwell said money is not the main issue. "If we were out to make money we wouldn't be in humanities. But people just cannot get by on what they're making."

Diether Haenicke, dean of the College of Humanities, said the walkout is superfluous, unfortunate and ill-advised. "I am very disappointed with the stoppage and there is no need to do it," Haenicke said.

Haenicke said the issue of higher pay for TAs is his top priority.

Caldwell said the TAs and the dean agree on the issues but not on tactics. "When we meet with the dean he seems more interested in preventing the stoppage than working to get the increase," Caldwell said. "We are on the same team. We are trying to draw attention to his college."

Caldwell said he hopes the stoppage will draw attention to the college and give the dean some bargaining power in requesting the pay increase.

"We just decided to do something rather than be quiet and have the pay increase rejected," Caldwell said.

Caldwell said that the 9 percent pay increase of two years ago and the 6 percent pay increase of last year are misleading. Those increases are only for new TAs, he said. "Anyone who has been here for awhile (more than two years) has not seen any of that money," he said.

Caldwell said the starting pay is raised to help attract good people but that once a graduate student is enrolled he receives no increase. "There should be a uniform increase throughout," he said.

Litwak said that the work stoppage will not be a traditional protest. Lectures and seminars about the humanities will be part of the demonstration to help draw attention to the humanities, she said.
TA skills workshop held
Improves quality of teaching

By Susan R. Lancaster

Amid recent calls for higher standards among university teaching associates (TAs), OSU foreign language departments have devised a unique teaching workshop for incoming TAs.

According to Gerard Ervin, foreign language coordinator for the College of Humanities, the two-week intensive course provides basic teaching skills for the beginning teacher, while working to ensure competence among foreign languages TAs.

"Up to two or three years ago, the preparation a beginning foreign language TA received depended on the TA's department," Ervin said.

"Three years ago, the German and Russian departments together began a full-day, two-week, pre-term course for new TAs which now includes new TAs from virtually all of the foreign language departments."

The course, taught by faculty TA supervisors from the various language departments, is required of all incoming foreign language TAs.

"It reflects real commitment on the part of the college office to lay out that kind of money," Ervin said.

"We're one of only a few in the country to conduct such a workshop, at least among foreign language departments."

Other OSU departments, such as English and linguistics, conduct three-day workshops for new TAs, but the foreign language departments are unique in providing intensive practical training for the new teachers.

"We're not after a lot of pedagogical theory," explained Ervin. "The TA should come out of the course with classroom survival skills."

According to Ervin, the workshop is divided into three parts. The first section includes a collective meeting every morning for TAs from each language, to introduce them to the teaching of foreign languages, to the university, and Columbus.

"The TA should come out of the course with classroom survival skills."

In the afternoon, a faculty supervisor from each language takes the group for that particular language for a more specialized session, where they are introduced to the department and the textbook to be used, and practice the teaching of their particular language.

In addition to practicing various teaching methods, the TAs have an opportunity to experiment on each other. For example, French TAs might present basic French grammar to Russian TAs, and German TAs might practice on the Spanish TAs.

Robert Weintraut, a third year German TA, praised the practical aspect of the course.

"The best part of the workshop was being able to practice on each other, to people who didn't know that language," she said. "If an explanation was not clear, the others would tell you and perhaps suggest different or better techniques for that particular grammar point."

According to Ervin, the third part of the course is handled differently by the various departments, and involves the actual supervision of teaching during the quarter.

In Slavic languages, for instance, the TAs receive three units of credit for the workshop, and then enroll for two units of actual teaching credit.

Other departments, such as German, grant five units of credit under one course number, but assign grades based on both the workshop performance and autumn quarter teaching activities.

In addition to academic credit, the new TAs receive a two-week salary for the workshop.

"If it were just a course, we couldn't ask them to come two weeks early, and if it were just a job, we couldn't assign homework, give grades, or require outside reading," Ervin said.

Heimtraut Taylor, director of undergraduate language instruction for the German department, agreed.

"The workshop does not just stop after two weeks," she said. "Our TAs are required to meet with me in weekly meetings all year long. We continue to practice teaching, exchange ideas and go over testing."

Taylor added that TAs must do extra reading in theoretical texts, observe each others' classes, and meet with her for individual conferences.

Mario Iglesias, director of elementary instruction in Spanish, also emphasized follow-up supervision as an integral part of the course.

"My role is to challenge them to do their best, to teach them how to deal with conflict situations, such as grade grievances, and to evaluate them as teachers," he explained.

"The idea behind the workshop is to improve the quality of teaching," he added. "It is a requirement. They have to become good teachers, and must enter the profession with the commitment to be good teachers."

Taylor also placed great emphasis on teaching performance, pointing out that TAs in the foreign language are largely responsible for the elementary language curriculum.

Both Taylor and Iglesias agreed that an unsatisfactory teaching performance is grounds for termination of a TA contract.

"With a person who is extremely good academically, but poor as a teacher, we cannot renew the contract," said Iglesias.

"We may try to get a research associateship for something else, but we will not continue the teaching appointment."

The supervisors emphasized that the workshop represents only the first step in TA training, and doesn't guarantee outstanding teaching from every trainee.

"While we try to foresee areas of potential problems," said Ervin, "the person is on his or her own in the classroom."
OSU standards for TAs vary

By Barbara Behrendt

Qualifications for graduate teaching associates at OSU are left up to the individual disciplines for which the students work.

And although some departments place strict requirements on their associates, an education college consultant calls their inconsistent preparation an "academic tragedy" made even more appalling by the fact that many go on to become professors.

For example, in the economics department, a graduate student must complete at least 45 hours toward a masters degree before he or she can lead recitations, said Don Parsons, graduate committee chairman. Only dissertation level students can teach their own courses, he added.

But the chemistry department allows first quarter graduate students who start in autumn to teach basic chemistry after only one week of orientation on the principles of "how chemistry is taught" at Ohio State, said Perry Frey, department vice chairman.

Frey said a chemistry TA must have a bachelor's degree in chemistry. He believes this "qualifies a person to teach basic chemistry" since he or she would be qualified to be a professional chemist.

Other departments disagree on the amount of teaching experience required of TAs or their knowledge of teaching techniques.

Henry Angelino, professor of psychology, requires that all TAs have some teaching experience before they can teach a course he supervises.

The English department requires a three-day teacher training workshop for inexperienced TAs, said Michael Rupright, department administrative assistant.

Parsons said the economics department has no teacher training program for TAs.

According to Dale Jackson, a consultant for an education college-sponsored teaching service, some departments assume, "If you know content, then good teaching can follow." This is where problems arise.

There are ways for TAs to get the necessary training, however. The teaching consulting service offers free assistance for TAs and faculty members who would like to improve their teaching skills.

But Jackson said in the last year less than 10 of the approximately 120 teachers seeking help were TAs. Last autumn quarter there were 1,948 TAs working at OSU, although not all of them taught classes.

Those who used the service were enrolled in a TA training class begun by Kevin Ryan, professor of foundations and resources. The course was offered through the College of Education.

The course, begun last year on an experimental basis, includes teaching skills and advice on "how to survive and excell" in an associateship, Ryan said.

The idea for the class came to Ryan after he found that a similar course offered by the graduate school had been discontinued due to lack of interest.

But Jackson said a university-wide set of requirements for TAs would probably not be the answer. "The nature of the university is one of independence" between the different departments, he said.
TA program faces cuts, language barriers

Job security sliced by budget

By Maraiinn Main
Lantern staff writer 1-22-82

Concern about the quality and training of OSU teaching associates (TA) has spread in the gloom of Ohio's budget crisis.

TAs doubt their job security while undergraduate students and faculty question the quality of instruction TAs provide. All feel the lack of state funds makes the situation more critical for both TAs and the university.

"Most of the present TAs are assured of a job through spring quarter but after that the picture is uncertain," said Joe Hentges, a TA in the Department of Education.

Hentges believes cutting the number of TA or research positions will hurt the university because graduate students will be less likely to attend OSU if fewer jobs are available here.

A lower number of TAs attending OSU would lead to fewer sections of undergraduate classes, a higher teacher/student ratio and more students being closed out of classes, Hentges said.

Many TAs already are concerned by large class sizes. They expressed their views at a TA forum given by the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) Jan. 14.

Janet Martin, CGS president, said because of the success of the first forum, a second will be held at 7 p.m. Feb. 14 in Stillman 100.

Martin said TA input primarily concerned present teaching conditions, especially the number of sections a TA is required to teach and the inadequate preparation time a TA is given for classes and selecting textbooks.

"At the meeting there was agreement that a maximum of two sections should be required per TA," Martin said. "And rather than informing a TA the first day of the quarter, we want a two to four week notice by a department as to which classes and how many sections the TA will instruct."

The language problem of foreign TAs is the most common complaint Martin receives from undergraduates.

"Since we were unable to discuss the problem at the last TA forum, it will most likely be a topic at the next one," she said.

Martin believes the problem is communicating subject matter to a particular student's level of comprehension rather than just understanding an accent.

"I've had comments concerning the accents of Australian TAs and TAs from the southern United States, so it is unfair to point to just one or two ethnic groups who serve as TAs," she said.

Hentges said some students unnecessarily blame a foreign TA's accent for their own poor performance in that class.

Math TAs must pass an English proficiency test.

If a student fails the language test or the classroom training, a TA position is not offered. The student is used in another capacity, such as a grader, Gold said.

Foreign TAs in other departments are not required to take an English exam or receive classroom training.

"Since I received my bachelor of science degree from the University of Illinois, I was not required to take any English test when I came to OSU," said a Vietnamese TA in the Department of Microbiology.

The TA does not believe a language training class should be required for foreign TAs because many are proficient in English prior to the teaching assignment.

"I think it just depends on the individual and how comfortable he is speaking English," the TA said.

To more adequately prepare TAs to instruct classes, two courses now are offered emphasizing classroom technique and speaking ability, Martin said.
TA training varies in Big Ten

By John Steele
Lantern staff writer

Throughout the Big Ten, the requirements a graduate student must meet to be a teaching assistant vary as much as each academic department. Resembling a can of alphabet soup, the variety of standards dash the administration's dream of conformity.

The University of Minnesota's Graduate Assistants Office said there is a written language requirement for foreign TAs whose native language is not English. Minnesota would not give details of department requirements.

"Any generalization about departmental matters would be inflammatory without need," said an a graduate student working as an administrative assistant.

But administrators at Michigan, Michigan State, Wisconsin and Iowa did reveal some of their departmental procedures involving TAs.

At the University of Michigan, graduates working for the university are members of the state teachers' union.

John Forsyth, assistant personnel director of staff and university relations, said TAs usually are fulfilling degree requirements by teaching classes.

But depending on the department, TA training programs to improve teaching skills may be either voluntary or required. He said TAs are judged by faculty and student evaluations.

If a foreign TA has problems communicating in English, he is enrolled in the university's English Language Institute if the class he teaches is a discussion rather than a laboratory setting.

Dean John Cantlon of Michigan State University said many departments require graduates to teach at least one term.

"Training programs are a mixture of teaching, examination, and general relationship techniques with departmental differences," he said.

Judy Craig, assistant dean of the University of Wisconsin's college of letters and sciences, which selects TAs for the university, said a faculty committee is reviewing campus-wide selection procedures and may recommend campus standardization in that area.

Classroom training varies from simple orientation to video taped performances. She said there is a TA review every semester by a committee of faculty, students and graduate peers.

Sherwood Tuttle, dean of the University of Iowa's college of liberal arts, which also appoints TAs, said most TAs are capable instructors because of the standards they must meet to become graduate students.

But Tuttle wishes there was more faculty supervision of TAs through training and teaching.

"When I was a graduate student," he said, "no first-year graduates were allowed to teach a class and pay was based on your degree. Today, you have first-year grad students teaching and all graduate pay is the same because of economics and the open market."
Foreign teaching associates (TA) face not only a language barrier but a cultural barrier that alienates them from OSU undergraduates in the classroom.

Undergraduate students criticize some of these TAs for failing to communicate English effectively.

But Colin B. Bull, dean of the College of Mathematics and Physical Sciences, said cultural background also contributes to the problem with foreign TAs.

"Many of these students come from cultures where to question an instructor just isn't done. Then, when they get into a classroom and have 50 students from Chillicothe all asking questions at the same time they go into shock," he said.

Dorothy Brickman, director of international student and scholar services, agrees the problem is not limited to language alone.

Brickman said the relationship between students and a teacher is very different here than in other countries. "We have a very casual and informal education system which isn't carried over to other countries."

She said her office holds a seven-day orientation program to help foreign students adjust to this country. This program tries to help these students understand the differences not only in geography and culture, but also in the educational system as well, she said.

In addition, Brickman said workshops are held for foreign students and Americans to discuss differences in their cultures.

Currently, there is no standardized procedure governing the language requirements for non-native English-speaking TAs entering the OSU classroom.

James M. Siddens, coordinator of admissions, said it is up to the different departments to set standards for foreign TAs.

He said graduate students whose primary language is not English must pass an English proficiency test before being admitted to the Graduate School. The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) only is used to test a minimum understanding of English, he said.

"The test covers vocabulary, reading and grammar. It doesn't test the students' speaking ability," he said.

Siddens explained the purpose of this test is to insure the student can handle note taking, lectures and take tests in the graduate program.

For some colleges, however, the use of foreign TAs is a necessity which outweighs any of the associated problems.

According to Bull, whose college employs approximately 700 TAs — 25 percent of whom are foreign — the course load is such that "we can't afford not to use them."

"Last year about 397,000 credit hours were taught and we only have 206 faculty members. Obviously you can see the problem we have," he said.

He said an attempt could be made to hire more American graduate students but it would cost more money because of stiff competition across the country for TAs.

"The number of domestic students available is less than the demand. We could use only domestic students and have huge sections of classes or go with the present system and have smaller sections, which is more preferable," he said.

S. Earl Brown, dean of the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, thinks the language problem is "grossly over exaggerated."

"Most students, when they see an Oriental TA, immediately assume there will be a problem," he said.

Donald D. Glower, dean of the College of Engineering, said there is a problem but it can be solved.

He said because he has two children enrolled at OSU, he is familiar with the students' perception of foreign TAs.

The present system of training these TAs was not adequate for providing students with effective education, he said.

Brown said, however, TAs who do not speak English as a primary language receive help from the university to orient them to teaching.
Top-notch TAs to get $1,000 prize

By Diane Richards
Lantern staff writer

Every winter quarter, students and faculty nominate graduate teaching associates (TAs) who they feel have shown outstanding classroom performance.

Since its beginnings in 1973, more than 65 TAs have won the Graduate Teaching Associate Awards.

Nominations can be made on an official form to be printed in the Lantern Feb. 12 and 23, or forms can be picked up at the Graduate School, University Hall 247.

Informal nominations can be made in a letter explaining why a nominated TA should win the award. All nominations are due by Feb. 26.

After the nominations are turned in, a 13-member committee of undergraduates, graduates and faculty members will evaluate nominated TAs.

The evaluation process may include committee members going unannounced into classes taught by TAs to observe.

Kate Carey, a reporter for the Office of Communication Services and a former committee member, said she looked for outstanding qualities and personal aspects described on a TAs nomination form. She also was impressed by the number of times a TA’s students stayed after class.

“The decisions weren’t easy to make because all of the TAs were excellent,” Carey said.

Amy Edgar, administrative assistant of the Graduate School, said a TA cannot be considered again if he or she already has won the $1,000 and plaque.

Sue Avarill, a graduate student in romance languages from Wooster, was a winner in last year’s contest. She said the award was an honor and a surprise.

“Winning the award didn’t change my teaching style,” she said. She spent half of the prize money on a vacation and the other half went into the bank.

Only ten awards can be distributed each year, Edgar said. Most of the awards come from the College of Humanities, the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences.

The reason so many nominations are made from these areas is that they hire more TAs than other colleges, Edgar said.

The annual contest was started because the Council of Graduate Students thought there should be some kind of recognition for excellent teaching by TAs.

Last year, 70 TAs were nominated for the awards. So far, 70-80 nominations have been entered in 1982. The winners will not be announced until spring quarter, Edgar said.
Students suggest instruction changes

By Marianne Main
Lantern staff writer 3-1-82

A list of recommendations based on an undergraduate student survey about OSU teaching associates (TAs), was presented Wednesday to the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) by the Undergraduate Student Government (USG).

The second TA forum, sponsored by CGS, was an opportunity for undergraduate and graduate students to discuss problems and recommendations about TAs.

Recommendations made by USG in response to the survey included:

- All university departments should require prospective TAs to attend a seminar or workshop before teaching in that department.
- All departments should have an English language program for foreign TAs or be able to refer TAs to a department that offers a language program.
- All prospective TAs should be interviewed in person with strong consideration given toward the candidate’s academic excellence, English language proficiency, ability to communicate and to organize classroom materials.
- The survey, distributed to approximately 100 students in various university colleges, cited major problems encountered most by undergraduates: difficulty in understanding foreign TAs and the TAs’ lack of preparation for teaching a class.

Other comments made by undergraduates in the survey included the question regarding teaching ability of some TAs, and the value of receiving TA instruction relative to a student’s educational investment.

Joseph Hentges, a doctoral candidate in educational administration, and CGS President Janet Martin were chairpersons of the forum.

Motions passed by CGS members in response to the USG survey included:
- A requirement that all graduate school TAs attend a paid workshop before they teach any undergraduate-level courses.
- All departments should allow students to evaluate their TAs before the fourth week of a quarter. This would allow TAs to receive feedback and suggestions as to how they could improve their teaching skills.
- Also passed was a resolution to formulate a CGS committee to study the other USG proposals and to present their results at the next CGS meeting April 19.

After presentation of the committee’s results, CGS will vote on the proposals. Those resolutions passed will be given to university administrators for action, said CGS Vice-President David Eales.

Four executive members of CGS will comprise the committee. These members include Martin, Eales, Treasurer Bob Zahler and Secretary Jan Eriksen.

TAs in attendance questioned the method of survey distribution and made recommendations for students involved in a TA conflict.

Pankaj Doshi, a TA in the Department of Mathematics, believes students are apathetic and do not try to solve conflicts encountered with a foreign TA.

“When I ask them, (my class), whether they have problems understanding me, all I get is blank faces and no answer,” Doshi said. “Do they not care if they cannot understand what I say?”

Doshi also said few of his students take advantage of office hours to ask questions or express problems.

“I sit there during my office hours and few students come; they only bother to see me around the midterm or final,” Doshi said.

Karen Altman, a TA in the Department of Communications, said her department has begun bimonthly forums for TAs on subjects related to their class material or improvement of teaching and communications skills.

She said the forums are not required but “usually draw a good turnout depending on the topic.”
Students ask for more TA training

By Laura Hubka
Lantern staff writer

A list of recommendations on the training and quality of graduate teaching associates (TAs) has been approved by the Council of Graduate Students (CGS) and will be sent to university decision-making organizations.

The list will go to the Council on Academic Affairs May 5, the University Senate and the Board of Trustees, said Janet Martin, CGS president. "Students have made suggestions and we feel the faculty needs to have some say," Martin said.

The recommendations approved by CGS are:

* A handbook should be developed by the various departments for TAs. It would describe instructional policies and provide information concerning university services and facilities as they relate to teaching.
* All TAs should be required to attend training programs prior to beginning teaching. The programs would be developed by the departments or colleges, and include such areas as: responsibilities, resources, communication skills, grading, presentation of course materials.
* All prospective TAs should be interviewed in person or by telephone when personal interviews are not practical. Strong consideration should be given toward the ability to communicate and a proficiency in the spoken English language.
* The university should have English programs for foreign TAs and other TAs in need of such a program with an emphasis on verbal communication skills.
* All departments should have a student evaluation process in conjunction with the Faculty Evaluation Process. The evaluation should be done bi-quarterly and the results would be available to TAs.
* A TA should be informed by the ninth week of the quarter which class he or she will teach the next quarter.
* All departments should be required to provide written job descriptions to TAs describing the course, goals and objectives.
* A central reporting system should be set up to monitor unfilled TA positions throughout the campus and to act as a clearinghouse providing information to TAs.
* Consideration by departments should be given to developing differentiated stipend levels based on the number of years of graduate work completed.

A survey of about 100 students in various colleges conducted last quarter showed the two major problems were difficulty in understanding foreign TAs and the lack of TAs preparation for teaching a class.

Last quarter several open forums were held for undergraduate and graduate students to discuss problems and make recommendations concerning the training and quality of TAs.

Because of these problems and the condition of the state budget, which will make students pay higher tuition, Martin said that students deserve to have a better education.

Martin said that many Ohio legislators do not see higher education as important and do not support graduate programs. And at the university, research has taken precedence over teaching.

"We want to shift a bit of the thinking. All the best researchers are not necessarily the best teachers," Martin said. "We think teaching should be a primary concern," she added.

"This is the first time students have attempted to make a policy concerning TAs," Martin said. She said it is a big step toward realizing the importance of teaching.

