

Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences Teaching Fellow Program Resolution process

The role of the teaching fellow is central to the professional development of graduate students and to undergraduate education in Yale College. It is, therefore, important that teaching fellows take their responsibilities seriously and fulfill them diligently. It is in fact very rare that teaching fellows do otherwise. Typically, these rare instances are handled through an informal process that includes the student, the course instructor, and the Teaching Fellow Program. When difficulties cannot be resolved informally, they are subject to the process described below.

Teaching fellow appointments are contingent on the satisfactory fulfillment of the responsibilities associated with each appointment level and type. The deans of the FAS, GSAS, and Yale College jointly send a [message](#) each term to all teaching fellows and faculty members detailing responsibilities, respectively. Other responsibilities include:

- regularly attending lectures when stipulated by the course instructor of record
- consistently holding your section(s) when you are a discussion section leader
- holding regular office hours, based on the assignment
- responding promptly and professionally to student and faculty inquiries
- behaving professionally in all duties related to the teaching assignment
- grading and returning assignments promptly
- maintaining an hourly commitment consistent with the appointment level.

All teaching fellows are governed by these expectations. Any apparent failure to fulfill these expectations should be first raised by the course instructor with the teaching fellow for informal resolution. If that resolution cannot be reached promptly, the procedure below will be used. This procedure is not intended for the resolution of disputes involving grades assigned by teaching fellows.

1. REPORT

The process begins when the Dean overseeing the Teaching Fellow Program is informed of conduct by a graduate student that may constitute a failure to fulfill the above expectations. This information shall come in the form of a report, in writing, typically by the course instructor of record. At this point, the teaching fellow may be temporarily relieved of the assignment to ensure continuity of instruction.

2. EVALUATION OF THE REPORT

The Dean will determine whether the conduct reported, if true, warrants referral to the Committee on Regulations and Discipline, a subset of which will adjudicate cases regarding teaching responsibilities. Typically, the subset will include a faculty committee chair, a student member and a GSAS administrator. The Dean will ordinarily make a determination within two days of receiving the initial report. In making that determination, the Dean may consult the Director of Graduate Studies of the student's program, or other officials of the Graduate School or the University, provided that in the interest of confidentiality the Dean will not consult more widely than the Dean believes necessary. The Dean may also obtain other information and/or documentation that the Dean thinks may be useful.

3. NOTICE TO THE STUDENT

When the Dean receives a complaint, the Dean will promptly inform the student in writing that a complaint has been made, the nature of the complaint, and ask for a response and/or explanation. This notification shall contain a statement of the conduct reported, the expectations allegedly unmet, all documents obtained by the Dean that are relevant to the report, and a printed copy of this procedure and the possible penalties, as detailed below. If the Dean decides not to refer the matter to the subset of the Committee on Regulations and Discipline, the Dean will promptly notify the student and the instructor of record that the matter has been closed.

4. THE STUDENT'S RESPONSE

The student must respond to the notice promptly (within 2 calendar days) to maintain continuity of instruction.

5. DISPOSITION OF THE COMPLAINT

When the student concedes that teaching responsibilities have not been met, the Dean will decide whether to grant the request for a disposition, and if it is granted, will decide on the appropriate penalty and notify the student in writing. The Dean will normally talk to the student before making a determination.

If the student denies the allegations of failure to fulfill teaching responsibilities, the subset of the Committee on Regulations and Discipline will convene to consider the evidence gathered earlier in the process. The group will typically speak with the student and with the course instructor before making a determination and may seek additional information or evidence, as needed.

6. PENALTIES

If the Committee subset determines that the student has failed to meet their teaching responsibilities, penalties may include any, or a combination, of the following:

- remedial training
- probation
- cancellation of appointment, with corresponding transcript notation
- cancellation of appointment and no academic credit (if teaching is for academic credit).

Students whose teaching appointments are cancelled will not receive academic credit for teaching that semester. The Committee subset will recommend to the Dean a disposition and penalty. The Dean will then make a determination and notify the student in writing of the disposition and the penalty.