Martin said a policy is needed to improve the quality of teaching.
Guidelines for OSU TAs

4-30-62

Student instruction demands skill — it requires patience and effective communication. OSU students have determined that some graduate teaching associates (TAs) lack these important qualities and have proposed practical guidelines for these instructors.

Last week the Council of Graduate Students approved a list of recommendations for improving the training and quality of TAs in accordance with the survey distributed to students last quarter. The poll determined that students had problems with TAs who came unprepared for class and those who lacked sufficient English skills.

The council’s suggestions for TAs include mandatory training sessions, maintenance of English programs, quarterly evaluations and personal interviews with prospects before hiring occurs.

These recommendations are good ones indeed. Plenty of intelligent TAs have serious difficulty communicating with their students. Sometimes these people come from foreign countries and lack sufficient English skills. Others have difficulty conveying ideas because they understand the subject at a higher level and have problems explaining these concepts in simple terms.

Many times it is not the fault of the foreign TA, who is out of touch with American methods of teaching, but it is the administrator who is to blame for failing to require training programs.

Other TAs know their subjects well, yet lack the patience and ability to work with people. These qualities are essential to effective teaching, and administrators should deny these people the right to teach, for their personalities dampen the learning process.

Some administrators contend that their departments offer programs for TAs, and that’s good, but perhaps they need to try harder to improve their programs.

Students deserve quality education in return for the large sums of money they pay for tuition each year. We hope administrators keep this in mind when they decide whether to approve the proposal in the upcoming months.
Workshop aims to better training

TAs get crash course in teaching

By Lynne Brungarth
Lantern staff writer

9-27-82

Teaching associates were able to improve their skills at a recent three-day workshop, sponsored by an ad hoc committee that was named to address TA training.

Workshop coordinator Nancy Zimpher said participating TAs came back from the workshop with “very positive” feedback.

The first day dealt with various teaching methods, the second focused on matching teaching methods with student development and the final day dealt with measuring a student’s performance.

Eighty TAs from eight different departments participated. Approximately 10 percent was foreign.

OSU officials did not demand all TAs participate, but some department chairmen may have required TAs to attend, Zimpher said.

The workshop was part of a two-phase plan formulated by the ad hoc committee, she said.

The six-member committee was formed winter quarter after college deans in the colleges of education and humanities were approached by OSU President Edward H. Jennings, who was concerned about TA training and quality.

Zimpher speculated that Jennings approached these two colleges because they had more experience in conducting workshops.

The deans appointed three members from both colleges to serve on the committee.

Committee members are: Michael W. Curran, Gerald L. Ervin and Gary Walters, all from the College of Humanities, and Russell J. Spillman Sr., Nancy Zimpher and Peter Lemish, all from the College of Education.

The plan’s second phase surveyed all OSU colleges to determine TA hiring practices. Survey results are being tabulated and should be finished by the end of autumn quarter.

The outcome of the workshop and survey may result in the formulation of some TA training policies.

The policy changes could be made in conjunction with the Council of Graduate Students and Undergraduate Student Government.

Last April, the council and USG filed a list of recommendations regarding TA training and quality. The recommendations were based on the results of a survey, given to 100 students from various colleges, that questioned TA quality and training given to 100 students.

The proposed recommendations were:

• The development of a handbook describing teaching policies for TAs.
• Mandatory TA training programs.
• English programs for foreign TAs.
• Student evaluations of TAs.
• A written job description for all TAs.
• A centralized reporting system to monitor unfilled TA positions.
• Development of differentiated stipend levels based on the number of years of graduate work completed by a TA.
• Interviewing all TAs in person or by telephone before they are hired.
• Informing TAs by the ninth week of the quarter which classes they will teach.

The recommendations must be approved by the University Senate before they are reviewed by Jennings and the Board of Trustees.
Ten GTA's received a surprise last week while they were teaching when they were selected as recipients of the Graduate Associate Teaching Award.

Winners of this year's awards are: Paul Bartlett, Anatomy; Craig Runniman, Political Science; Michael Gribble, Psychology; Robert Dailey, Industrial and Systems Engineering; Shari Robins, Humanities Education; Donald Tidrick, Accounting; Stacy Gartin, Agricultural Education; Patrice Whiteside, Dance; Kim Lance, Chemistry; and John Frysinger, French.

The awards were distributed during the week of May 20-27 in an in-class presentation where winners received a plaque and an invitation to the Graduate School Awards Reception.

The reception will take place 4-6 p.m. June 1, at the Faculty Club, said Amy Edgar, administrative assistant in the graduate school and staff support for the Graduate Associate Teaching Award Selection Committee.

At the reception winners will be awarded a check for $1,000 and OSU President Edward H. Jennings will be on hand with other administrators and those responsible for the selection, evaluation and presentation of the awards to congratulate the winners, Edgar said.

The Graduate School coordinates the efforts of the selection committee, but it is a university-wide award which is equivalent to the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching that is awarded to faculty members, Edgar said.

Graduate students can be nominated by either students or faculty and it takes only one nomination to be considered, she said. Nominations are open to students in all areas of study.

Nominations for the awards are solicited through advertisements in the Lantern about three times a quarter, Edgar said. The competition runs from spring quarter to winter quarter.

In order for graduate students to be eligible for consideration they must have been enrolled for at least seven hours during the quarter they were nominated and they must have taught a class during the quarter they were nominated, Edgar said.

Once the nominations are closed in February, letters are sent out to the nominees. The nominees are asked to send in student evaluations of their teaching, which most departments encourage them to hand out, Edgar said.

The selection committee, comprised of five undergraduates, six graduate students (usually some who have received the award themselves) and two faculty members who have received the Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching, evaluate the nominees, Edgar said.

The committee selects the 10 winners on the basis of screening the nominee's student evaluations, the nomination applications and observations made by committee members during impromptu visits to the actual class, Edgar said.

Lance, a graduate student from Wooster, was presented his award for Chemistry in class Tuesday. Lance said he was aware of the nomination and he was a little suspicious when the presenter came into his class.

"People in coats and ties don't usually walk into the chemistry lab," he noted.

"It was really nice. It's definitely an honor to know that your students think enough of your teaching to nominate you."

"In the back of your mind you always have the idea, 'Well what if I won?,' but you really don't think about it until you do," Lance said.

Frysinger, a graduate student from Celina, was surprised in his French class Wednesday. He said that he had been observed several times but, "I was surprised that I did win."

"I'm very honored. Out of about 2,400 GTA's at OSU who could have won, I was very pleased to win." He added that he hopes to use his money to take a trip to France at the end of the summer.
Tax waiver delayed for grad associates

By Genevieve Lataillade
Lantern staff writer
Graduate associates will not have to pay taxes on fee waivers until Jan. 1, 1986.

Under federal guidelines of the Deficit Reduction Act of 1984, taxing fee waivers of graduate students and employee educational benefits would have begun June 30, 1985.

According to congressional sources, the extension was prompted by political pressure from employers, labor unions and schools.

The tax will affect graduate teaching and graduate administrative associates. Graduate research associates are exempt from the tax if their research is directly connected to their thesis.

Don Christensen, president of the Council of Graduate Students, said the extension "is only a relief in the sense that it gives us some time to gather a campaign."

The major concern is to make the extension permanent, Christensen said.

He added that the Council of Graduate Students will wait until after the election "to know what kind of lobbying efforts we would go into."

Christensen said a letter-writing campaign might be possible.

When Congress reconvenes in January, the American Association of Universities will continue to lobby to make fee waivers non-taxable beyond December of 1985, said Herb Asher, special assistant for state relations. Asher is also special assistant to OSU President Edward H. Jennings.

According to Christensen, the average monthly income for a graduate associate, excluding the fee waiver, is $612 a month, or $5,508 for a nine-month appointment.

"That is only $528 yearly above the Federal Poverty Income Guidelines of 1984 for a family of one at $4,980," he said.

"The fee waiver is not discretionary income," he said. Taxing fee waivers further aggravates a student's finances, Christensen said.
TAs take up slack at big universities

By Paul Corbitt
Lantern staff writer

Dependence on graduate teaching assistants for lower level courses is a fact of life at a large university.

Some OSU faculty and graduate students responded recently to a report by the National Endowment for the Humanities which said many undergraduates were turning away from courses in literature, history, philosophy and languages because of dull teaching.

The report, written by William Bennett, President Reagan's nominee for Secretary of Education, said universities were not putting their most experienced and accomplished teachers in freshman and sophomore humanities classes.

Instead, often to save money, many universities used adjunct faculty and graduate students in these classes.

Bennett's criticism of the teaching at lower level courses is valid for any large university, said Thomas Willke, Vice Provost of the College of Arts and Sciences.

The university's attention to lower level courses is "incredibly better than it was ten years ago," Willke said.

"Everything is stacked against doing a good job with the freshmen," he said. "Funding on these courses is traditionally very low. We're teaching large batches of students relatively cheaply."

In addition to teaching, faculty have other responsibilities, like research, which are required for tenure, Willke said.

Despite these obstacles, he said there is a real sense of duty on the part of the departmental chairmen and professors to do a good job in the lower level courses.

G. Michael Riley, dean of the College of Humanities, disagrees with the Bennett report which says the quality of lower level humanities courses is poor.

Michael Weis, a graduate student from Columbus who has taught American history at the 100 level, said graduate teaching assistants in lower level courses are closely supervised both in terms of books assigned and course content.

History professors already have a substantial teaching load of courses for graduate students and history majors, he said.

"If we could hire another 10 or 15 professors, it would be great to have them teaching the lower level courses," Weis said. "But we hire more people or else we accept our funding levels as they are and accept the TAs who don't do a bad job at all."

Tony Machosky, a graduate student in English who has taught English 110, said he doesn't agree with Bennett's claim that undergraduates courses may suffer because of teaching by graduate students.

"I think it's just the opposite," he said. "Graduate TAs often put more time into their courses than faculty," he said.

If undergraduates are turning away from humanities courses, it's because the students are not interested in the courses, not because the courses are uninteresting, he said.

The unofficial policy of the English department is for all professors to teach the gamut of courses from 100 to 900, said Morris Beja, chairman of the department of English. Few do so because there is not enough faculty to go around, he said.

"I agree with Bennett that the results of that are often unfortunate," he said, "but it's not that we lack the will or good intentions.

Understaffing hurts the upper level students, too, said Ronald Rosbottom, chairman of the department of romance languages.

"Cheap, that is, inexpensive teaching, is not necessarily poor teaching," he said. "It's simply cheaper to hire a graduate student than it is to hire a faculty member. For elementary courses, students are not being short-changed, but at the upper levels they are.

"Programs have not been cut, but staff has," Rosbottom said. "When you replace senior faculty with junior faculty, you're short-changing the student.

"I don't think teaching by grad students is necessarily bad or of poor quality, but we should also be teaching grad students how to be good researchers and good advisers," he said.

Everything is stacked against doing a good job with the freshmen. Funding on these courses is traditionally very low. We're teaching large batches of students relatively cheaply.

— Thomas A. Willke

"Many lower level courses are taught by Graduate Teaching Associates," he said, "but at OSU that teaching effort is closely guided and supervised by members of the faculty.

"Because of the vast numbers of students in this university, we have had to deliver a first-class education without the necessary resources to do that.

Every graduate teaching associate in the history department has to take a course on teaching history at the 100 level, said Marvin Zahniser, chairman of the department of history.

The course "is fairly rigorous," Zahniser said. "I have very few students here complaining about the TAs.

"TAs are, by definition, apprentice teachers and not as skillful as those who have been teaching for a very long time," he said.

Although it is preferable to have professors teaching all the courses, graduate students do need some teaching experience before they leave the university, he said.

Many history professors do teach the lower level courses, he added.
Foreign TAs: 
The undergrads' lament

Ohio State students will tell you they have classes in which they simply can't understand the teacher. Now Ohio legislators and the university administration are focusing on the problem.

By Michael Marlow

Ohio State student Lori Hamilton laughs when she thinks about the foreign-born teaching assistants she has had at the university. But there was a time when she wasn't laughing. "My economics TA—who was foreign—would have me lost from point one when I sat down," Hamilton says. "I quit going to class, I was so frustrated."

And Hamilton, a junior majoring in accounting, isn't alone. Every Ohio State student seems to have his or her favorite story about a foreign TA. Along with autumn football and High Street bars, bad experiences with foreign instructors seem to be a common rite of passage for students at OSU.

Junior Debbie Mullins says she also has a tendency to skip classes taught by foreign TAs, because she can't understand what they're saying. She says of one particular TA: "We'd ask him a question, and he would answer something that had nothing to do with the question—and everyone would laugh at him."

Many students who are originally angered by the fact that they've been assigned a teacher they can't understand seem to develop a sense of resignation. "At first, people would get furious about it, but after you sat there and realized it wasn't doing any good, you just laughed," Hamilton says.

The chance of an undergraduate's slipping through Ohio State without having a few classes taught by foreign TAs is very slim. Ohio State employs about 500 foreign TAs, according to graduate school assistant dean James Siddens.

Most of these TAs are teaching science or math courses, which often are the most difficult courses for American students. "Everybody's pretty disgusted in my economics class," says Robb Amick, a sophomore majoring in communication.

"Economics is a tough enough subject to grasp with an English TA, but it's impossible with a foreign one."

Of the four classes Amick is taking this quarter, three instructors are foreign. He says he is having more problems this quarter than he has ever had trying to understand his
foreign TAs. Many of his class hours are wasted. "People just sit there and doodle," he says. "Your mind wanders."

Complaints like these aren't new. Ohio State administrators say students have been complaining about their foreign TAs for years. What is new is that these complaints seem to have been heard loud and clear both on and off campus.

"It has become a hot topic," says Louis Holshuh, director of Ohio State's American Language Program, which teaches English to foreign students. "It appears that these complaints have finally been taken seriously."

OSU officials are in the process of developing a program that will insure foreign TAs have the English speaking skills necessary to teach a class. Siddens says the program, which will test the oral English skills of incoming graduate students and help them with their language problems, will be in place for the 1986-87 school year.

Holshuh says his programs have always taught foreign TAs written English so they could write essays and answer test questions. But the new program will emphasize spoken as well as written English.

This development coincides with the drafting of a bill that has passed the Ohio House that would force Ohio State and other public colleges and universities in Ohio to make sure their foreign instructors can speak understandable English.

The bill was the idea of Rep. Barbara C. Pringle (D-Cleveland), whose daughter, a student at Kent State, had many of the same problems encountered by Ohio State students. "My daughter came home and said, 'Mom, there ought to be a law.'"

Rep. Pringle looked into the topic and found that many of her friends' children were having the same problems at other state universities and
college. So she designed a bill that requires state schools to test all teaching assistants for verbal English. The bill requires schools to help students who do not pass the test.

Critics have charged that Pringle’s bill is weak because it does not specifically tell schools what to do. But she says she has her pen ready to write a stronger bill if this one doesn’t do the job.

Pringle, who claims the problem has been around for about 20 years, believes schools such as Ohio State should have dealt with this problem earlier, before being forced to by the state. “I see no reason why we had to mandate this, but it was obvious that something had to be done,” she says.

OSU officials are quick to point out that they were plotting their strategy to deal with this language problem long before the Ohio House began discussing Pringle’s bill in April. “The timing is unfortunate for us, because it looks like we’re doing this in reaction to the bill,” says Dean Siddens. “We originally began discussing this in June, 1984.”

While Ohio State undergrads and Ohio legislators complain about these foreign instructors, university officials are quick to defend Ohio State’s TAs. Siddens is upset with what he sees as a “Blame-everything-on-the-

foreign-TA” syndrome. “These foreign TAs are highly qualified,” Siddens says. “They’re many times more strong students than Americans.”

Ohio State officials stress that the school is not making some particular effort to hire foreign TAs exclusively. Because of a shortage of U.S. graduate students in areas such as the sciences and mathematics, Ohio State has to turn to Taiwan, Korea, China, India and other countries for qualified graduate students. “We are not able to attract sufficient high-caliber domestic students for many of these areas,” Siddens says.

University officials say many people oversimplify the TA problem by saying it is nothing more than a language barrier. Holschuh says there are other problems, caused by both the foreign TA and by the Ohio State student.

OSU officials videotaped foreign TAs teaching class last spring to find out what all the problems were. “We wanted to see where the communication breakdown occurred and how it occurred,” Holschuh says. The videotapes confirmed what administrators suspected all along: Language is only a small part of the problem. Many TAs just don’t understand the American classroom. Holschuh says some of the TAs didn’t understand how to begin a class, introduce a new point or promote discussion among students. “They just don’t have some of the teaching techniques down—like to raise your voice when asking a question or how to begin or end a class,” Siddens says.

The videotapes also show that student behavior often contributes to the problem. Siddens says that in many foreign countries, the student is taught to treat his instructor almost like a god. Thus, the rather irreverent nature of American students can be shocking; “A lot of foreign TAs feel threatened by this challenge,” he says.

In autumn of 1986, foreign TAs will be given a primer in American classroom politics in addition to the English-language training. Holschuh says that when TAs begin to understand Ohio State classroom quirks, most of the communication problems will disappear.

But even with this additional training for foreign TAs, school officials claim much of the problem will remain: the Ohio State student. “I think it’s fair to say that most students aren’t willing to make an effort to talk to someone who doesn’t sound like they do,” Siddens says. One administrator characterized the foreign TA problem as the typical OSU
student's aversion to "brown-skinned people."

This opinion irritates some OSU students. "That's very unfair and absolutely not true," Amick says. "I can't believe the administrators of this university would say something like that."

At least some TAs agree with Siddens's assessment of the controversy that surrounds them. Shing-Whu Jha, a math TA from Taiwan, smiles when he is questioned about the foreign TA problem. He says he can sympathize with Ohio State students who enroll in a difficult math class and cannot understand the professor. But he says most students could try harder to understand what their foreign TA is up against.

"We're a minority with not good English and we must teach," Shing-Whu says. "For the TA it is very hard." Shing-Whu says classes should try to develop relationships with their foreign TAs. "Sometimes I think the relationship between the student and teacher is more important than the topic, but Ohio State students are concerned about the grade more than the relationship with the TA," he says.

Some students who don't do well in a foreign TA's class may use the TA as a scapegoat. Shing-Whu says some students claim he is the reason they didn't pass his Math 150 class. He replies that many students pass his classes every quarter with high grades.

Yuji Kodama is an Ohio State assistant professor of mathematics from Japan who was a TA on the East Coast in 1978. He agrees that most Ohio State students make little effort to understand their foreign TAs. Kodama, who has taught at OSU for two years, says, like Shing-Whu, that today's students are concerned only about grades. "They don't care about what they are learning," he says. "They care only about the exam."

Most people don't expect legislation or an added verbal language requirement to solve all the problems. But the growing consumerism among prospective college students virtually assures that this is an issue that won't disappear. Parents and students are more concerned than ever about getting the best education their money can buy. And who's doing the teaching can become a selling point. "It's a rip-off to spend all that money and not be able to understand the teacher," Pringle says.

Michael Marlow, a former editor of the Lantern and a journalism student at Ohio State University, writes frequently for Columbus Monthly.
Assistants’ fee waivers assessed

By Anne Szymczak
Lantern staff writer

Beginning January 1, many OSU graduate assistants must pay federal income tax on fee waivers. The regulation will affect at least 2,500 students, said Jean Girves, assistant dean of the Graduate School.

Previously, graduate assistants were taxed only on monthly stipends while tuition waivers were tax-exempt. Now both are taxed, Girves said.

The tax-exempt status for graduate assistants was not renewed by Congress in an effort to help balance the federal budget, said Rep. Mike Stinziano, D-Columbus.

Graduate students affected most by the tax are non-residents, said Julie Franklin, member of the Council of Graduate Students. These students pay up to $135 in taxes per month on fee waivers, she said.

To reduce the tax amount, students may take exemptions and deductions, said Beverly Jensen, president of the Council of Graduate Students. The group plans a workshop to help students learn about these, she said.

"The main problem with the tax is it affects those already pressed for income," Stinziano said. “It’s really tough on the students.”

Graduate assistants doing research work on dissertations or theses do not have to pay the tax, Girves said. The government considers this part of degree requirements and not employment, she said.

Last quarter, the council conducted a letter-writing campaign to urge renewal of the tax-exempt status. The group sent almost 150 postcards to state senators and congressman.

Franklin, who took part in the campaign, said graduate students are not organized enough to take strong action against the tax.
Tax angers graduate associates

By Anna Szymczak
Lantern staff writer

The failure of the U.S. Senate to renew the tax-exempt status of tuition waivers during its last session will require many OSU graduate associates to pay more taxes this year.

To help these students, the Council of Graduate Students sponsored a workshop Tuesday night to advise graduate associates how they will be taxed and what deductions and exemptions they may make.

About 250 people attended the workshop, which featured three speakers from the university and a representative from H & R Block.

Helen DeSantis, vice president of Personnel Services, explained how the university will tax graduate associates' paychecks.

"There are two parts to the process, withholding and the W-2 (form)," she said.

DeSantis said Ohio State taxes tuition waivers on the cost of seven credit hours per quarter — the minimum number of hours graduate associates must take to keep their associations.

Taxes on one-third of the seven hours are withheld each month of the quarter from the graduate associate's paycheck, she said.

Many students take more than seven hours or add and drop classes each quarter, DeSantis said. After the university determines the actual number of credit hours taken by the graduate associate, it will either include the total amount of the tuition waiver on the W-2 form as money earned, or withhold the difference owed at the end of the pay period, she said.

Many members of the audience expressed concern that associates that take more than seven credit hours per quarter must pay the un-taxed portion at the end of the year.

Pat Tressler, an H & R Block representative, suggested graduate associates fill out long tax forms instead of short forms in order to save money. Itemizing job expenses such as books or lab equipment, keeping track of charitable contributions and claiming dependents all fall under legal tax exemptions, she said.

Tressler also said the first $3,430 of income for a single person is tax-free. If married, a person can earn up to $5,620 before being taxed.

For graduate associates who are not residents of Ohio, the tax taken from their paychecks will be greater.

Jean Schuster, from the university registrar, spoke about Ohio residency requirements. A non-resident student who wants to become a resident of Ohio would have to live in the state for 12 months. During this time a student should have a car registered in Ohio or have an Ohio driver's license.

He said students who want to become residents of Ohio must be careful when taking out a loan.

"If a student uses an out-of-state address on a loan application, a chance at residency status could be ruined," Schuster said.

Bulent Aball, a graduate associate and student from Ankara, Turkey, expressed concern that foreign graduate associates could not use the advice given at the workshop.

"A U.S. person can apply for a loan or change his residency, but nothing like this applies to foreign students," Aball said.

Because foreign graduate associates cannot get help they may be forced to leave Ohio State, he said.

"In the engineering department, over 50 percent of the T.A.s are foreign. If they leave and are not replaced, class sizes could get bigger," Aball said.

John Rogers, vice president of the Council of Graduate Students, said the tax could cause graduate associates to take fewer hours which could set them back in their programs.

Student morale could also be a problem, Rogers said. "Look at the folks here tonight. They're upset, they're angry."

The tax bill is scheduled to be discussed in the Senate Feb. 1, said Thomas Linney, director of government relations for the U.S. Council of Graduate Schools in Washington D.C. He said, however, that Congress often takes longer than scheduled to consider bills.

During the last session of Congress, the House of Representatives extended for two years the necessary legislation to renew the tax-exempt status of tuition waivers.
Foreign teaching associates learn skills to improve teaching methods

By Wendy Wallace
Lantern staff writer

For many non-English speaking graduate teaching associates, starting their classes can be the beginning of the end.

A pilot course being taught this quarter, however, may help those teaching associates improve their spoken English and teaching techniques and, as a result, get their classes off to a good start.

The course, English 294, is part of a program being developed to ensure that teaching associates have the speaking and teaching skills necessary to be effective in the classroom. The program will begin this fall.

"(In class) we practice conversation and pronunciation, and it also teaches us how to manage the class," said Hwang Jyh-Dean, a graduate student from Korea.

English 294 is being tested to determine if it meets three needs discovered in a survey taken last spring, said Kathleen A. Romstedt, acting assistant director for the American Language Program and instructor for the pilot course.

Language functions — such as the way questions and definitions are worded — are areas in which foreign teachers need help, she said.

A second area is culture. The students are informed of culture of American undergraduates with a presentation by a high school guidance counselor, a panel discussion with undergraduates and by observing other foreign teaching associates.

Finally, the students learn ways to reinforce their spoken English by using body language, visual aids and teaching equipment such as overhead projectors.

The course, which is taught by Romstedt and Patrick Kelley, intensive English specialist for the American Language Program, uses videotapes of former teaching associates to illustrate teaching techniques.

Each of the 12 students in the class will be videotaped at least three times during the quarter, and also at the beginning and the end of the course for comparison.

"It's real instructive when they see themselves speaking. It makes them more conscious of what they do," Kelley said.

The students in the pilot program said it will help them when they begin teaching.

"It's helping very much," said Nury Effendi, a graduate student from Indonesia. "After this class, we will know the technique of how to be a good (teaching associate)," he said.

The five-credit-hour course is graded on a satisfactory/un-
satisfactory basis.

As a result of a decision made in 1984 by the Council of Deans, the courses will be incorporated into a program. The council mandated that Ohio State develop tests and coursework for teaching associates for whom English is a second language, said James Siddens, assistant dean for the Graduate School.

Beginning this fall, all prospective teaching associates who speak English as a second language will have to show a proficiency in spoken English.

Students will be tested for English proficiency in their native countries, Siddens said. However, because the test costs $40, some students may be unable to afford it.

As an alternative, Siddens said, the department sponsoring the student may offer him a position on the condition that he take a spoken English test upon arrival. If he does not pass, he will not be allowed to teach.

However, the university will support the student for three quarters while he performs non-teaching duties such as grading papers, Siddens said. The student can enter the new program during this time and if he passes an examination at the end of the program, he will be allowed to teach.

Siddens said none of the approximately 500 graduate associates currently teaching will be affected by the mandate.
Jinbae Chung, a teaching associate from Korea, practices skills he has learned in a pilot program at OSU.
IRS taking more taxes from GAs

By Toni Tasser

Any fee authorization earned by graduate teaching and administrative associates since Jan. 1 is considered taxable income by the federal government.

About 3,000 Ohio State graduate students receive tuition in exchange for working as teaching, research and administrative associates.

The value of the associates' tuition will continue to be taxed unless the U.S. Senate takes action. It is considering a bill that would return tuition to a tax-free benefit retroactive to Jan. 1.

Prior to this year, stipends were taxable, but University-paid tuition and fee authorization were not.

The average monthly stipend at Ohio State is about $650, according to Beverly Jenson, president of the Council of Graduate Students (CGS).

Generally, the graduate associates whose fee authorizations are being taxed now are those who had their stipends taxed prior to Dec. 31, 1985.

In most cases graduate research associates are exempt from the tax if their research pertains directly to their theses or dissertations, says Jenson.

These students are exempt from the tax because their dissertations or theses are part of the University's graduate degree requirements, according to Jean E. Girves, assistant dean and secretary of the Graduate School.

In December, the House of Representatives passed a bill which extends for two years the exemption for graduate associates having to pay taxes on the value of their tuition. The Senate is now considering a like bill.

"A similar provision was attached to the tax bill in the Senate and we believe there's a good chance that it will pass retroactive to Jan. 1, 1986," Jenson says.

Jules LaRidus, former dean of the Graduate School and now president of the Council of Graduate Schools of the United States, serves as liaison for CGS. He recently sent a message to council members.

He says there is an "excellent" chance for the bill to pass since "these
Continued on page 11.
Ohio bill to require English proficiency in foreign teaching assistants by autumn

By Bob Icsman
Lantern staff writer

Students at state universities will no longer have problems understanding foreign teaching assistants if a House bill clears the Senate.

Sponsored by Rep. Barbara Pringle, D-Cleveland, the bill requires graduate teaching assistants at state universities to be fluent in spoken English by the start of the 1986-87 academic year.

The Senate Finance Committee held its first hearing Tuesday on the bill, which passed 94-1 by the House in June, that orders the boards of trustees at state universities to create programs testing graduate teaching assistants in verbal English skills.

Currently, foreign teaching assistants must pass an examination in written English skills before teaching in Ohio universities.

"All teaching assistants should be able to communicate well enough to be understood in class," Pringle said. "If they can't communicate, the instruction really doesn't mean anything."

In 1984 the OSU Council of Deans ordered the university to develop tests and coursework for teaching assistants who speak English as a second language.

Pringle said she learned of the TA problem when her daughter complained she couldn't understand her math teacher at Ohio State. College workers and aides at the Statehouse told Pringle they had similar problems at Ohio State and other universities, Pringle said.

Under the bill, universities can establish their own programs. The Senate, however, may change the bill and create specific statewide standards for the programs, she said.

Herb Asher, special assistant to President Edward H. Jennings, said he favors the freedom given to universities under the current bill.

"There is a problem... and we're getting a handle on it," he said.

This legislation comes at a time when most universities, including Ohio State, have already begun programs to increase the English fluency of teaching assistants, he said.
Grad associates seek Ohio residency to lower taxes

By Anne Szymczak
Lantern staff writer

Graduate associates seeking to become residents of Ohio have been bombarding the Office of Residency.

"In one week we had 200 of them," said Mindy Eckman, acting assistant to the registrar. Normally, the office receives 25 applicants a week at the most, she said.

"We have never had this volume of residency applicants before," Eckman said. "So far, there have been 400 or 500 students at the minimum seeking residency this quarter. Most of them are graduate associates," she said.

The reason for the increase in the number of graduate associates applying for residency is Congress did not renew their tax-exempt status. Although the House of Representatives passed the renewal during their last session, the Senate failed to act on it.

Being an Ohio resident can lessen the amount of money taxed on a graduate associate's paycheck. This is because the tax would be based on lower in-state fees.

Graduate associates who take seven hours of coursework can reduce the amount of money they pay taxes on from $419 to $174 a month by becoming residents, according to Helen Desantis, executive director for Personnel Services.

The procedure for becoming a resident has been streamlined by the residency office. Less time is spent filling out forms. The office also extended the deadline for accepting applications for winter quarter residency from Nov. 1 to Jan. 27.

With the deadline extension, graduate associates could lower the amount taxed on their paychecks beginning in January, Eckman said. The office is still accepting applications for winter quarter but only pay periods after the application is accepted will be affected, she said.

Those who wish to become residents of Ohio can do so only if they have lived in the state for a year. They also must show documentation that proves they have been here a full year, she said.

"Most use their last paycheck for this," Eckman said.

The Office of Personnel Services has also been helping graduate associates reduce the impact of the tax on their fee waivers. The office has an information center called the Graduate Associate Help Center. The center, located in Archer House 307, is set up to help those who will be under-withheld, Desantis said.

Since the university is only withholding tax based on the minimum number of credit hours graduate associates must take, those taking more hours will owe a greater amount of money at the end of the year.

The office can help associates determine the true amount of tax withheld from their paychecks and prepare for it, thus lessening the amount owed at the end of the year, Desantis said.

"We have no intention of being tax consultants," she said, though.

"We want to help determine the approximate monthly tax that should be withheld. We can do this by looking at the associate's stipend, fee authorization and other income, if there is any."

Even though the associates' personal tax situations are not known, it is expected that most associates will receive refunds at the end of the year, said Jean Girves, assistant dean of the Graduate School.
Fluent English required by bill

By James Kuake
Lantern staff writer

Approval of a bill that makes proficiency in spoken English a requirement will improve the quality of OSU's foreign teaching assistants' instruction and communication skills, said P. Manoharan, a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Mathematics.

"The importance of a TA to make himself clearly understood is as important, if not more important, than his ability to present his course material," Manoharan said. Manoharan is of Indian origin.

A graduate teaching assistant for almost three years, Manoharan conducted a survey of his 100-level math class last year, asking his students to evaluate him on both his teaching ability in math and his proficiency in delivering his lectures. Out of ten possible points, his average score was 9.9 for teaching math and 8.5 for his clarity of pronunciation and delivery of the material.

"I personally feel that the mathematic department's program, which is already in progress, to provide foreign TAs with special training in classroom instruction techniques and fluency of spoken English, benefits both the students and the TAs themselves," Manoharan said.

"I feel that foreign graduate teaching assistants should be adequately prepared to face both American and other international students in the classroom by ensuring that her delivery of the course material be transmitted in the most clear, audible and understandable manner," said Yun-Chan Chi, a fifth-year graduate teaching assistant in the Department of Statistics who is from the Republic of China.

According to Shobha Char, accents are inevitable and exist even among Americans from different regions of the nation. "Perhaps the speed which a foreign born teaching assistant speaks, together with his or her accent, may pose a difficulty for American students to follow their teaching assistant's lecture," said Char, who was a graduate teaching assistant at Ohio State for more than five years and is currently an instructor in the Department of Mathematics.

But after a few recitation classes, the students would eventually learn to grasp and make out the accent of their TA, said the instructor from India.

"I think that it is very important that new foreign graduate teaching assistants do get adequate training to help them have self-confidence in classrooms and also to feel comfortable with their spoken English ability, and not scramble or be lost words when trying to explain a point in a recitation class," she said.

English test required for TAs by fall quarter

By Bob Payne
Lantern staff writer

State-supported colleges and universities must have programs requiring English proficiency for all teaching assistants by the beginning of the 1986-87 school year.

The bill which was passed in the Ohio Legislature, has been sent to Gov. Richard F. Celeste for his approval.

The legislation requires the boards of trustees of all state-supported colleges and universities to establish a program to assess oral English language proficiency of all teaching assistants, before allowing them to teach.

"Many students have complained to me that they have had trouble understanding some foreign-born teaching assistants," Barbara C. Pringle, D-Cleveland, sponsor of the bill, said.

Ohio State has been taking the lead in developing a program to ensure that teaching assistants have the necessary language and teaching skills, Barry Crawford, a junior from Wadsworth and president of the Ohio State chapter of the Ohio Student Association, said.

"The bill is basically modeled after the program that has already been developed at Ohio State," Crawford said. "We've been pushing it in an effort to help the other state colleges in Ohio."

A 1984 decision by the Council of Deans mandated that Ohio State develop tests and coursework for teaching assistants who speak English as a second language, James Siddens, assistant dean for the Graduate School, said.

"We support the legislative action as we would support any policy which would improve the quality of instruction for our undergraduates, as this bill does," Siddens said.

Beginning in the fall of 1986, the OSU program will require prospective teaching assistants who speak English as a second language to show a proficiency in spoken English.
Tests place foreign TAs by English skills

By James Kuake
Lantern staff writer

Ohio State's English as a Second Language programs office began administering placement tests this week for TAs who need to demonstrate their proficiency in spoken English. The placement test is a prerequisite for the new English 104 course.

"Both English 104 and 105 will be offered regularly beginning summer quarter," said Robert Kantor, director of OSU's English as a Second Language Program. "English 104 is designed to improve the English fluency and pronunciation and the oral comprehension of non-native speaking teaching associates," Kantor added.

"English 105 is designed to improve the communication skills of non-native speaking teaching associates to the level where classroom instruction can take place without difficulty," he said.

"We are keeping our 104 and 105 classes to a limited class enrollment of about 12 to 15 students per section to ensure maximum attention and interaction between the instructor and the students," he said.

Students may register for these courses only after taking the SPEAK test which is administered by the English as a Second Language program office. The SPEAK test is an institutional version of the Test of Spoken English (TSE) which is administered worldwide by the Educational Testing Service (ETS), Kantor explained.

"The structure of the SPEAK test is identical to the TSE and is also scored in the same fashion," he said.

Ohio State's program to help foreign graduate teaching associates improve their skills in spoken English and classroom communication is looked upon as one of the best in the nation, Kantor said.

"This would definitely be the largest program in the nation due to the number of international graduate teaching associates Ohio State has," he said.

As early as 1984, when a special task force appointed by the Council of Deans recommended testing of spoken English proficiency of foreign teaching assistants be put together, Ohio State's English as a Second Language program office, the department of Speech and Hearing science, and the American Language program office started working on the design of programs.

After the design of efficient and effective programs to test and screen spoken language, the two new courses called English 104 and 105 were created, Kantor said.

"Just like the TSE, our SPEAK test is scored on four categories: pronunciation, grammar, fluency and comprehensibility," said Susanne Sarwark, assistant director of the program office.

"The tape of the student's responses is listened to by two or three people or graders from our office to ensure objectivity. All our graders have been through special training and are capable of making accurate and fair judgments of the student's spoken language ability," Sarwark said.
Top graduate students win awards

A select group of graduate students was honored at a reception on June 9 for their superior teaching abilities, for their creative endeavors in research, and for their leadership in the University community and the community at large.

Ten graduate students were selected as recipients of the 1986 Graduate Associate Teaching Award. Nominations for the award were collected throughout the year. A committee of students and faculty, chaired by Maria Annoni, doctoral candidate in the School of Music and previous recipient of the award, reviewed evaluations of the nominees’ teaching, visited their classes, and selected the 10 students whose teaching abilities were judged to be exceptional.

 Winners were notified by surprise, in-class presentations of the awards. Members of the selection committee, faculty members in the student’s field, and colleagues accompanied by Roy Koenigschnecht, dean of the Graduate School, made the presentations. A $1,500 honorarium was awarded by President Jennings to each of the recipients at the June 9 reception.

This year’s winners are: Sharon A. Broderick, Nursing; Jill M. Funfar, Nursing; Melinda C. Kanner, Anthropology; Susan F. Kobs, Biochemistry; Artemis S. Leontis, Classics; John I. Liotas, German; Jeffrey J. Roberts, History; Christine Smithies, Human Services Education; Victoria E. Snell, Romance Languages and Literatures; and Susan Wilkinson, Health, Physical Education and Recreation.

Financial support for the award is provided by the Development Fund. The award program is supported by the Graduate School.

In another graduate award program, five students were selected as recipients of the 1986 Graduate School Leadership Award and were recognized for their contribution to the University community and for the distinctive service in University organizations. The selection committee, comprised of faculty members and previous award winners, was chaired by James Siddens, assistant dean of the Graduate School. Winners of this award received commemorative plaques and a $100 book award from President Jennings.

Recipients of the graduate leadership award are: Margaret M. Bogenschutz, Educational Policy and Leadership; Maria C. Gonzalez, English; Beverly A. Jensen, Home Economics Education; John E. Rogers, Educational Theory and Practice; and Michael A. Shetzline, Physiology.

Graduate Student Alumni Research Awards were granted to 61 graduate students during autumn and spring quarters. Proposals for the funding of dissertation support were submitted for review by members of the research committee of the Council on Research and Graduate Studies. Awards of up to $1,000 each and totaling $50,400 were made to this select group who represent 32 departments across the campus.

Support for the Graduate Student Alumni Research Award is provided by the Development Fund and the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Four winners also were chosen for the 1986 Council of Graduate Students Outstanding Service Award. This award recognizes exceptional service on behalf of the graduate student body. A student committee, chaired by Doug Oxenford, made the selections.

Service award winners are: Frank Eguroje, doctoral candidate in art history; Debra A. Gallagher, staff member in dairy science; Robert W. Howe, professor of educational theory and practice; and Joseph A. Testa, doctoral candidate in physics.
Tests reveal international TAs' English needs

By Tom Spring

A dozen students, some Asian and some European, speak into a tape recorder as they listen to recorded instructions in a testing room in Denney Hall. They are among some of the 300 foreign graduate students who were expected to have taken a spoken English test by the first day of class. Still others had taken the Test of Spoken English prior to arriving at Ohio State for their studies.

An oral English test is required for students who do not speak English as their native language and who plan to teach at Ohio State.

Students who score 230 or better on either test are certified as proficient in spoken English, according to Susanne Sarwark, director of Spoken English Programs. Some score a perfect 300. Those who do not score at an acceptable level have several options available.

"If students score between 200 and 220, they take a Mock Teaching Test," says Sarwark. The test is a condensed 10-12 minute opening day lesson in an elementary-level course. The presentation is videotaped and rated by a panel of two English-as-a-Second-Language staff and two faculty members.

"A student discusses a topic in his field," she says. "This way a student can show how well he or she can communicate in a classroom context.

"Pronunciation isn't everything. We're looking for communicating ability. The ability to use the blackboard, answer questions and anticipate problems makes them very effective teachers."

Also, she says, students may be nervous while taking the spoken English test. "They may show themselves better in the Mock Teaching Test because they're talking about something they're familiar with."

"Sometimes evaluators say, 'This person is dynamite. He'll be great in the classroom.'

Students who successfully present the material are certified. Those who don't, and those with sub-220 scores on the spoken English test, take one or two English classes, based on their scores, to build their skills.

The testing and training programs were instituted earlier this year in response to University concerns about students being able to understand their teachers. Some students have complained that they cannot understand their foreign teaching associates.

While some students may complain as an excuse for poor study habits, some complaints are legitimate, University officials say. The testing and training is to ensure that graduate students are prepared and skilled in English speaking and teaching to communicate subject matter and talk with American students.

"One of the big problems for international TAs is dealing with questions," says Sarwark. "In some cultures, students don't ask questions in a class. It is a big challenge when five hands are raised and a question is asked in rapid English."

Sarwark says some TAs may not respond when an evaluator raises a hand.

One TA made up an answer. When asked why, he said that he did not want to admit that he did not know the answer. "We teach them responses such as, 'I do not know the answer but I will find out and tell you tomorrow.'

"In working with these people, I've found the problem isn't always just pronunciation. Sometimes, it's different cultural expectations — the relationships between teachers and students, the way teachers are expected to teach and students to respond."

Robert Kantor, director of English as a Second Language Programs, says program and department faculty raters usually agreed on whether individuals were ready for the classroom.

English 104 and 105 were offered officially first this summer.

The training made a big difference. "I was just beaming," Kantor says. "Students were so much better. I felt very good about them."

Classes meet for about five hours a week. Students study English pronunciation, listening comprehension, public speaking, American and classroom culture, and teaching skills. Students practice making presentations on videotape.

In English 105, students with pronunciation difficulties are assigned pronunciation tutors to work with them two or three times a week.

"The tutors prove most helpful," says Elin Epperson, assistant director of the Spoken English Program.

Both classes are graded satisfactory, unsatisfactory.

The exit test for English 104 is an oral interview. The exit test for English 105 is another Mock Teaching Test. Students must pass the Mock Teaching Test to be certified to teach.

Epperson, who helped develop a pilot one-course program at Louisiana State University, says Ohio State's program is more extensive. "We offer students two classes and class size of 12 students is reasonable to give students individual help."
Conference to look at TA enhancement

A national conference Nov. 16-18 will bring educators from throughout the country to Ohio State to examine better ways to work with graduate teaching assistants.

The conference, conducted by the Office of Instructional Development and Evaluation, will explore issues on the employment and education of teaching assistants.

President Jennings will give an address, "The Central Role of the Teaching Assistant in Higher Education," at 5 p.m. Nov. 16.

Kenneth E. Eble, University of Utah professor, who has written widely on college teaching, will deliver a keynote address, "Defending the Indefensible," at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 17.

Registration for the conference is being taken at the Office of Conferences and Institutes, 225 Mount Hall. The fee for registration will be $135 before Nov. 1. It will increase to $160 after that date, according to Nancy Chism, conference coordinator. The fees include meals during the conference.

Registration without meals is $75 before Nov. 1 and $100 after Nov. 1. The conference will be in the Holiday Inn on the Lane.

For more information, call Chism at 422-3644.
Foreign TA’s testing positive in English

By Karen Bockhorst
Lantern staff writer

A new Ohio law requiring all foreign graduate teaching associates to prove their proficiency in spoken English, has had a positive impact on classroom communication, officials say.

Susanne Sarwark, director of the Spoken English Program, said the program has helped both the graduate teaching associates and the undergraduates they teach, but she will not know exactly how successful the program is for a couple quarters.

Robert Mayer, professor of chemistry, said the new testing program has had positive results in the Chemistry Department.

"The program has made a great difference. In the past students have come to the department with complaints (about foreign teaching assistants) by this time in the quarter. But so far there haven't been any," Mayer said.

English proficiency is measured by an examination administered by the Spoken English Program and English as a Second Language Program.

About 150 students took the test before fall quarter and 100 are certified to teach. Those who did not pass still can still do such things as grade papers or assist professors.

"Those who didn't pass the test are quite diligent about being certified," Mayer said.

Jian Tan, a graduate teaching associate in chemistry, said she did not think the test was that difficult, but said it might be unfair.

"There are some students who can teach but didn't pass the test. I don't think that's fair," Tan said. "All foreign students have a language barrier, even if they pass the test."

Sarwark said although House Bill 497 mandates Ohio universities to test foreign graduate teaching associates beginning this quarter, Ohio State attempted to correct the problem earlier.

During spring quarter 1984, the English Department conducted a test which analyzed the English proficiency of foreign teaching associates.

The department concluded the university needed to test foreign teaching associates and the pilot test program that began this summer became permanent this quarter, Sarwark said.

The test studies the pronunciation, grammar and comprehension of the foreign graduates, which Sarwark said are vital to their success in communicating in the classroom.

If students do not pass the test they are required to take basic English courses.

Sarwark said the basic English classes also teach the foreign graduate students about American culture, which is often different from their own.
Take care of teaching assistants,

By Debra Mason
Dispatch Staff Reporter

Nearly all of Ohio State University's 45,000 undergraduate students will take courses taught by other students at some time.

That's why colleges should nurture those students who also instruct, OSU President Edward H. Jennings said yesterday.

Jennings gave the opening address at the first nationwide conference on the employment and education of teaching assistants. The three-day conference is hosted by OSU.

"A university cannot achieve excellence, cannot use all of its human resources well, without attending to the issues inherent in the employment and education of its teaching assistants," Jennings told about 200 people in the Holiday Inn On The Lane.

Some of those issues involve problems related to the variety of hats worn by teaching assistants, who alternate as teachers, staff members and students.

"At times, given considerable authority over a classroom or section of an undergraduate course, they may also be expected to 'know their place' — if they can figure out what that happens to be," Jennings said.

At OSU, about 4,000 of the university's 10,000 graduate students are employed as research, administrative or teaching assistants. About 2,500 actually teach courses or labs, said Anne S. Pruitt, director of OSU's Center for Teaching Excellence.

Pruitt told the group that no large university could exist without the services of teaching assistants.

OSU's mathematics department, for example, has 86 faculty members and 15,000 students enrolled in its courses. Lecturer Joseph Fiedler said about 220 graduate students and 35 undergraduates help teach them.

Jennings said schools should give teaching assistants support that is "not only financial but educational and personal."

Jennings urges

Phrases such as "only a T.A.," heard from both students and faculty members, can harm teaching assistants and scholarship, he said. "Our teaching assistants must be valued for their contributions, and they must know that they are valued."

He cited OSU's Center for Teaching Excellence as one way to offer the counseling, education and professional aid that teaching assistants need.

The conference is sponsored by the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States and the American Association of Higher Education. About 300 people are expected when the main presentations begin today.
TAs to get teaching guidelines

By Betsy Bing
Lantern staff writer

If Randall B. Ripley has his way, political science teaching assistants will be given specific guidelines for teaching their courses. Currently assistants have no written rules to follow.

Ripley, chairman of the political science department, has appointed a faculty committee to review what is expected of the instructors.

Ripley said he appointed the committee after Scott Kirkman, an autumn quarter Political Science 101 teaching assistant, was reprimanded by the political science department for his teaching methods that included not giving tests to his students and cancelling classes two days a week. Political Science 101 is a five credit class scheduled by the department to meet five days a week.

"Good teaching can be defined in a variety of ways," Ripley said. "Cancelling class on two days of the week is not considered good teaching, as Scott Kirkman did last quarter." Kirkman said he was told in November by political science administrative associate, William J. Lydon, that he would not be permitted to teach winter quarter and possibly not teach the rest of the year.

Kirkman, a third-year graduate student, does not think he should have lost his teaching position because no guidelines were in place to instruct him how to teach his course.

Ripley said in his 18 years at Ohio State as department chairman of political science, he has never had a problem with teaching assistants following their assumed responsibilities.

One of those responsibilities is that class meet on the days the university lists in the Master Schedule. In this case, Kirkman should have held his five credit course all five days of the week at its scheduled time, Ripley said.

"There are no written rules that state a teaching assistant must hold class every day of the week. But, because of this incident, the new committee will ponder on documenting a written set of rules."

Ripley said the department doesn't have documented rules for professors or teaching assistants because they are expected to understand what is acceptable.

Lydon said guidelines and responsibilities are discussed at length by a faculty supervisor with teaching assistants at the beginning of each quarter.

"It is obvious that if a class is scheduled to meet on five days of the week in the Master Schedule, then it should meet on those days," Lydon said.

Ripley said he was approached by a student in Kirkman's class on the first day of autumn quarter who complained that Kirkman cancelled classes on Mondays and Fridays. Although Kirkman said he had been teaching this way for the previous five quarters, Ripley said the department had never received a complaint.

Ripley said he believes autumn quarter was the first quarter Kirkman cancelled class two days of the week, which is the primary criticism of the department.

Management analyst for the graduate school, Amy Edgar, said, "Each individual employing unit, or department, establishes its own criteria that teaching assistants must follow." The obligations are between assistants and their faculty supervisors, she said. "There isn't one specific description for every graduate or teaching assistant to follow," she added.

University Ombudsman C. Austin Grey said the political science department was justified in initiating the dismissal of Kirkman because of his teaching methods. Grey said however, that the political science department should have been aware of the problem earlier.

"Somebody in the department should have reviewed the syllabus early in the quarter to make sure it met the requirements," Grey said.
Videos educate teachers

By LEAH WEAVER
Lantern staff writer

A new program in the Department of Economics makes graduate teaching assistants take a closer look at themselves.

This quarter nearly 40 teaching assistants are participating in a teaching-methods seminar, using videotaping to improve classroom techniques. The economics department is the first at Ohio State to use this approach.

Videotaped classroom presentations are evaluated by a faculty supervisor, other teaching assistants and students, said Belton Fleisher, professor of economics and developer of the program.

He said the videotaping was implemented primarily to help foreign teaching assistants improve communication and teaching methods.

“Our department is notorious, along with math and computer science, for having a high percentage of foreign teaching assistants,” Fleisher said. “Nearly two-thirds of our teaching assistants are not native, English-speaking people.”

Because most of the department’s graduate students go on to teach college economics, Fleisher said the program gives them essential classroom preparation.

“Graduate programs do not necessarily give students the training they need to be effective teachers,” he said. “Some foreign teaching assistants have difficulties with English — this is not good for themselves or the students they will eventually be teaching.”

Fleisher said the first-time graduate teaching assistants in the seminar have at least one of their classroom sessions video-taped.

The seminar instructor then views the tape with the teaching assistant, reviewing the good and bad aspects of the performance.

Teaching assistants are evaluated in various areas, including verbal clarity, speed of delivery, subject knowledge and expressive behaviors.

“Expressive behaviors include the use of posture, arms and facial expressions that invite student response and participation,” Fleisher said.

The program has been received favorably by students, he added.

“I don’t think anyone wants to go into a roomful of students and be disliked or ineffective,” he said.

“This has been a way to help prospective teachers develop the skills they need to do a good job.”

One teaching assistant who was videotaped said the experience was initially unnerving.

“At first I was a little nervous about being taped,” said Fausto Hernandez, a second-year graduate student from Mexico City, Mexico. “It was intimidating to the class as well as to me. But then I got used to it, and it was okay,” he said.
Tax pinches grad assistants

By KAREN D. BROWN
Lantern staff writer

The new year brought smaller paychecks for graduate assistants because legislation making the value of their fee waivers tax exempt expired Dec. 31.

Graduate assistants are graduate students who are employed by the university.

Steve Stoffel, vice president of personnel services, said graduate assistants are taxed on one-third the value of their tuition waivers. The maximum amount of the fees, and thus the waiver, is the value of 10 credit hours.

Single students who are state residents are losing about $25 a month, and single out-of-state students are losing about $107 a month, said Jamie Cano, president of the Council of Graduate Students.

Newton Cattell, director of the Midwestern Universities Alliance, said the fee waivers were part of a law that also allowed tax waivers for employee educational assistance.

Employers used to be able to pay tuition costs for employees without having the employees include that cost in their gross income.

"One of the big problems with that legislation and the main reason it was not continued is because Congress estimated a heavy revenue loss of $300 million a year," Cattell said.

The alliance is a consortium of six universities, including Ohio State, with a Washington, D.C., office that informs its members about legislation affecting them.

All graduate assistants received a pay raise in January, but even with the raises, graduate assistants still have less take-home pay because of the taxation.

"You can't make ends meet — that's the biggest problem," Cano said. "Graduate student budgets are so small that you account for every penny. Then all of a sudden you are losing anywhere from $25 to $100 a month."

Ann Machen, a graduate student from Zachary, La., said, "We have rent and food bills. Even if you just look at the bare necessities, it is difficult to live."

John Greisberger, director of the International Students and Scholar Services office, said foreign students are hit especially hard by the taxation of fee waivers.

Foreign students pay higher out-of-state fees, which means they are taxed at the higher rate. They also are no readily able to supplement income with other work because of immigration service restrictions, he said.

Greisberger said students who have talked to him have said they are having to cut necessities.

"They might do less in terms of social and cultural activities, they may look to rent a cheaper apartment, or they may cut back on some of the food items they've been buying," he said.

Cattell said that when Congress considers technical corrections to the 1986 Tax Reform Act, there will be an opportunity to re-introduce legislation to make fee waivers tax exempt. But, he said it is hard to tell when Congress will consider the corrections, if ever.

Legislation has also been sponsored by 256 U.S. representatives and 32 Senators to eliminate the tax on fee waivers. In recent years, however, tax legislation has been held to the end of the session Cattell said.

The graduate council will hold a graduate student financial aid seminar at 7 p.m., Feb. 10 in Independence Hall 100 to discuss the taxation.
Residency rules let grad teachers reduce new tax

By KAREN D. BROWN
Lantern staff writer

Some non-resident graduate assistants could lower the amount of taxes they have to pay on their fee waivers by applying for conditional residency status.

Chris Richter, assistant registrar, said conditional residency allows out-of-state students to pay in-state tuition if they are U.S. citizens or permanent resident aliens.

With this status, graduate assistants would pay taxes on their fee waivers at an in-state rate, rather than the higher out-of-state rate. It is too late to apply for residency for Winter Quarter, but students may apply for Spring Quarter, Richter said.

Fee waivers for graduate assistants lost their tax-exempt status Jan. 1.

To be eligible for conditional residency, students must have self-supporting jobs in Ohio, be enrolled for 11 credit hours or less, and not receive financial aid to meet educational or living expenses.

During Autumn Quarter, the Board of Regents, which establishes the rules on residency qualifications, re-evaluated the conditional residency status.

Originally, graduate assistant stipends were not considered as income. This policy prevented many graduate students from meeting the work requirement for conditional residency.

"Now it is viewed that the student is an employee of the university and it is income," said Linda Ogden, a spokeswoman for the Board of Regents. "It is taxable and that makes a person gainfully employed."

Richter said the university asked the board to re-evaluate the conditional residency status after several graduate assistants argued that their stipends were not financial aid but reimbursement for work.

"In the past we were not sure if GTA's (graduate teaching assistants) fell into a financial aid category or an income earning category," Richter said. "If you were going to look at that as financial aid, and they were using that for support, they were ineligible for conditional residency."

Ogden said the new tax laws were evaluated the rule for conditional residency.

"That is one more argument that someone who holds a teaching assistantship is employed," Ogden said. "They are not only receiving compensation in exchange for their services ... but now it is absolutely clear that income is taxable."

If students want conditional residency status for Spring Quarter, they should apply as soon as possible, Richter said.

Although the deadline for Spring Quarter was Monday, Richter said the registrar's office will continue to accept requests until the first week of classes. He said, however, that the office cannot guarantee that any determination will be made before fees are assessed for late applications.

Kathy Pond, assistant to the registrar, said conditional residency was initially established to give people who had come to Ohio specifically to work an opportunity to attend classes at resident rates.

Anyone applying for permanent residency must have lived in Ohio continuously for 12 months. Anyone applying for conditional residency does not have any time requirement, she said.

Pond said applications for conditional residency have increased significantly from this time last year, although exact figures are not available. As of February, the registrar's office has received 152 requests for conditional residency, she said.

Heidi Fenc, a graduate associate in physics, and her husband Al Fenc, a graduate associate in computer information sciences, were both granted conditional residency status for this quarter.

"We talked to the people in the tax office, and they did not know exactly what taxes would be, but it looked like it may have been a case of one of us waiting a quarter out," she said.

Fenc said the 11 credit hour restriction limits the classes she can take because most courses in the physics department are four and five credit hours.

For this reason, Fenc said it will take her longer to complete her degree.

"At least I am taking classes," she said. "It is a hassle, but it is better than the alternative."
Tax change costing grad students

By Janet A. Pearl
Dispatch Staff Reporter

There is no quick fix for a big tax headache afflicting graduate students at Ohio State University.

That was the assessment offered by university officials and tax experts last night at an information session to explain a tax increase for graduate research, administrative and teaching assistants.

Jamie Cano, president of the Council of Graduate Students, said 4,000 of OSU's 10,000 graduate students are affected by a provision of the 1986 Tax Reform Act. The provision counts the value of a student's waived tuition fees as income.

For example, a student who is a resident of Ohio receives a stipend of $814 a month for 20 hours of work weekly. That amount has always been taxed.

But now the student also will be taxed on an additional $827 a month, the value of tuition waived in exchange for the student's work for the university, Cano said.

The $814 stipend reflects a 5 percent pay raise that was effective Jan. 1. Despite the raise, students will be taking home about $25 a month less in pay due to the tax increase.

The situation is worse for out-of-state residents and international students, who receive the same monthly stipend but whose tuition waiver is $2,024 a quarter, Cano said. They will have their income reduced by $107 a month.

Those figures are based on full-time appointments and an enrollment of 10 or more credit hours, he said. In an effort to sidestep the tax increase, a number of students have dropped their course loads to 7 hours, the minimum enrollment for graduate associates.

That way, an Ohio resident would lose about $8 monthly to taxes. An out-of-state student would lose $64 per month.

Dan Danahey, a student in the Anatomy Department, said, "They're taxing us on this tuition as if we actually had the money in our pockets."

Danahey, 26, of Chicago said the tax hike will affect his standard of living. "That $100 is several utility bills and part of the rent," he said.

Linda Budai, an Internal Revenue Service spokesman, said graduate students may receive advice on their taxes by writing the IRS, P.O. Box 3459, Cincinnati, Ohio, 45201.

They also may call the toll-free IRS tax line at 1-800-424-1040.
Graduate council crusades to reverse tuition waiver tax

By KAREN D. BROWN
Lantern staff writer

The Council of Graduate Students has organized a letter writing and media campaign in an effort to gain Congressional and public support against the taxing of graduate assistant tuition waivers.

Graduate assistant tuition waivers became taxable income as of Jan. 1.

Steve Molnar, organizer of the letter-writing campaign, said the council’s goal is to deliver 3,600 letters to Ohio legislators in Washington, D.C. The letters will not be mailed because of the cost.

“The letter writing campaign has two purposes,” said Molnar, a graduate assistant from Chicago in the Biochemistry Department. “The first and most important is to let our representatives know how we feel about the taxation situation. The second purpose is to unify the graduate students and develop a communications network.”

Molnar said the legislative offices he has contacted have not received many telephone calls or letters on the issue.

The letter writing campaign, he said, “is going to be a way to inform these people that there is a problem with the new tax law and that people at Ohio State are suffering.”

Kathy Greene, a spokeswoman for Rep. Chalmers P. Wylie, R-Columbus, said the House has proposed a bill that would make the tuition waivers tax exempt. The bill has 260 sponsors, including Wylie.

Louis Roth, a spokesman for Sen. John H. Glenn, D-Ohio, said the Senate has sponsored a similar bill, which would make undergraduate employee education assistance tax exempt. Glenn is a sponsor of this bill.

The letter does not yet apply to graduate tuition waivers, but the Senate is expected to add provisions for graduate students when the bill reaches the floor, Roth said.

Greene said the House bill has been referred to the House Ways and Means Committee, but no action has been scheduled.

“The committee has shown a lot of interest in this type of

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legislation,” she said. “It is just a matter of whether or not they are willing to pay for it. This bill would cost $300 million a year.”

The committee is still planning to meet until March, she said.

Ted Johann, legislative assistant to Rep. Willia D. Gradison Jr., R-Cincinnati, said, “The bill is really not stalled because nothing is moving. It is just going to be a little while before some tax legislation is considered and there is not going to be a final answer on this until the summer.”

Gradison is a member of the House Ways and Means Committee, but he is not one of the bill’s co-sponsors.

“He is inclined to support it, but because the budget deficit is a higher priority he doesn’t want to commit to something that he might have to go back on in the name of a larger compromise,” Johann said.

“When technical corrections are considered to the 1986 Tax Reform Act, tuition waivers may also be included in that legislation,” he said.

“If it were two or three years ago, I would say that there is no question that it would be included,” he said. “But the longer we go in these budget deficit times and especially with the presidential campaign coming up ... it becomes more and more revenue-driven all the time.

“People are really focusing on the bottom line of how much is this going to cost and can we afford it,” Johann said.

The council has also started a media campaign.

Diane Mould, organizer of the media campaign, said the students are trying to generate public awareness of the position of graduate students.

Mould, a graduate teaching assistant in the College of Pharmacy, said the council is sending news releases to local newspapers and TV stations.

“We want to draw attention to the impact on the quality of education that may occur if this situation continues,” she said. “If enough graduate students are financially in hardship, they may have to leave and return to industry and in some cases leave the country if they are foreign students.”
Petition circulated for repeal of new tax

By KAREN D. BROWN
Lantern staff writer

An assistant physics professor is circulating a petition at Ohio State and other universities around the country in an effort to get Congress to repeal the tax on graduate assistant tuition waivers.

D.L. Cox said the petition states that the tuition waiver tax provides a negative incentive for people to attend graduate school and that it can have disastrous long-term effects if it remains in effect.

Tuition waivers for graduate assistants lost their federal tax-exempt status Jan. 1.

Cox said the tax "will severely harm undergraduate education since there is a pivotal role played by the graduate teaching assistants. It will also be hurting the ranks of future scientists, engineers and other academicians."

The petition also states that the United States' competitiveness as a

world leader in science, education and technology could be harmed, Cox said.

The petition is being circulated on campus with the help of graduate students and faculty members. Cox is also circulating the petition to about 300 people at other universities by an electronic mailing system. Those universities include Rutgers University and the University of Pittsburgh.

Cox sent the petitions Saturday and Sunday and has not yet received any responses.

"The real concern I have on the immediate level is that these graduate students are really getting punished," Cox said. "What this is really doing is just nailing the graduate students and taking money away from them."

Once the petitions are signed, they will be sent to Congress, Cox said. "There are too many variations from state to state. The real thing is to get it changed at the federal level."

Julie Franklin, a graduate assistant in the physics department who is helping to coordinate the petition drive, said the petition is also informing faculty members about the tax.

The goal is to get every faculty member to sign the petition, Franklin said. She said they have already collected about 200 signatures.
Waivers not deductible in some cases, IRS says

By KAREN D. BROWN
Lantern staff writer

Graduate assistants who have heard of a possible way out of their tax woes should not rely on that information, according to university sources.

Although the Ohio State Council of Graduate Students has been told by the Internal Revenue Service that graduate assistants can deduct their fee waivers as business expenses, it may not be true.

Graduate fee waivers became taxable income Jan. 1.

Bob Pearson, from the IRS Cincinnati district office, said the person who gave the council this information is an IRS-trained employee who answers a 1-800 information line.

Pearson said the delegate from the council was told that fee waivers would qualify as business expenses if the waivers were required by employers by law for graduate assistants to keep their salaries, grades or status. The waivers are not deductible if they are necessary only for students to keep their jobs.

This is the explanation for what qualifies for educational expenses as noted in IRS publication 17, Pearson said.

Joanne Turner, assistant professor of accounting and management information systems, said those rules are decided on a case-by-case basis, "but, in general, anything that qualifies you for a different job is not deductible even if it is required for your present job."

"For example, if your employer required you to get a law degree, in general, that would still not be deductible because now it qualifies you to be something that you weren't qualified to be before," Turner said.

Tuition for graduate school is not deductible because it qualifies you for something you were not qualified to do before, she said.

"There are some very limited circumstances in which it might be deductible, but this is again a case-by-case basis and would have to handled as such by the IRS," Turner said.

Steve Stoffel, associate vice president for Personnel Services, said the information given to the council is not an official IRS ruling.

"It is not a ruling — it is not in writing, and it does not apply to each and every individual circumstance," he said.

Stoffel said he does not believe tuition waivers are deductible business expenses.

"Each individual's taxes are their responsibility with the Internal Revenue Service and that is how they need to finally work it out," he said. "There is not one opinion that will apply to everyone; it is not that simple of a question."

Turner said information received from the IRS information line is not binding.

Such a procedure for receiving binding information from the IRS is called a private letter ruling, Turner said.

To receive this ruling, an individual must pay a fee and file papers with the IRS explaining the question or problem.
New tax law puts bite on grad students

By Tim Doolin
Dispatch Staff Reporter

The 1986 Tax Reform Act is teaching graduate students a lesson in cold reality.

"I think the realization is that graduate education is no longer a privileged sanctuary from taxes like it was in the past," said Thomas Linney, director of government and associate relations for the Council of Graduate Schools in Washington.

Linney will discuss the law's impact on graduate students at 7 p.m. today in Independence Hall at Ohio State University.

About 4,000 of OSU's 10,000 graduate students are affected by a provision of the tax legislation that counts the value of a student's waived tuition fees as taxable income.

Linney said the tax law, which went into effect in 1987, makes it harder for graduate students to make ends meet.

"Graduate students are being treated as taxpayers," he said. "There is no consideration for the fact that their graduate degree will allow them to make more money and pay more taxes over their career."

Schools most affected by the tax laws are large public universities, such as Ohio State, where many graduate students work as teachers and research assistants.

At OSU, a student who is a resident of Ohio can receive $814 a month for 20 hours of work a week. That always has been taxed.

But now the student also will be taxed on an additional $827 a month, the value of waived tuition.

Although OSU granted a 5 percent stipend increase in January, students' take-home pay will be about $25 a month less because of the tax increase.

The tax law is tougher on out-of-state residents and international students. Their monthly stipend is the same, but their tuition waiver is $2,024 a quarter. That means $107 a month less in take-home pay.

Universities are having a difficult time dealing with the complexities of the tax law, Linney said.

"It is very confusing legislatively, and that is compounded by state and institutional policies governing teaching and research departments," he said.

Legislation pending in Congress could restore some tax benefits to graduate students, he said. "I think federal policy should encourage people to get their advance degree. I think graduate education has served this country well."
Grad students seek relief from new tax burden

By Tom Spring

Graduate students can take heart. Support to get Congress to reinstate tax-free tuition waivers that expired Dec. 31 appears to be strong and growing.

Legislation to extend Section 127 of the tax code has support from 39 senators and more than 260 representatives, according to Thomas Linney, director of government and association relations for the Council of Graduate Schools in the United States.

Linney talked about the 1986 Tax Reform Act and its impact on graduate students in a presentation March 3 on the Columbus campus.

He explained that Section 127, which expired Dec. 31, addressed employee education assistance benefits. Under the section, tuition remissions given to graduate students who perform teaching or research assistant work were excluded from taxation.

Now it's a different story.

For instance, Ohio State's graduate teaching and research associates recently received an average salary increase of 5 percent. However, with the implementation of taxation, those living in Ohio take home approximately $25 a month less than they did before the raise. Out-of-state and foreign students take home about $110 less a month.

While some out-of-state students have opportunities to qualify for Ohio residency and lower tuition, international students do not.

Linney said an exclusion generally had been in place since the tax code was established in 1954.

"The rationale was that if you earn an advanced degree, you'll earn more money, contribute more to society and pay more taxes," he explained.

Repealing the tax is estimated to cost the federal government about $200 million a year, Linney said.

Another promising sign of support is the involvement of a wide range of government, education, labor and business groups, he noted.

"While tax measures are not popular in an election year, Section 127 has a lot of popular appeal," said Linney, who indicated chances for passing the extension are promising.

He said the extension is supported by the National Association of Universities; the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges; the Council of Graduate Schools; the newly formed National Association of Graduate and Professional Students; and the 127 Coalition, co-sponsored by the American Association of Community and Junior Colleges, the National Association of Manufacturers and the AFL-CIO.

Linney noted that no member of Congress wants unhappy students. "You seldom find a member of Congress who isn't supportive of education," he told about 90 people at the meeting.

"This is a more arcane issue," though, he noted. "You may remember President Reagan in his (1988) State of the Union Address holding up the budget resolutions. They amounted to about 1,800 pages.

"Well, the Tax Reform Act (of 1986) was 1,800 pages, too. Scholarships and benefits took two pages of it. The extension of Section 127 took one page. While these are of major importance to graduate students and graduate school institutions, it is a relatively small piece, which is why it's difficult to focus attention on it."

The other problem, he says, is that some in Washington feel that students can get grants or loans to pay for their education.

In a survey conducted at the March 3 meeting, several students indicated they already participate in the National Student Loan Program. Most said they are taking seven credit hours instead of 15 credit hours.

Linney said odds are "70 percent to 80 percent at least" that if the tax exclusion is reinstated this year, it will be retroactive to Jan. 1, 1988. Implementing it for part of a year would be awkward.

"Tax legislation this year is a dicey proposition because of the election," he said. "Tax legislation in 1989 is a certainty (in order) to better the overall economic position in this country. There will be tax legislation in the 101st Congress."

Ohio State students will attend the meeting of the National Association of Graduate and Professional Students March 18-20 at Penn State to learn what other students are doing.

"We have more graduate students on a single campus than anyone else (in the United States)," said Jamie Cano, president of the Council of Graduate Students. "Our goal is to take the national leadership on this issue."

The students have held information meetings; begun a petition drive and letter-writing campaign; and met with legislators.

As of March 3, more than 800 faculty members had signed a petition asking Congress to repeal the tax, said Julie Franklin, a graduate student in physics. The petition, initiated by Dan Cox, assistant professor of physics, also has been sent to about 300 faculty at other universities through a computer mail network.
Plan saves graduate associates tax money

By Ty Goehring-Lee
Lantern staff writer

Although the Graduate School has come up with a plan to save graduate associates tax money, it is unclear how the Internal Revenue Service will interpret the action.

Graduate Associates will not pay taxes on summer tuition waivers if they are not employed or work less than 20 hours per week during the summer.

Since Jan. 1, tuition waivers, also known as fee authorizations, have been taxed as income. Most graduate associates receive a monthly stipend paycheck and a tuition waiver as compensation for their teaching services, research work or administrative duties.

Currently, tax on the combined income of both stipend and tuition is deducted from graduate associates' pay.

Steve Stoffel, associate vice president of Personnel Services, said because most graduate associates are not working during the summer months, the fourth-quarter fee authorization will be treated as a scholarship.

Under Section 117 of the Tax Code, tuition scholarships are tax-exempt.

A memo to department and graduate studies chairpersons, directors and deans, clarifies section 118-3 of the Graduate School Handbook that states graduate students receiving a summer quarter tuition authorization may hold an appointment for less than 20 hours a week.

"There have been reports of misconceptions that if you had a fourth-quarter (summer) authorization, you couldn't have a summer G.A. (graduate associate) appointment," said Paul Isaac, graduate school associate dean.

The memo also states, "the implication is that for graduate students using the fourth quarter fee authorization during summer, holding a G.A. appointment for less than 50 percent time would not trigger withholding."

This means graduate associates employed for less than 50 percent time, normally 20 hours a week, will not be taxed on the tuition waiver, only on their stipend paycheck, Isaac said. Graduate associates working 20 hours or more per week will be taxed on both pay and waiver.

He said some students may take home more pay if they are appointed to less than 20 hours and are exempt from tuition waiver taxes, as opposed to working more hours, getting paid more, but being taxed.

Stoffel said tuition waivers are being treated as scholarships because of the way university officials have interpreted the law. The waivers will not be reported on W-2 forms.

Stoffel said, "No one asked the IRS whether they had a problem or not."

He said since each individual's tax circumstance is different, there is a possibility that the IRS will interpret the law differently.
Foreign students cultivate English skills

By Zinle Chen
Lantern staff writer

Many Ohio State students complain that foreign teaching assistants don’t know English well enough to lecture, but there is more to this problem than just learning how to say new words.

Cultural barriers are also a problem for foreign students. Once the language is learned, students must study the American culture to overcome teaching difficulties.

There is a program at Ohio State that helps students learn both the language and the culture. It’s called the Spoken English Program.

The program results from a 1986 law stating that foreign graduate students must show proficiency in spoken English to be certified as teaching assistants, said Susanne Sarwark, director of the program.

Most of the students who enroll in the program are from Asian countries, including Taiwan, mainland China and Korea, she said.

Asian students find it difficult to practice their English speaking skills because many of them do not know Americans, Sarwark said.

“A lot of them say that Americans are just difficult to meet,” she said.

However, this program pairs foreign students with volunteer tutors at least once a week to practice English speaking skills, Sarwark said.

“A lot of European and Latin American natives test out of the program because they have a lot of experience speaking English. Also, their languages are more similar to English,” she said.

The program consists of two courses, English 104 and English 105. These courses teach pronunciation, fluency, comprehension, classroom language and public speaking.

Hui-Heun Tu, a graduate student from Taiwan in food science and nutrition, said, “We learn a lot, although we have learned a lot of English before. We practice a lot. We have labs.”

“It is a very interesting class,” Choong Il Cheon, a graduate student in molecular genetics, said, “I realize that the pronunciation or intonation that I learn in my country may be faulty. In this class I learn the correct pronunciation and the correct use.”

Cheon, a native of Korea, also said he can make mistakes in the class without feeling uncomfortable.

These course also teach the foreign graduate students how to deal with classroom situations.

Sarwark said, “For example, what do you say when people are making noise in class — what would an American (teaching assistant) say? Do you say, ‘shut up’ or do you say, ‘would you please have the courtesy of being quiet’? What can you do in this type of situation?”

Another important part of the Spoken English Program is that foreign graduate students can learn more about the American culture, said Jeannette Bolivar, assistant director of the Spoken English Program. Bolivar also teaches an English 104 class.

Bolivar said in addition to practicing English skills, she has given students the opportunity to study campus life.

“I gave them assignments to go talk with Americans. They observe how Americans differ from their societies,” Bolivar said.

“They went to the Union and saw people kissing in public, and sleeping in the lounges, and studying while they were eating. These things are unheard of back home,” Bolivar said.

Hee Chang Lyu, a graduate student in industrial design from Korea, said, “The program makes more opportunities to meet Americans.”

Mark Choi, a graduate student in communications, said many Americans often cannot empathize with a foreigner’s problems with English.

“At the Health Center, when I bought health insurance, I went to the office. It was my first day in America. So you can imagine, my English was very bad ... so how (could) I explain about the health insurance,” Choi said.

“I said a few words, and all of the people in the office began to laugh. I don’t know why they laughed at my wife and me,” he said.
Federal tax overhaul strikes graduate students’ benefits

By Tim Doulin
Dispatch Staff Reporter

Julie Franklin received a $59-a-month pay raise in January from The Ohio State University for serving as a graduate research assistant in physics. But she is taking home $7 a month less than she did last year.

How is it possible?

It isn’t the new math. It’s the new tax law.

Franklin and about 100 other graduate students from OSU and the University of Akron rallied on the Statehouse lawn yesterday to say the law is unfair. Similar rallies were held by graduate students across the country.

“MY DEPARTMENT gave me a nice raise, but I didn’t see it in my take-home pay,” said Franklin, 27, who is conducting research in condensed matter physics toward a Ph.D.

Such graduate assistants as Franklin pay no tuition and receive a minimal living allowance called a stipend in exchange for teaching or conducting research for the university.

In the past, only the stipend was subject to tax.

But starting in January, a provision in the 1986 tax-reform legislation required graduate students to pay tax on the tuition waiver.

As a result, Franklin receives a monthly stipend of $572 a month and takes home $721 a month after taxes. Last year, her monthly stipend was $814, but she received $728 after taxes.

THE LAW is shrinking the already tight budgets of graduate students, Franklin said.

After paying her monthly bills — which include $275 for rent, about $50 for utilities and about $150 for food — Franklin has about $20 left for recreation and entertainment, she said. But that doesn’t go far.

She has dropped two magazine subscriptions, doesn’t buy new records and goes to movies that cost only a dollar.

Franklin’s mother, a professor at the University of Minnesota, offers some financial support to her daughter, like buying new aerobics shoes or an airline ticket home to Minneapolis once or twice a year.

“I HAVEN’T even bought new clothes in six months,” Franklin said.

Franklin, who now qualifies as an Ohio resident, considers herself lucky compared with OSU graduate assistants from out of state. On the average, they are taking home about $107 a month less this year, despite this year’s pay raise.

Franklin left a job as a quality control engineer in the semiconductor purchasing division at the Sperry Corp. in Minnesota to attend graduate school at OSU in 1984. Despite the financial obstacles, she is determined to finish the remaining two years of her research.

About 4,200 of the 10,000 graduate students at OSU are affected by the law.

Many graduate students have written letters to congressmen, encouraging them to support legislation to repeal the tax.

OSU students also have enlisted the support of many members of the faculty and administration, including school trustee Hamilton J. Teaford and OSU President Edward H. Jennings.
Awards surprise teaching associates

By Tamera L. Kaufman
Lantern staff writer

Ten graduate teaching associates were surprised last week when presentation committees for the Graduate Associate Teaching Award selection committee burst into their classrooms and presented them with the special award.

The Graduate Associate Teaching Award, which was first presented 15 years ago, is the university’s highest form of recognition for graduate students, said Amy Edgar, administrative program associate for the Graduate School and staff support for the selection committee.

There were 94 nominations out of more than 2,300 graduate teaching associates, Edgar said.

Ten winners were selected and received, through a surprise in-class presentation, a plaque and an invitation to the Graduate School Awards Reception today.

At the awards reception, President Edward H. Jennings will present each winner with a $1,500 honorarium, she said.

The award was created to parallel the faculty’s Alumni Award for Distinguished Teaching, said John Sohl, chairman of the graduate award committee and a past recipient of the award.

“Because TA teaching is such a major part of education at this university, it should be awarded in the same manner as faculty teaching,” he said.

This year’s winners were: Maria Cruz Arrieta, Department of Romance Languages and Literatures; Suzanne H. Gottling, Department of Human Services Education; Ann C. Hall, Department of English; Deborah A. Hall, Graduate Program in Speech and Hearing Science; Jongsung “Jay” Kim, Graduate Program in Business Administration.

Also included were Rebecca C. Leugers, School of Allied Medical Professions, Division of Physical Therapy; Richard E. Nantello, Department of German; Katheryn Lore Riddle, School of Health, Physical Education, and Recreation; Elvia Suyapa Silvia, Department of Psychology; and Bradley R. Trees, Department of Physics.

Because TA teaching is such a major part of education at this university, it should be awarded in the same manner as faculty teaching.

— Chairman John Sohl

Nominations for the award are solicited through the Lantern each quarter, Edgar said. The graduate nominees are notified and asked for their student evaluation of teaching forms. These forms, a number of in-class observations, and committee discussions are the basis for the final selection.

Sohl said as the presenters — the dean of the graduate school, his advisor, the department chairperson, the graduate studies chairperson, the college dean, and members of the selection committee — arrived at his class, he was definitely startled.

However, he said the students’ excitement and applause when he was given the award meant the most to him.

While the award presentation and the money are terrific, the honor can definitely come in handy when applying for faculty positions.

“To be able to say I was selected out of 2,300 people to receive an excellence in teaching award is pretty impressive,” Sohl said. “The money is nice, but the true value is that it makes you more employable.”
House bill continues tax on fee waivers

By Tom Spring

Graduate students whose tuition is paid by their employers will continue to have their fee waivers taxed if a recent House-passed bill clears Congress. This includes 254 Ohio State staff taking graduate coursework, according to Graduate School figures.

Under the bill, graduate research and teaching associates and undergraduate students whose tuition is paid by their employers would have their first $1,500 in tuition benefits exempted from federal income tax. All other graduate students, including any staff enrolled in graduate courses paid for by the University, would continue to be liable for federal taxes on all fee remissions.

A separate bill has been introduced in the Senate.

Students with employer-paid tuition became liable for tax on Jan. 1, 1988, as part of the 1986 Tax Reform Act. A University employee taking four graduate credit hours each quarter in 1988-89, for example, would have tuition remission of $357 a quarter, or $1,428 a year, beginning autumn quarter. An employee in the 14 percent tax bracket conceivably could pay $200 more in taxes.

Ohio State "is a good example of a school that will be caught on the horns if the House bill becomes law," says Thomas J. Linney Jr., director of government relations for the Council of Graduate Schools, based in Washington, D.C.

Various higher education and graduate student organizations, including Ohio State's Council of Graduate Students, have been lobbying Congress for the past year to extend an expired section of tax law pertaining to tax-free tuition benefits.

Ideally, universities would like to see all education benefits exempted, notes Steve W. Stoffel, associate vice president for personnel services.

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“Almost every major research institution that has large graduate programs is lobbying” against the restrictions, he says.

Until last Dec. 31, the law allowed undergraduate and graduate students a tax exemption on the first $5,250 of tuition, notes Julie Franklin, a doctoral candidate in physics and member of the University’s Council of Graduate Students. Since the law expired, all employer-paid tuition at the graduate level has been taxable.

Ohio State withholds taxes on tuition waivers for graduate students who are research, administrative and teaching associates but not for regular staff. The tax liability, though, exists as of this year.

The House of Representatives passed a tax revision bill Aug. 4 which would allow undergraduate students with employer-paid tuition to pay no tax on the first $5,250 in 1988, retroactive to Jan. 1. That amount would be reduced to $1,500 in 1989 and 1990.

“We were hoping that an amendment to raise that amount from $1,500 would be offered and passed by the House,” said Franklin.

The $1,500 exemption also would apply to graduate teaching and research associates, but not to other graduate students who receive fee waivers.

That, Linney says, won’t help universities recruit businesses to send employees for M.B.A. and other advanced studies.

The bill passed overwhelmingly despite efforts in Congress to reinstate and permanently extend Section 127 of the federal tax code which generally excluded educational benefits from taxation.

Linney says universities used the section to encourage corporations to send their employees to school, give tax-free fee waivers to university employees, and assist graduate teaching and research assistants.

The House bill, says Linney and Franklin, not only reduces the tax-free amount. It also restricts eligibility.

Under the 1988-89 Ohio State budget, full-time, Ohio resident undergraduate students at the Columbus campus pay $680 per quarter in tuition and fees. Non-Ohio residents pay $1,876. Full-time graduate students who are Ohio residents pay $893 per quarter; non-Ohio residents pay $2,256.

Franklin says the House bill is better than the Senate tax modification bill. That bill, which has been passed out of committee, does not carry any exclusion.

“If the Senate version doesn’t have any extension and we’re left with this miserable version in the House, I have a feeling when the conference committee meets to work out differences, they’ll scratch the House version and we could be left without any exclusions,” says Franklin. “This is pretty grim news.”

A Senate bill amendment to restore and extend the tax exemption “is expected to be on the floor sometime after Sept. 7 when Congress returns from summer recess,” notes Linney. “Our position is to get the Senate to extend 127 without the restrictions added by the House bill.”
Waivers for TAs studied

By Jill Wolfram
Lantern staff writer

A task force met Thursday for the first time to discuss options the university might implement to ease the tax burden on graduate assistants, Ronald Rosbottom, chairperson of the task force and professor in the Department of Romance Languages, said Friday.

Graduate assistants are students employed by the university as teaching, research and administrative assistants.

Rosbottom said the task force is composed of faculty members, graduate students, and members of the administration from fiscal affairs, personnel services and the president’s office.

He said the task force has put a tentative deadline of Nov. 1 to come up with recommendations to Madison Scott, Vice-President for Personnel Services, and Roy Koenigschnitz, Dean of the Graduate School.

Rosbottom said the first meeting of the Task Force on Taxation of Graduate Associateship Fee Authorizations was used to prioritize the university’s options. Part of the meeting was used to update the task force committee on the status of current Congressional legislation.

Legislation making the value of graduate assistants’ fee waivers tax exempt expired Dec. 31, 1987. They are currently taxed on one third the value of their tuition waivers each month.

Rosbottom said a bill pending on the Senate floor could extend the tax exempt status to Dec. 31, 1988.

Members of the task force were also asked to gather additional information on the impact of the changing tax status on graduate students and what other institutions have done to help their students, Rosbottom said.

“There seem to be as many different arrangements as there are institutions,” he said.

“The primary concern is to keep it financially attractive for students to work as T.A.s,” he added.

“We’re trying to reduce as much as we can the burden these tax laws are causing the graduate assistants, but we’re still unclear what all the options are legally, fiscally and academically.”

Roger Musgrave, President of the Council of Graduate Students and a member of the task force, said the task force will meet Wednesday with more data from the personnel and controllers offices including what the cost of possible raises to graduate assistants would be and where the money would come from.

Rosbottom said despite efforts of the task force and the university, he doesn’t think the university will be able to reduce the costs completely.

One possible option, though, is the decoupling of fee waivers and living stipends, Musgrave said. This would allow the fee waivers to be considered scholarship instead of income and therefore be tax exempt.

He said other schools who have not had a long reputation for coupling have decoupled but, “CSU has been conservative to this point because of a possibility the IRS would question the reasoning behind the splitting of the

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package after the taxing began."

Musgrave said another option under consideration is offering excess capacity courses. He compared this to an airline with empty seats allowing its employees to fly for free. Graduate assistants could sit in on those classes that would not otherwise be full.

"But this could get complicated," he said. "Federal rules could require a 2 or 3-tier registration process allowing paying students to register first."

Musgrave said close-outs could also be a problem under this system.

He said he thinks the administration is committed to helping graduate students citing four raises to graduate assistants in the last three years.

He also pointed out the university allows all out-of-state graduate assistants with U.S. citizenship to apply for conditional residency so they will be taxed on the lower in-state fees.

Musgrave said on the average, in-state graduate assistants who are single with no dependents are losing $60 each month and out-of-state graduate assistants with the same circumstances are losing $150 each month because of the tax.
Recommendations made on graduate fee waiver tax

By Jill Wolfram
Lantern staff writer

A special task force has made its recommendations to the administration concerning the federal taxation of graduate associate tuition fee waivers.

The task force made five recommendations that it thinks are within the legal and fiscal restraints of the university, said Ronald C. Rosbottom, professor with the Department of Romance Languages and task force chairman.

The recommendations were given to Madison H. Scott, vice president for Personnel Services, and Roy A. Koenigsknecht, dean of the Graduate School.

The task force, which formed in June, has officially met for the last time, Rosbottom said. It is now up to Koenigsknecht and Scott to decide whether to pursue the recommendations.

"My understanding is that they were pleased with the recommendations," he said.

The first recommendation deals with the university's withholding policy. The task force has proposed that the university not withhold taxes on non-resident fees, Rosbottom said.

"We will consider that to be, in effect, a scholarship. We hope this will be understood as a scholarship by the IRS and therefore be non-taxable," he said. "The university is interpreting it this way."

Rosbottom called this approach "modified decoupling" because it does remove part of the tuition fee and treats it as a scholarship. He said that some universities
have completely separated the living stipend from the tuition, only withholding taxes on the stipend.

"We're taking a more conservative approach because we're not sure (complete decoupling) will work. We're doing our best to help the students without upsetting the IRS," he said.

The second recommendation the task force made is for the Jan. 1, 1989 graduate associate stipend increase to be announced no later than Oct. 31.

"The first priority is to let the students know of the raise so that they can start planning their finances for the year," Rosbottom said.

The third recommendation is for the university to increase the amount of the minimum graduate associate stipend, Rosbottom said.

"The lowest stipend should be raised before we even think of raising anyone else's. We've recommended that the lowest stipend be raised before the university gives an across-the-board increase for everybody," he said.

The minimum graduate associate stipend last Fall Quarter was $675 per month, said Stephen W. Stoffel, associate vice president of the Office of Personnel Services. Approximately 8.8 percent of graduate associates at Ohio State receive the minimum stipend, he said.

The fourth recommendation deals with the implications of attention to those actions that might ease the impact of taxation on graduate associates. An example would be quick responses to requests for loan and Ohio residency reclassification, Rosbottom said.

"Don't make them wait forever for loan applications and residency questions. A month without an additional $200 is a big month for some of these students," he said.

Roger Musgrave, president of the Council of Graduate Students and a member of the task force, said he thinks students will be pleased with the recommendations if they are implemented.

"The task force seriously looked for ways to relieve the strain given the restraints, and I think we came up with some good ones," he said.

Rosbottom also praised the task force for its work.

"I've worked on few committees that were so diverse and fewer than that that were so unanimous in their commitment to work together to come up with solid recommendations. It was very encouraging to work on a committee that did its work so fast and so efficiently," he said.
Fee waivers regain tax-exempt status

By Lewis R. Horner
Lincoln staff writer

Graduate associates at Ohio State will once again enjoy tax-exempt tuition fee waivers.

University officials are confident in their interpretation of the provisions pertaining to graduate fee waivers included in a recently passed tax bill. The university will immediately stop withholding taxes on the waivers.

"We have turned our payroll around. The Oct. 31 checks will reflect no withholding," President Edward H. Jennings said Thursday.

The tax correction bill passed Saturday by Congress provides a permanent tax-exempt status for graduate associate fee waivers if the students meet the tests used to determine what can be considered exempt, a staff member of the Senate Finance Committee said.

President Reagan is expected to sign the bill into law.

Herbert Asher, professor of political science and special assistant to President Jennings, said the test for fair compensation can be easily met by the university.

Because the bill is retroactive to Jan. 1, 1988, taxes withheld on tuition waivers after the first of the year could be refunded. The amount refunded, if any, will depend on the individual's tax situation, Jennings said.

The loss of the tax exemption caused nationwide protests by graduate students. Graduate students and universities lobbied Congress to reinstate the exemption.

Jennings said he thought Congress acted on the exemption because of the lobbying efforts from around the country. He praised the Council of Graduate Students at Ohio State for its efforts.

Roger Musgrave, president of the Council of Graduate Students, said the council was very happy with the outcome of the bill.

"There are some of our legislators who take graduate education very seriously," he said.

Roy Koenigsknecht, dean of the graduate school, called the bill a major victory and said that it removed a major obstacle to graduate education.

"There is a growing awareness in Washington of the importance of advanced scholarship and graduate research," he said.

With the passage of the bill, university efforts shifted to implementing the tax exemption. As a result, graduate associates will be receiving larger paychecks Monday.

Musgrave said, "We owe the administration a vote of thanks for the effort to get the checks changed."

Jennings also praised the Office of Personnel for making the changes so quickly.

"They deserve a great deal of the credit for their responsiveness to the student body," he said.

Asher said that in the past, tax exemption on the waivers had been granted for a limited time. When the law granting the exemption expired, so did the exemption. Because this bill makes the exemption permanent, Congress must actively vote to revoke the exemption, he said.

Jennings said, "My bet is that the issue has been put to bed."

"The last law allowing the exemption expired Dec. 31, 1987. The university began withholding taxes on the fee waivers in January. The amount withheld for taxes at that time ranged from $25 to $107 a month."

There had been some doubt that the tax-exempt status would be restored, including Franklin, a graduate student actively involved in trying to restore the exemption, kept in touch with the lobbying effort in Washington.

"I left Friday thinking we had lost the battle," she said.

Jennings said university officials would be working with the Council of Graduate Students to help graduate associates get tax refunds back promptly.

Franklin said a separate tax return will have to be filed to get a refund from the city of Columbus.
TA tuition waivers may be exempt from income tax

By Lewis R. Horner
Lantern staff writer

University and legislative officials remained unsure Wednesday about the fate of the tax status of fee waivers.

A provision in tax legislation passed Saturday by Congress could make some or part of tuition waivers exempt from income tax, but that is subject to how the law is interpreted.

Beginning in January, tuition waivers for graduate associates became taxable with the expiration of a law providing tax-exempt status to employer-paid tuition.

The taxing of fee waivers resulted in nationwide protests and petitions by graduate students, which prompted Congress to modify tax provisions. President Reagan still must sign the legislation.

Graduate associates are employed by the university and receive a monthly stipend, as well as a waiver for tuition fees.

The bill passed Saturday provides a permanent tax-exempt status to graduate teaching and research associates, but only for what is considered to be in excess of fair compensation for work performed, said Kevin Bruns, legislative assistant to Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio.

He said the exemption is retroactive to January 1, 1988, meaning graduate associates taxed too much will get money back, according to the legislation.

Rick May, legislative director for Rep. John Kasich, R-Ohio, said the issue is determining the true value of a graduate associate's job.

If the fee waiver is considered to be part of the payment a graduate associate receives for a job, then it would be taxable, he said. If all or part of the fee waiver is considered to be in excess of fair payment for a job, then it would be considered a non-taxable scholarship.

May said it was his understanding after talking to members of the tax staff of the House Ways and Means Committee that universities would have to determine the fair market value of the work performed by graduate associates.

Herb Asher, special assistant to President Jennings, was optimistic about the law, but said university officials want to be sure about the wording of the law before they made any decisions.

“We want to make sure the cross references (among sections of the law) provide us with the protection we need,” he said.
Congress provides tax relief for grad associates

By Steve Sterrett

President Jennings announced Oct. 27 that the University has stopped withholding federal taxes on the tuition remission of graduate associates. The action affects more than 4,000 graduate associates.

Congress recently adopted a wide-ranging tax correction bill that retroactively reinstated and made permanent the federal tax exclusion for tuition remission of graduate associates.

The bill reached the White House on Nov. 2 and President Reagan has until Nov. 14 to sign it.

The provision in the law that excluded tuition remission of graduate associates from taxable income expired Dec. 31.

The University in January began withholding federal taxes on the tuition remission to avoid graduate students incurring an unexpected tax liability for 1988.

"We in higher education applaud this action by Congress which recognizes that it is in the national interest to encourage Americans to pursue advanced studies," Jennings says. "Because of the University's desire to assist its graduate associates and assurances that our interpretation of this portion of the bill is correct, we are acting now.

"I want to single out the Council of Graduate Students at Ohio State and graduate students across the nation who have worked hard to demonstrate to Congress the importance of this tax exemption," Jennings says.

He also complimented the University's Office of Personnel Services for promptly changing the University's payroll. "They deserve a great deal of credit for their responsiveness to the student body."

The result is that October paychecks, distributed Oct. 31, reflected the reduced withholding, resulting in higher take-home pay for graduate associates.

In addition, Jennings says University officials will work with the Council of Graduate Students to assist graduate associates in obtaining prompt refunds from the IRS when they file their 1988 tax returns.

Graduate associateships are awarded to graduate students who teach or conduct research or other work while pursuing graduate studies. The minimum stipend for graduate associates is $665 a month. The tuition for full-time graduate students is $893 per quarter for Ohio residents and $2,256 per quarter for non-residents.

University officials still are studying how the changes apply to regular employees who take graduate courses under the fee authorization program.

The tax correction bill extends for another year the exclusion from taxes of the fee authorization for employees in undergraduate courses.
TA program to begin Winter quarter

By Jill Wolfram
Lantern staff writer

The Teaching Associate Forum, consisting of a series of monthly lectures and panel discussions, will begin Winter quarter.

The Teaching Associate Forum is part of a drive within the Center for Teaching Excellence to reach the often forgotten TA, said Chris Jones, research associate in the area of TA development.

The forum sessions will address important issues surrounding teaching associates and will generally consist of a panel of speakers followed by a question and answer period, Jones said.

The first session of the forum is entitled “Keeping all the Balls in the Air: Juggling the Multiple Roles of the TA.” The panel includes Roy Koenigsknecht, dean of the Graduate School, Joseph J. Filotta, associate professor in the Department of Communications, Jamie M. Cano, assistant professor in the Department of Agricultural Education, and Jeffrey Lep- tak, graduate teaching associate.

This session will be Jan. 17 at 7 p.m., and will be followed by a reception, Jones said. The location of the session will be announced later, he said.

“We want to stress that the Forum is an informal, social experience that will allow TA’s to interact with university faculty,” he said.

The Center for Teaching Excellence is varying the days and times of the monthly sessions in an attempt to accommodate the TA’s schedules, Jones said.

“We’re making a concerted effort to fulfill a need expressed by TA’s, so we’re hoping for a good turn-out,” he said.

Teaching associates had previously been included in the Faculty Forum on Teaching, but the issues discussed in this forum were not always relevant to them, said Roger Musgrave, president of the Council of Graduate Students.

Musgrave said he strongly encourages all TA’s to attend the sessions “for the sake of improving their teaching skills as well as giving them a chance to meet TA’s outside their own departments.”
Grads’ income returns boosted

By Kevin Havens
Lantern staff writer

Graduate associates may be receiving more than they had expected from their income tax returns.

A federal tax code which made graduate associate tuition waivers exempt from local, state and federal taxation expired December 31, 1987. Graduate associate tuition waivers became taxable income as of January 1, 1988.

This action affects about three thousand OSU students who were graduate associates during winter, spring and/or summer quarters of 1987, said Terry Krukemeyer, chairperson of the legislative affairs committee of the Council of Graduate Students.

“Our concern is to get these students aware of the money they’ll receive from the city of Columbus, since most are already aware of the state and federal returns,” he said.

Most of the graduate associates do not bother to fill out a Columbus city tax form, he said.

Single students who are state residents will receive $16.56 from the city of Columbus for each of the quarters they were a teaching assistant, a research assistant or an administrative assistant.

Single out-of-state students will receive $40.50 for each quarter from Columbus.

A tuition waiver means a graduate associate at Ohio State will not be billed for course fees up to 10 credit hours.

After an extensive lobbying campaign, the U.S. Congress reinstated the tax exempt provision of the waivers and made them retroactive on September 1, 1988. The reinstatement affects all graduate associates filing for income tax returns who had tuition waivers taxed from January 1, 1988 to October 31, 1988, Krukemeyer said.

To receive a refund, graduate associates must fill out a Columbus city income tax refund form, which will appear as an insert in the “Graduate Voice,” a publication of the Council of Graduate Students for graduate students.

The tax refund form must be sent in with a copy of the student’s W-2 form to room 025 of Archer House, 2150 Neil Ave, to receive approval, Krukemeyer said.

This office cannot give out tax information.

Bruce Kreischer, a chemical engineering teaching assistant winter and spring quarter in

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Forums offer look at issues TAs can face

Issues of interest to teaching associates involved in classroom instruction will be addressed each month in a new series, "TA Forums."

The informal, social discussions are sponsored by the Center for Teaching Excellence and the Council of Graduate Students.

"Each program is focused around one particular topic, with panels composed of faculty members, key administrators and experienced teaching associates," says Chris Jones, teaching associate development director.

"We believe these new events fill a need often expressed by TAs for more discussion on teaching, and they will help improve the quality of instruction available to undergraduates," Jones adds.

The forums are open to the entire University community.

The first program is "Keeping All the Balls in the Air: Juggling the Multiple Roles of the TA" at 7 p.m. Jan. 17 in 100 Stillman Hall.

"No one ever said life as a teaching associate was easy," Jones says. "Not only do typical TAs have to cope with the demands of teaching as many as three large classes, they must be equal to their own tough schedule of courses and personal research."

Addressing the topic are panelists Roy Koenigsknecht, dean of the Graduate School; Joe Pilotta, associate professor of communication; Jamie Cano, assistant professor of agricultural education; and Jeffrey Leptak, teaching associate, education.

Later topics include: "Pleasing Students and Supervisors: Teaching a Course That's Not Your Own" Feb. 15 in Hitchcock 031; "Strategies for Teaching Special Student Populations" March 2 in 100 Stillman; and two spring quarter programs, "Making Them Talk at 8 in the Morning: Ideas for Involving Your Students" and "Life Beyond An Assistantship: Procuring a Faculty Teaching Job."

For more information, contact Jones or Nancy Clarim at 292-3644.
OSU, city work to relieve taxed tuition waiver woes

By Cara Giacalone
Lantern staff writer

Columbus has made refunds for taxed tuition waivers easier for graduate students to receive.

The city issued the 4,619 refunds for a total of $265,606.90 to Ohio State to be distributed on or around January 31 in individual checks to each of the students for that part of the city tax, said Helen DeSantis, assistant vice president from the personnel services office.

"I think that this is one of the first times it has been really a win-win situation. By having the city give the university the money, it has saved the city from processing about 4,600 refunds and has prevented these students from actually filing for a refund," she said.

Because of a failure to renew a law exempting graduate tuition waivers from taxation, the graduate students paid taxes on their tuition waivers from January 1988 through September 1988.

A tuition waiver prevents graduate students from getting billed for course fees up to 10 credit hours.

Between the time the old federal tax code expired and the new code was issued, the graduate students were paying taxes on money they never received because it went straight to the university, said Terry Krukemyer, chairman of the Council of Graduate Students' legislative affairs committee.

The refund checks will be received around the same time the payroll checks will be received; however, these two checks will be separate.

"This is the first time we've done refunds of this magnitude or even this type so what we're hoping to do is get the checks run this week and distribute them with the (payroll) checks," DeSantis said.

About 300 students who are involved in this refund are no longer on campus or no longer have associateships.

These students will be notified by mail and will be able to pick up their checks at the Archer House, said Krukemyer.

The checks can be mailed out to the students who are not on campus, but the student must provide the university with authorization to mail the check, DeSantis said.

"What's nice about it is the students won't have to fill out forms, but more importantly no student will fall through the cracks if he didn't submit a refund form," Krukemyer said.

"I don't think anyone will object to the idea of not having to fill out extra paper work," said Yongkyoon No, a graduate student in linguistics.

"I think it's great. It seems like it's an easy, workable way to do things," said Tony Morrison, a graduate student in philosophy.
Forums to improve TA quality initiated

By Spencer Schein
Lantern staff writer

A lot of students talk about how they wish someone would do something about the quality of their teaching assistants. Chris Jones has done something about it.

Jones, development coordinator with the Faculty and TA unit of the Center for Teaching Excellence, has come up with a series of forums where TAs can listen to experienced faculty members and other TAs and ask questions about any problems they may have.

"It has been really successful," Jones said. "With two forums held last quarter, there has been a steady growth of people as the forums are better known."

A third forum was held on April 6, exploring the topic of "Making Them Talk at Eight in the Morning: Ideas for Involving All of Your Students." Jones said about 45 people attended.

Jones moderated the forum, with the panel being made up of Nancy Chism, Program Director with CTE Faculty and TA Development; Joe Dalmasso, assistant professor with the Department of Horticulture; Lewis Randolph, graduate teaching associate with the Department of Political Science; and Margene Peterson, graduate research associate with CTE Institutional Technology.

Jones said they try to get as many perspectives as they can on the panel to help the TAs more.

The main topic brought up at the forum was how to have more students involved in class discussions and involved in the class itself.

Chism said one way of doing this is by using open-ended questions that are designed to get some response out of the students and moving away from the dreaded "are there any questions?"

She said there are all types of learners and that TAs need to expand the ways they teach in order to get to all of them.

Randolph mentioned three don'ts for TAs when teaching classes -- don't yawn, don't talk about how you don't want to be there, and don't isolate part of the class by only asking certain people questions.

He also said that getting to class early and moving around the room during class helps involve more students.

Another main topic was the use of visual aids to involve more students. Peterson emphasized using overhead transparencies as a way of getting the class more involved. Randolph also spoke of using videotapes to liven up a class.

Establishing some type of rapport with the class and trying not to intimidate students was another topic. Dalmasso said that introducing himself to the class and telling them a little about his background on the first day works for him in establishing contact with the students.

Jones said that the forums help undergraduate students as well as TAs, because the level of teaching is increased, which can only be beneficial.

Roger D. Musgrave, president of the Council for Graduate Students, said the TA forums are co-sponsored by the Graduate School, the Undergraduate Student Government, CGS, and CTE.

Jones hopes to continue the forums in the fall, and said that CTE is planning one for May, although no date nor topic has been set upon as of yet.

For more information on the TA forums, contact Chris Jones at the Center for Teaching Excellence, 20 Lord Hall, or by calling 292-3644.
Student clings to life following violent attack

By Lori Timmins
Lantern staff writer

Most victims of campus-area robberies live to tell about their ordeal. Roger Schwirk will probably live, but he may not be able to tell about the attack which left him lying unconscious in a South Campus alley.

Schwirk, a first-quarter graduate student and teaching assistant in philosophy, is still in a coma after being attacked and robbed south of campus on Dec. 1. He was hit over the head with a rock and robbed after going to the Kroger at Seventh Avenue and High Street to get a late-night snack. Earlier in the evening, he had handed in his last paper for the quarter and went to a party with other graduate students.

Schwirk spent most of December at Doctors Hospital North on Dennis Ave., but his parents moved him back home by air ambulance to a hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina, right before Christmas, according to Sevr Schwirk, Roger's brother. He has been in a coma ever since.

Doctors had previously taken him off the respirator that was helping him breathe through an incision in his wind pipe. He had to be put back on it Friday night and was returned to the intensive care unit.

Schwirk said his brother only responds to deep pain. His eyes are open, but they stare blankly into the distance.

"Sometimes his heart rate changes, but there's no real physical signs," Schwirk said. "If you really want to see something you can convince yourself that you did, but he's not really responding in any way we can be sure about."

Schwirk said before the attack his brother worked out regularly and could bench press 350 pounds.

"The fact that he is in excellent condition may have kept him alive, but it won't help him neurologically," Schwirk said.

Roger could live for 40 years in a coma, Schwirk said.

If he does come out of the coma, it is likely he will suffer memory loss and will have to learn to walk and talk again, Schwirk said.

"They don't think he'll ever be anything like he was," he said.

He said doctors are not optimistic about Roger's chances of coming out of the coma.

"It's so rare to come out of a coma that you can't plan on it," Schwirk said. "There always seem to be stories in the public press about miraculous recoveries, but you don't hear about the hundreds of thousands who never get up."

Doctors say if he doesn't make progress in six months or a year he probably never will, Schwirk said.

If Roger's condition stabilizes, he will be moved to a long-term care facility, his brother said.

"But we're not going to give up hope ever," Schwirk said.

Lennie Erwin Sloan, 21, of 1210 Summit St., has been arrested and charged with felonious assault and robbery, according to Columbus police. Sloan's preliminary hearing is slated for Feb. 21.

Schwirk said because of Sloan's age, if he is convicted he might be out when he is in his thirties.

When his brother was home for Thanksgiving he had told his family how much he loved Ohio State.

"He felt like he was making a difference," Schwirk said. "I think he was as happy as he had ever been in his life."

Roger had his pick of graduate schools after graduating magna cum laude from the University of North Carolina and Schwirk said he couldn't help but think about what would have happened had his brother chosen to go elsewhere.

"Columbus has a lot of problems, and if they don't start cracking down, a lot of good people like Roger are not going to come here," Schwirk said.
‘Where oh where has my professor gone?’

By Chip Ramsey
Lantern staff writer

Professors at Ohio State may become an endangered species as more and more students are finding teaching assistants as the heads of their classes.

“The faculty is chronically understaffed, therefore, making the class size too large,” said Stephen Cecchetti, associate professor of economics. “This being the case, the TAs have to teach and handle some of the burden.”

Professor Edward Ray, chairperson of the economics department, said the budget situation at the university has become restrictive in recent years.

“We used to be able to hire outside professionals who came in and taught one or two courses,” he said. “Now that it’s more expensive to hire visiting faculty, we find it easier to hire and support graduate TA positions.”

Ray said there are no resources for a lot of growth in terms of hiring instructors and hiring new faculty.

According to Ray, the university legislature turned out to be less generous than various administrators had hoped.

“The economy has slowed down and this has fed into a system that has led to a falling off of support to higher education, so you end up seeing larger classes,” he said.

Class sizes have definitely increased in the last two to three years, Ray said.

Economics 200 and 400 courses average 75 to 80 students per class and 500 level courses average 60 per class, he said. Some classes are so large a student can become disengaged with the learning process.

“Something happens when a class size hits 35 or 40,” Ray said. “If you care about students and you want to interact with them effectively, something of that personal interaction disappears at a class size of 35 or 40,” he said.

At some point there is a threshold where something gets lost in both the teaching and learning experiences, Ray said.

Ray said there is a definite trend towards hiring more TAs than hiring outside professionals and full-time lecturers.

“Almost all of the recitation sections and labs are taught by TAs,” said Frank Delucia, chairman of the physics department.

Ray said the situation requires a reallocation of resources.

“We haven’t seen the stability in the upper administration that is necessary to dig deeply enough and follow through with the reallocation,” he said.

Ray said the university needs more funds to get back to a position to hire more full-time lecturers with more teaching years and diverse backgrounds.

Delucia said the university has to make do with what it has.
Increased research leads to more TAs

By Chip Ramsey
Lantern staff writer

The emphasis on research at Ohio State has limited the classroom role of professors and has increased the importance of teaching assistants.

"Over the past decade, faculty teaching loads have decreased," said Robert Arnold, associate provost for Academic Affairs Administration. "In order for them (the faculty) to conduct more research, more TAs are involved in undergraduate education."

Arnold said many of Ohio State's TAs are outstanding teachers and they serve the undergraduate classes extremely well.

"A lot of people say, well how can a TA be as good as a professor?" he said. "A TA is young, closer to the age of the student, so he or she has more sympathy towards the student and/or more rapport."

"I wouldn't say the TAs are better than some of our professors, but I would say some very high-quality education is being conducted by teaching assistants... I have great confidence in them," he said.

Introductory level courses in most areas are taught by teaching assistants, said James Collinson, associate dean of the College of Mathematical and Physical Sciences and professor of geology and mineralogy.

Ohio State doesn't put its outstanding people in introductory courses, Collinson said. However, he said that teaching assistant may well be a better teacher than the professor.

Arnold said research has always been going on at Ohio State, but more so now.

Stanford University President Donald Kennedy in an address to the Stanford Academic Council as quoted in Engineering Education said, "In some departments, faculty members may 'buy out' teaching time in order to concentrate upon research, or teaching loads are simply reduced to satisfy research objectives."

According to Arnold, Ohio State is considered one of the major research universities in the country.

"One of the missions of a large research university is to conduct research as well as teach, but that certainly doesn't mean teaching is not important," he said. "It's very important."

Collinson said there has always been a balance between time spent on research and time spent on teaching.

"Successful people achieve the proper balance," he said. "Less successful people who can't cope with that system spend more time with teaching or more time with research." 

A TA is young... so he or she has more sympathy towards the student and/or more rapport.

— Robert Arnold, associate provost for Academic Affairs Administration

"Research."

Collinson said it is very hard to do research, teach and perform community service, so there is a trend towards research at Ohio State.

"When it comes to promotion and tenure, teaching is looked at just like research," Collinson said. "But the trouble is, it's very hard to evaluate good teaching, but it's easier to evaluate research because good research is recognized by fellow peers."

Collinson said there is a lot of excellent research being done at Ohio State. All of the departments at Ohio State are centers for "state-of-the-art" and "cutting-edge" research, he said.

Arnold said many senior faculty members have intense research programs heavily supported by grants. He said those faculty have a tendency to do more research and less teaching.

Some junior faculty, such as assistant professors, also have heavy research commitments, he said.

"Now on the other hand, you have both junior and senior faculty who do not have real heavy research loads and they're spending lots of time in the classroom," Arnold said.

In many of the large classes at Ohio State and other research universities, professors are teaching the lectures and TAs are conducting recitation and lab sections.

"In large lecture classes the quality of the class doesn't go down just because the number of students has increased," Arnold said. "If a student maintains a dialogue with the TA, then the quality of a course won't change."
Teaching assistants protest budget cuts

By Laura Briggs
Lantern staff writer

OSU teaching assistants from the sociology, history and women's studies departments urged Gov. George V. Voinovich to restore his promise as the education governor during an informational rally Tuesday on the Oval.

Michele Smeller and Kim Dill, TA's in the sociology department, organized the rally of about 20 graduate students and formed a graduate student organization known as Save Quality Undergraduate Education, Stopping Hypocrisy or SQUISH.

Proposed budget cuts will reduce the number of TA's, causing undergraduate instruction to suffer, said rally organizers.

The group was formed in the last two weeks in response to Voinovich's cuts to higher education, Smeller said.

Five sociology graduate students will lose their jobs because of cuts, Smeller said.

The remaining TA's are waiting to see if they can keep their jobs, she said.

Krishnan Namboodiri, chairman of the department of sociology, could not be reached for comment.

Seventy-five percent of introductory classes at the university are taught by TAs, Smeller said.

The proposed state budget cuts $100 million from higher education. Rally participants urged passers-by to sign a petition asking Voinovich to consider an alternative budget which gives $90 million back to education.

James W. Hutchens, assistant dean of the college of the arts, said cuts in the budget will affect the entire university, but the department heads decide where they tighten their budgets.

Tei Street, a graduate student in the women's studies department,

George V. Voinovich said cuts will be made in other areas of her department.

Unfilled appointments were dropped instead of getting rid of TA's, she said.

Because there are only 13 faculty in the department, teaching assistants make up the bulk of teaching, she said.

The university made no mandate to cut TA's, but what is cut is an indication of what is valued, Street said.

The university can not attract graduate students without funding, she said.

Kate Weigand, a TA for four years in the history department, said the history department wants to keep all its TA's, but there will be fewer summer appointments.

Although TA's only teach one-fourth of the courses in the department, they are responsible for much of the grading and discussion groups, she said.
TA workshop

The University Teaching Associate Workshop will be held Sept. 19 and 20 for new and returning TAs.

Sessions will cover topics such as teaching a diverse student population and the rights and responsibilities of TAs. In small groups, participants will discuss lecturing, leading discussions, effective feedback and testing and grading.

Special workshops for international and ethnic minority teaching assistants will be held Sept. 17.

Colleges and departments can send teaching associates to all or part of the workshops. Or they can combine their own programs with the general sessions.

The workshops are sponsored by the Center for Teaching Excellence. The special sessions are co-sponsored by the Office of International Students and Scholars, the Spoken English Program and the Office of Minority Affairs.

For more information, or to make reservations, call Nancy Single, 292-3644.
The Graduate Associate Teaching Award (GATA) is the university's highest recognition of excellence in teaching by graduate students. To be chosen as one of the 10 best instructors places the recipients in a very select group of graduate students.

Graduate Teaching Associates (GTAs) constitute an important component of Ohio State's teaching instruction. At any one time, 2500 GTAs share their knowledge and enthusiasm for their fields with the university's undergraduate students. TAs can be found teaching undergraduates in a variety of settings: in recitation groups of 15-20 students, in fine arts studios, and in lecture halls. They may be holding one-on-one instruction in our chemistry laboratories, or they may be outdoors on the tennis courts.

Although the competition for the award is held during the spring quarter, TAs may be nominated if they have taught at any time during the preceding year. Nomination is by members of the class to a selection committee made up of previous GATA winners, faculty recipients of the alumni award for distinguished teaching, and selected honors undergraduates. This committee carefully reviews letters of nomination and student evaluations of teaching. Beyond the written assessment, committee members visit the classroom of each nominee, many more than once, to evaluate teaching effectiveness further. Final decisions are based on the nominations, students' evaluations, and class visitations. Ten GTAs out of the 2500 are selected for their outstanding instructional abilities.

Winners of the award are notified by a surprise in-class presentation of a commemorative plaque. The Dean of the Graduate School and a group including the department and graduate studies chairpersons, college dean, advisor, and members of the selection committee burst unannounced into the classroom. Wild applause usually greets the visitors. When quiet returns, the winner is invited to the Graduate School awards reception. He or she will receive a $1500 honorarium from the President of the University.
Cuts to hit grad students hard

Ohio State's elimination of some graduate associate jobs could cloud some futures.

By Tim Doudin
Dispatch Higher Education Reporter

Rick Weinbl has come too far to turn back now, but the road to a Ph.D. recently became a little longer. Weinbl, who is in the final year of a doctoral degree program in educational policy and leadership at Ohio State University, recently lost a huge chunk of financial support.

As the result of recent budget cuts, Weinbl's job as a graduate research associate in the school's Center for Teaching Excellence was eliminated. With the job went a monthly stipend of about $900 and a waiver that requires the university to pay his tuition.

"I'm writing my dissertation," Weinbl said.
"I have to reconsider that status, if I can't find another assistantship." That could be tough.

Earlier this month, OSU announced that about 700 jobs on the main campus would be eliminated in a cost-saving measure to help defray the loss of about $145 million in state support.

From 200 to 400 of the jobs are expected to be teaching, research and administrative positions belonging to graduate students.

About 4,000 of the 11,000 graduate students serve as assistant associates. The appointments are a form of financial aid, with appointments going to the top students.

The amount of stipends varies among departments and degree programs, with the minimum at $750 a month. The loss of appointments combined with a 9 percent increase in graduate school tuition (which pushes the annual cost to $3,966 for Ohioans and $10,278 for non-residents) could prove fatal to the plans of some graduate students, said Karen Duncan, president of the Council of Graduate Students.

"It really has the potential to stop a career dead in its tracks," Duncan said.

"It is a matter of opportunities being lost to continue education and, in some cases, to start one."

The official number of positions eliminated won't be known until fall, but the cuts are potentially devastating to graduate students, said James M. Suddles, assistant dean of the graduate school.

"If somebody was in the middle of a graduate program and lost the teaching assistant position, they would likely have to drop out," Suddles said.

Departments will be reluctant to let go of graduate associates who are in the middle of programs, Suddles said. Instead, new appointments are likely to go unfilled, causing the university to lose out on top graduate students.

"We view the graduate assistantships as a financial incentive to attract the best graduate students, and we could well lose some of the best people because we can't support them," Suddles said.

"Many students have a choice of graduate schools and go where they get support, everything being equal."

Between 300 and 350 one-year graduate fellowships were spared cuts. Those students receive stipends of about $10,000 and fees are paid by the university. Unlike graduate assistants, fellows are not expected to teach or conduct research for the university, he said.

As for Weinbl, he doesn't expect to land an assistantship in the fall but said he needs to finish the degree to fulfill his goal of becoming a teacher.

"The alternative is to apply for a full-time job outside the university," Weinbl said. "I can do that. I have skills, but I won't be able to devote as much time to school, and it will definitely delay finishing my degree."
Associateships eliminated in budget cuts

By Lynn Passloff
Lantern staff writer

Terrance Lumpkins’ dream of becoming a college professor might have to be put on hold because of state budget cuts.

Lumpkins recently learned that his position will not be renewed next year, and he will have to find a way to continue his education in the graduate program at Ohio State.

“I want to be a college professor and I can’t do that without a Ph.D.,” said Lumpkins, 25, a graduate student in the masters program for political science. “A masters won’t help me at all.”

Lumpkins is one of the many graduate students whose positions are being eliminated because of budget cuts. There are about 4,600 associateship positions and according to the university, between 200 and 400 positions, including undergraduate work study positions, will be cut, said Karen Duncan, president of the Council of Graduate Students.

About 40 percent of graduate students hold associateship positions, Duncan said.

Graduate associateships receive a salary in addition to receiving a fee authorization, so if their position is cut, not only do they lose their wages but also their fee authorization, said Jim Siddens, assistant dean of the graduate school. A fee authorization is a benefit that a graduate associate receives for the services they provide, he said.

The decisions for the position losses are not made by the graduate school, but by the specific departments themselves, Siddens said.

“I do not see this as a good development for the university, but understand that individual departments have to balance their budget,” Siddens said.

“We don’t like it, obviously. The preference of the graduate school would not be to cut general associateships,” Siddens said.

Duncan said the Council of Graduate Students wanted to lend its voice by writing a letter in response to the state budget cuts.

“Our goal is to make people aware that cuts are affecting the university in ways that perhaps they did not realize, she said.

“We realize that the state is in a predicament, but do not believe that cutting higher education disproportionately is the way to solve the state budget problem,” Duncan said. “We are losing people because students are losing the opportunity to continue their education, and losing students who won’t be coming to Ohio State because the funding won’t exist for them.”

In many ways, students are the future of the state, and when universities are not supported, neither is the state, Duncan said.

The Math and English departments are large employers of teaching associateships and also of general associateships, Siddens said.

Phil Huneke, vice chair of the Math Department, said they have not hired as many teaching associateships.

The English Department probably does not have enough teaching associateships, but the department cannot hire more without special permission or special funding, said Andren Lunsford, vice chair of the English Department.

Lumpkins, who will be out a job in the fall, is currently a research assistant who deals with issues relating to faculty and teacher associateship development. He also works with the multi-cultural teaching program.

“I am looking for jobs both inside and outside the university, and I’m pretty sure I’ll be able to find another job because offices have contacted me,” Lumpkins said.

Lumpkins said he attended the University of Cincinnati as an undergraduate and came to the OSU Graduate School because of the Political Science Department’s reputation.

“I am disappointed because I was encouraged to come here and (was) told that funding wasn’t difficult to get, and now it’s very difficult,” Lumpkins said.

“Technically, I’m supposed to graduate in December, 1993. The budget cuts won’t delay my graduating, but it will delay my entry into the Ph.D program, because I don’t have the funding to take courses,” Lumpkins said.
TAs learn to become better teachers

By Lynn Passloff
Lantern staff writer

The Center for Teaching Excellence is sponsoring the 11th annual Teaching Associate Workshop, which will be held Sept. 15 and 16. Also, there will be a special workshop for international and minority teaching associates on Sept. 14.

The purpose of the workshop is to reduce the anxiety of TA's in the classroom and to work with them on learning and teaching skills, said Nancy Chism, program director for faculty and TA development.

The Center for Teaching Excellence provides this workshop because some TA's wouldn't have an alternative workshop to attend, and the workshop provides a university-wide experience. For example, a chemistry TA could get to know and work with an English TA.

Jogeshwar Das, a TA from India, who teaches classes in anthropology, said the workshop is a big help for TA's.

Das didn't attend the workshop his first year because he was on a fellowship, but he did attend the workshop his second year. Because of the workshop, he was much more prepared to teach and know what to expect, he said.

As many as 500 people have attended the workshop in the past. Last year about four hundred people who participated. The attendance will go down this year because of the budget cuts, Chism said.

"The cost of the workshop is about $10,000," Chism said.

Larry Miller, a professor in agricultural education, will lead the key session, which will be held at Hitchcock Hall Auditorium.

Chism said.

He will speak about what makes an effective teacher, and also discuss clarity and enthusiasm, Chism said.

In addition to these two types of sessions, there will be mentor sessions led by TA's. The purpose of mentor sessions will be to instruct small groups of new TA's.

The mentor sessions will be held at Central Classroom building, Chism said.

Das, who has been a TA mentor for three years, said it is important to have a personal touch with students because knowing a student's name really makes a difference.

"The attitude is most important for the TA," Das said. "Take everything positively and don't think that because someone is asking you a question, they are trying to put you down."
Foreign TAs do battle with language, cultural barriers

By Hui-ling Lai
Lantern staff writer

Teo-Yu Chiang was giving a lecture in an OSU general biology class when a student asked a question.

Chiang, a teaching associate from Taiwan, did not quite hear the question and asked the student to repeat it.

"Never mind," the student responded. "Forget it."

As a foreign TA, Chiang said she often feels she is the target of a stereotype: She is another international TA with poor command of the English language.

Chiang and other foreign TAs, while acknowledging they have slight language barriers, say they have the communication skills necessary to teach their classes.

Chiang admits she does have some problems with English, but it simply means she cannot speak English as fluently as native speakers. She has confidence students will have no trouble understanding her as long as they pay attention.

Chiang said she checks often in class whether students understand her. If not, she always takes pains to explain again, trying her best to make herself clear. Students would understand more of what she's saying if they would read the textbook, Chiang said.

Sumit Ghose, a TA in French from India, said he never thought he had a problem communicating with students. The stereotype is harmful to most international TAs, he said.

Ghose said when he gave his first class at Indiana State University, his students kept asking him various sorts of questions to find out whether he could really handle the class. It could be because he is a foreign TA, Ghose said.

Last quarter, there were about 2,400 TAs at Ohio State, including 702 international TAs. Without exception, prospective foreign TAs must pass a couple of exams before teaching. In response to concerns about the language proficiency of international TAs, Ohio State implemented a rigorous screening procedure in 1986 that ensures only those international TAs with strong classroom communication skills are permitted to teach, said Susan M. Sarwark, director of the Spoken English Program.

Do students really mean to challenge international TAs because of the stereotype held by students? Or could it just be different perspectives?

Sarwark said it is important for international TAs to recognize certain kinds of behaviors are not impolite or rude.

"A lot of American students may never have met anyone from a different country before, and it's a surprise for them sometimes," Sarwark said. "Sometimes they don't know how to react very well."

Sarwark said international TAs need to learn more about the culture of the American undergraduate classroom to avoid misunderstanding.

"International TAs are formal and polite, but American students may think they are being cold or unapproachable," Sarwark said.

"International TAs are formal and polite, but American students may think they are being cold or unapproachable..."

Susan M. Sarwark

American students may simply be casual, but international TAs may think they are being rude," Sarwark said.

"Some of them perhaps may be rude, but I think, on the other hand, some of them are just different behaviors," she said.

Those international graduate students who want to get the TA position must take the Test of Spoken English first, Sarwark said. The test, administered worldwide, is an identical examination produced by Educational Testing Service as a standardized means of measuring spoken English language skills.

To be certified to teach, prospective international TAs have to score a minimum of 230 out of 300 on the spoken-English test, Sarwark said. Those who score at the margin can make up by taking the Mock Teaching Test. This test requires a prospective TA to present a ten-minute lesson to a panel of judges, which consists of professionals from the English as a Second Language Program, one faculty member representing the student's department and one outside faculty member.

Those prospective international TAs scoring far below the 230 cutoff are required to take English 104 and 105 before beginning to teach, Sarwark said. The former course is designed to improve the spoken English fluency, pronunciation and oral comprehension of international TAs, while the latter is designed to improve their communication skills. Students who are placed in these courses are not permitted to begin teaching duties until they complete the necessary coursework and pass an exit Mock Teaching Test.

Chiang took neither of the two courses because she passed the Mock Teaching Test. That is why she never thought the stereotype fit her.

Not all foreign TAs think the stereotype exists.

Savita Kamath, a TA in food science from India who thought students understood her pretty well, said she never senses the stereotype among her students.

"I think, in a way, it's right," Kamath said. "If I was in that position, maybe I would think the same thing. 'Oh my god, Foreign TA, I am not going to understand.'"

Kamath, who has had good experiences with her students, said she does not think students ever mean to take offense at foreign TAs because of the problem with language or because of their nationalities. If students want to be impolite, they will and do so in the American TAs' classes, she said.

Kan Nobuta also denied the existence of the stereotype. Nobuta, a TA in plant biology from Japan, said all his students showed patience and goodwill to him, although he said he might be hard to understand at times.

Todd Greco, a sophomore in computing information systems, agreed most of the foreign TAs are not that hard to communicate with. Usually people just need to have more patience to understand these TAs, he said.

Chiang said she cares about the stereotype much less now than she did two years ago. She knows you can't please everyone.

"I have a clear conscience because I have done my best," Chiang said.
Provost looks at graduate student mentor program

By Monica Setar
Lantern Staff Writer

The possibility of a new graduate student "teaching academy" program was introduced Sunday night to the Council of Graduate Students by Provost Richard Sisson.

Sisson introduced an idea about forming an academy for teaching of graduate students. The academy would be for graduate students who are interested in teaching as a career. It would allow graduate students to gain experience by having their own class.

"The graduate student would get a mentor, which would be a professor or master of the field," Sisson said. "This is who the graduate student could consult with, ask questions to and get referrals from."

Other than having a mentor, the graduate student would be solely responsible for designing and conducting the class.

Sisson said the program would be a way of preparing as many graduate students as possible for teaching because they would be dealing with real students.

The program would also be beneficial for undergraduate students.

"TAs have a big effect on students," Sisson said. "And some of the best teaching I've seen has been by TAs."

The program would also prepare graduate students to go out into the world as professors. It could assist them in finding jobs by affirming their teaching ability, Sisson said.

Sisson said the program is only an idea, and no one has actually decided to form an academy of teaching.
TEACHING ASSISTANTS RECEIVE LEADERSHIP AWARDS FROM PEW TRUST

COLUMBUS -- Eighteen teaching assistants (TAs) at The Ohio State University recently received Teaching Leadership Awards from the Pew Charitable Trusts. The grants, of up to $300 each, helped finance the TAs' participation in the fourth annual National Conference on the Training and Employment of Graduate Teaching Assistants, held Nov. 10-13 in Chicago.

The conference theme was "Engaging the Disciplines." Workshops, speakers, symposia and other activities addressed ways to integrate the views of universities, the academic disciplines and learned societies on graduate students' futures in teaching and scholarship.

Ohio State TAs who received Pew awards and their departments are:

Robert Boyd, aeronautical and astronautical engineering
Terrance Lumpkins, political science
Bruce Kelley, music theory
John Skrzypczak, Near Eastern, Judaic and Hellenic languages
Mark Winchester, theatre
Luis Hermosilla, Spanish and Portuguese
Daniel S. Dugan, technology education
Michael McCrary, sociology
Daniel Myers, sociology
Kaizaa Kotwal, theatre
Amber Ault, sociology
Sumit Ghose, French and Italian
Kenneth Williams, mathematics and communications
Shiv Bakhshi, communications
Carla Corroto, sociology
Kimberly Dugan, sociology

- more -
T.A. AWARDS -- 2

Dave Miklosovic, aeronautical and astronautical engineering
Sandra Thompson, management and human resources

Contact: Nancy Chism, faculty and TA development, Center for Instructional Resources, (614) 292-3644.
Complaints addressed at Ohio State

Myths debunked about food, teaching assistants

By Alan D. Miller
Dispatch Higher Education Reporter

Two of the most popular Ohio State University student sports — after football and complaining about a lack of parking — are griping about cafeteria food and swearing that teaching assistants can’t speak English.

“It’s expected,” said OSU President Gordon Gee. “It’s tradition.”

And both complaints are false, he said yesterday at a meeting of the university’s board of trustees.

“I have a daughter in (another) college right now, and she says the residence dining hall food is bad. She’s gained 10 pounds since she went there, so it can’t be too bad.”

She admitted it wasn’t bad, but that she complained because “everyone else said it was.”

The same happens when the topic is teaching assistants. At OSU, about 2,500 graduate students teach undergraduate classes each quarter.

“We once received a call from a parent saying, ‘My son is getting poor grades because he has one of those foreign teaching assistants,’” Gee said. “We checked it out and found he didn’t have a foreign TA. He wasn’t going to class.

“These myths need to be exploded.”

Of the 2,500 teaching assistants, about 700 are international students, said Roy Koenigsknecht, graduate school dean.

The university initiated policies in 1987 that Koenigsknecht said are the most stringent in the state. They prohibit teaching assistants from having contact with students until they exhibit a
command of English and pass a mock teaching test.

"The number of complaints to the provost's office about teaching assistants has plummeted since that went into effect," he said.

Associate Provost Robert Arnold said he received one complaint in the past year.

Still, there are some problems yet to overcome in the teaching assistant system, said Frank Chloupek, president of the Council of Graduate Students.

Some teaching assistants did not receive their assignments until a week before classes began, giving them virtually no time to prepare. For example, someone expecting to teach English 101 who is suddenly assigned to teach English 201 is put at a great disadvantage, he said.

"The number of complaints . . . about teaching assistants has plummeted."

Roy Koenigsknecht
graduate school dean

Student trustees Hiawatha Francisco Jr. and Amira Ailabouni requested the briefing on teaching assistants because they heard complaints from fellow students.

"It's a problem or we wouldn't have addressed it," Ailabouni said. "But I don't think it's a big problem."
Workshop to aid
new, returning TAs

The Universitywide Teaching Associate Workshop for new and returning TAs will be Sept. 13-16. Sessions will cover how to lead discussions, diversity issues in the classroom, testing and grading, lecturing and the personal dynamics of teaching and learning.

A special meeting for international teaching associates will be held Sept. 12.

Colleges or departments can send teaching associates to all or part of the workshops. They may also combine their own orientation programs with portions of the Universitywide workshop.

For more information, call Christine Stanley, 292-3644.
Foreign teaching associates learn language in Spoken English Program

By Cheryl Honigford
Lantern staff writer

Imagine you are an instructor trying to express ideas and theories in a language that is totally foreign to your own.

It is reality for nearly 200 of OSU's international teaching assistants.

The Spoken English Program, established in 1986, screens and trains TA's who speak English as a second language.

Under Ohio law, universities and colleges are required to screen TA's by assessing their oral English language proficiency and provide classroom instruction for those who are not able to teach.

TA's are chosen because they have an extensive knowledge of the subject matter, said Susan Sarwark, director of the Spoken English Program. But some TA's have difficulty conveying their knowledge of the subject to students, she said.

Prospective TA's must pass one of two exams which test their spoken English proficiency.

The TA's must pass the SPEAK exam that measures pronunciation, fluency, and accuracy. They also have to pass a Mock Teaching Test. Those who do not pass both tests must take a series of basic English classes.

The classes are graded on a satisfactory or unsatisfactory basis. If the student fails, they are not afforded another attempt, Sarwark said.

They are taught by instructors who hold doctorate or master's degrees in linguistics, teaching English as a second language, or foreign language education and also have extensive teaching experience.

In addition to classes, prospective TA's might also be matched with an American conversation partner. Graduate students can practice conversational English as well as have direct contact with American culture through weekly meetings with their conversation partners.

Peter Brandt, a graduate student in French, who volunteered as a conversation partner after seeing a flyer for the program, said that the last five quarters, he has had partners from France, Russia, China, Korea, and Thailand.

Kuo Hsiao, a graduate student in chemistry from Taiwan, said having a conversation partner has been a great opportunity.

"Because my conversation partner is retired and had been to Taiwan, Korea, and Japan after the Korean War, he knew a lot about my home country and international affairs," Hsiao said. He offered the meetings interesting and fun, he said.

Kuo said he will be ready to become a TA next fall.

There are 41 volunteers and 54 to 64 prospective TA's involved in the program, Brandt said.

See TAs/Page 2
Faculty celebrates teaching

There is perhaps no better time than the beginning of a new school year to have "A Celebration of Teaching," and that is exactly what Ohio State will have 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Oct. 6 in Gray Suites A, C and E of the Ohio Union.

The conference, geared toward experienced faculty and teaching associates, is the first of its kind at the University. It will feature a plenary session on innovation in teaching with panelists from the Academy of Teaching and Provost’s Teaching Fellows. In 17 concurrent sessions, faculty and TAs will talk about innovative methods they have put into practice.

“I see this conference as an occasion for our faculty and teaching associates to engage in extended dialogue and discovery on teaching issues, to renew their commitment to teaching, and to demonstrate the interest that Ohio State has in pursuing exceptional quality in teaching,” said Richard Sisson, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost.

Twenty faculty and 10 teaching associates will be involved in presenting the sessions. They come from 15 departments in 10 colleges. The topics were submitted last spring from faculty Universitywide. Discussions will range from innovative use of educational technology to collaborative learning, using case studies and creative assessment techniques.

“In the past the focus has been on orientation for new members, but we wanted also to provide a chance for cross-departmental dialogue,” said Nancy Chism, program director for faculty and TA development. A Celebration of Teaching will be a needed opportunity for “colleagues to share with colleagues,” she said.

The conference is sponsored by the Academy of Teaching, Faculty and TA Development and University Technology Services. For more information or to make reservations call Marsha Jones at 292-3644.
Bill seeks plain English spoken in classroom

Strong accents could lead to tuition refund

By Angela Miller
Lantern staff writer

If Ohio House Bill 273 is made law, Ohio State students could get a tuition refund if they are unable to understand their teachers.

The legislation requires an English-only standard in all state and local government agencies. The “English only” bill has passed through Senate committee hearings and will be presented on the Senate floor within the week.

Jose Amaya, a professor in the English department, characterized the bill as misguided and said, “It needs to be killed right now. It’s ridiculous.”

Amaya testified before a Senate committee Tuesday evening and said this bill could allow some to abuse the process in order to get a free refund. In order for a student to receive a refund under the bill, the person must file a complaint within two weeks of the first day of classes about the instructor’s speaking clarity.

The proposed legislation would require any written communication within a state and local government organization to be in English. Oral information for public services is an exception and can be given in languages other than English. An alternate language also can be used to comply with federal law, protect the public health or safety, protect individuals rights in civil or criminal action in court or in an administrative proceeding.

There is another exception: foreign language instruction. Other languages can be used to aid students with limited English proficiency so they can learn English in public schools. Alternative languages can also be used in order to promote international commerce, trade or tourism. The legislation also allows art terms or phrases from other languages.

Amaya said the bill would mean the state would determine a person’s fluency in English, not the university.

OSU has a test of high standard which evaluates the speaking clarity of foreign teaching assistants, Amaya said. Some faculty and students agree with Amaya.

Geetu Melwani, professor in journalism, questioned the accents of people from different regions in the United States. Melwani asked if they would be included in the testing of their English speaking.

Michelle Tobias, a senior majoring in physical therapy said everyone in America is supposed to have equal rights and access.

She has had experiences with teaching assistants who are difficult to understand and it was not a reason to drop the class. Tobias said eliminating instructors who don’t speak English would be a huge loss to the university.

The university is known internationally and there are international students here. If you are unable to tolerate people who are different than you, you shouldn’t be here, Tobias said.

According to records from the registrar’s office, the bill could affect four percent of undergraduates, 1,323 who are international students and 23 percent of graduate students, 2,210 being international.

Some immigrants also feel that the proposed law is unfair.

“My first reaction is one of ‘I don’t deserve this,’ I am an immigrant and I feel I’ve done my best to be a good contributing citizen,” said Jose Luis Mas, executive director of the Ohio Commission in Spanish Speaking Affairs.

The assumption behind the bill is that the Hispanic community is trying to make Spanish the official language, and that is completely false, Mas said.

Mas said the law could hit an estimated 140,000-250,000 Hispanics in Ohio.

Driver’s license tests is one example of how this bill will affect non-English speaking residents. The bill would force the exams to be in English only, along with welfare forms or Golden Buckeye card applications.

Mas said 19 other states have similar laws but Ohio’s proposal is one of the strictest.
Proposed English law unnecessary for OSU

TA proficiency tests ensure fluency in class, screeners say

By Angela Miller
Lantern staff writer

Editor's note: This is the third in a series on the "English-only" bill in the Ohio House of Representatives.

International graduate students in the English proficiency program at Ohio State are striving to become effective teaching assistants by improving their communication skills.

"As for any teacher, it is your responsibility to ensure students can understand you and the material you teach," said Jian Pan, an international graduate student majoring in physics.

"For an international student to become a teaching assistant there is a strict screening process. The Ohio House of Representatives Bill 273, now being reviewed by the Ohio Senate, addresses the issue of international teaching assistants' English proficiency. The bill proposes students could receive tuition and fee refunds if they drop a class because they are unable to understand their instructors."

Suean Sarwark, director of Spoken English at Ohio State, said of the 218 international teaching assistants this year only 30 percent passed the initial screening test for teaching certification.

"Students who do not pass the original test of spoken English may take English courses and work with tutors until they can pass. The certification includes a mock teaching test, which measures the teaching assistants' linguistic capability and ability to communicate," Sarwark said.

Sarwark said the Spoken English department has definitely helped the problem. Before the program, 70 percent of the international teaching assistants that didn't pass the initial screening this year would have been already teaching.

Since the English proficiency testing was mandated in 1988, Sarwark has done follow up studies and said OSU's teaching assistants' scores on student evaluations were close to the American teaching assistants.

She said there were a few who fell below proficiency after being cleared to teach. The reason may be that they work hard to pass and then later fall back and don't prepare, she said.

Sarwark said it's really important for students to communicate with their teaching assistants if they are having a problem understanding them.

"There shouldn't be a severe language problem if they are certified," Sarwark said.

In general, things are going well with only occasional problems, Sarwark said. This year they have received only two complaints, she said.

Gillian Carter, a teaching assistant and tutor, said her students are scared of the bill and the restrictions it may put on them.

She said she doesn't see a need for the law because OSU does a thorough job with its international students.

The demographics of the state are changing and it would not be good to institute a law that may limit us in the future, Carter said.

"I don't really think the bill is necessary because we've been working so hard on this," said Barbara Plankens, academic program specialist.

She said some departments really need teaching assistants and if the bill becomes law and starts eliminating international teaching assistants, sections will also be eliminated because there won't be enough people to teach the classes.

Chih-Hsin Shih, a graduate student majoring in chemical engineering, said he is afraid it will become harder to pass the mock teaching exam.

If the bill goes into effect it may discourage the university from hiring international teaching assistants, fearing it will lose money, said Kathi Cimenos, academic program specialist in the Spoken English Department.

She said OSU has always prided itself as an "international institution" and it would lose that if international teaching assistants were no longer hired.
PROVOST'S FELLOWS TO WORK WITH TOP TEACHING FACULTY

COLUMBUS -- Six Ohio State University graduate students have been named Provost’s Teaching Fellows and will develop their skills as teachers under the guidance of some of the university’s most respected faculty for the next year.

Richard Sisson, senior vice president for academic affairs and provost, honored the 1996-97 Fellows at a ceremony May 31. They are graduate students who already have demonstrated their classroom abilities by receiving Graduate School Teaching Associate Awards. Students and faculty nominate the teaching associates for the honors.

Since the TAs also show potential as future professors, Fellows are matched with top faculty, members of the Academy of Teaching who serve as mentors for a year.

"Mentors will assist them to strengthen their teaching skills, to discover innovative teaching methods, and to develop new models of engaging students," Sisson said.

The winners are:

-- Cornel Balteanu of COLUMBUS (43210), teaching associate for the Department of Mathematics, whose mentor is Elizabeth Stasney, associate professor of statistics.
April 6, 2001

OSU salaries slip compared to benchmark institutions

COLUMBUS – University administrators outlined how Ohio State’s compensation packages compare to the university’s benchmark institutions and markets in a presentation to the Board of Trustees on Friday (4/6).

An analysis of salaries for faculty and staff, and of financial support for graduate associates, was provided by Edward J. Ray, executive vice president and provost; Nancy M. Rudd, vice provost for academic policy and human resources; Larry M. Lewellen, associate vice president for human resources; and J Henderson, director of compensation.

Graduate support

For the first time this year, administrators provided charts that displayed the ranking of graduate associate financial support in relation to benchmark and public CIC institutions.

“Our net institutional investment for graduate associates is competitive, but our net financial support is not,” Lewellen said.

Ohio State ranked sixth out of 14 institutions for a net institutional investment (including tuition covered by the university) of $15,432 for each resident student, but ranked 13th for the average net financial support (stipends and benefits only, without covered tuition) of $10,275 per student.

Lewellen also pointed out that Ohio State is among only three of the 14 comparison institutions that do not provide any medical benefit subsidy to graduate associates.

“It should be noted that there are 311 public graduate programs, and we have chosen to compare with 13 top programs,” Lewellen said. “Given that fact, it is not surprising that we have a gap to close.”

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Protest at Ohio State aims at US House tax-plan provision hurting grad students

By Jennifer Smola
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Emma Lagan hates to think about what would happen should she need a new tire for her car, or worse, a new computer if hers were to crash.

The second-year graduate student in anthropology at Ohio State University said she has just enough from her student stipend each month to cover her basic expenses such as rent, food and insurance.

Lagan was one of about 150 students who gathered at Ohio State on Monday afternoon to protest proposed tax reforms that they say will hurt graduate education.

“I don’t need to be rich,” Lagan said. “I just need to make enough money to live comfortably.”

The House tax-reform plan, which is headed to the House floor for a vote later this week, would repeal a provision in the existing tax code that excluded qualified tuition reductions from an employee’s taxable income. That means those tuition-reduction dollars provided by universities to their employees would now count toward an employee’s income and would be taxed.

That applies to graduate students who receive tuition waivers and often teach or perform research at universities and colleges. The tuition that their school or department covers — sometimes tens of thousands of dollars — would count toward the students’ taxable income, setting off alarms among graduate students.

“I never see that money,” Lagan said. “It is not part of my income.”

Taxing tuition waivers is one of a

Counting those tuition waivers as taxable income would be devastating, graduate students said at Monday's gathering. Many who addressed the crowd said they would have to consider leaving their programs if the tax plan becomes law.

"The provision that would tax my tuition support would drastically increase my taxes," said Jenna Freudenburg, a fourth-year graduate student in astronomy. "I would be unable to really afford to be in the program that I'm in. That's true for a lot of my peers as well."

As students wrapped up their protest Monday, Ohio State President Dr. Michael V. Drake from his office to Ohio's congressional delegation expressing concern about provisions of the tax bill. At Ohio State, more than 4,300 students receive non-taxable tuition waivers, the letter said.

"Without this provision in place, these students will be subject to a major tax increase, making it difficult for universities to recruit them and thus hindering our research and innovation mission," Drake wrote.

The Senate's version of tax-reform legislation would not tax tuition waivers. Students at Monday's rally acknowledged that the House bill could die in the Senate, but they said they aren't willing to take that risk.

"We are going to kill this bill," said Alex Davis, a fifth-year doctoral candidate in physics.