

CAMPUS

# TAs chosen as finalists for Undergraduate Teaching Awards

By Valerie Holbert and Jenny McInnis  
Staff Writer

In some University lecture classes, a teaching assistant is a student's guiding light.

Ten of UNC's best teaching assistants are finalists for the Undergraduate Teaching Awards.

A student committee will choose five of the finalists as recipients of the awards, which carry a \$1,000 cash prize.

Students are encouraged to participate in the process by submitting letters of recommendation to student government in Suite C of the Union.

The committee will read the recommendations, sit in on classes and conduct interviews of the TAs. Winners will be announced Monday.

### Curt Ryan

Curt Ryan, a teaching assistant in the political science department, said teaching never bored him. "I like to teach a variety of classes," he said.

Ryan would like to teach in Washington, D.C., after graduate school because he wants to be a consultant for the U.S. policy in the Middle East.

Glenn Snyder, Ryan's dissertation adviser, said Ryan was an excellent nominee. "He is one of the leading graduate students," Snyder said.

Ramah Kayyali, a sophomore in Ryan's Middle East class, said he taught about a very controversial region.

"He is very objective and doesn't try to force opinions," Kayyali said. "He shows us both sides of the coin."

### Dan Humphries

Dan Humphries, a teaching assistant in the Slavic languages department, said he majored in Russian because he loved the way the language sounded when it was spoken.

He said he would like to be a professor of Slavic linguistics someday and teach students Russian and other Slavic languages.

Humphries said he first took Russian to satisfy a language requirement. "Before I knew it, I was on my way to becoming a Russian major."

"I was really surprised to be nominated because Russian grammar usually has fairly small sections," he said.

Eleonora Magomedova, director of the Russian program, said Humphries was a natural teacher. "There aren't enough superlatives in the English language to describe his teaching."

Michele Quinn, a junior from Eldersburg, Md., in Humphries' Russian class, said, "He's concerned that everyone in the class is learning, and he's always encouraging us and making sure we all understand it."

### Wes Boyd

Wes Boyd, a teaching assistant in the religious studies department, said, "I'm very excited about being a finalist. I'm happy some of my students appreciated

enough of what was happening in class to nominate me."

Boyd, who went to undergraduate school at Yale University, said he would finish medical school next month. He then wants to be a psychiatrist as well as a religious studies teacher, he said.

William Peck, director of the religious studies department, said he was excited and pleased about Boyd's nomination for the teaching assistant award.

"He's done extremely good work," Peck said. "I deeply appreciate him as a person and thinker."

### Beth Calamia

Beth Calamia, a teaching assistant in the classics department, said she was surprised a TA in Latin could get enough recognition for an Undergraduate Teaching Award.

Calamia is in her second year of graduate school. She said she was not sure where she wanted to teach after graduation.

She is concentrating in archaeology, and hopes to be an archaeologist and a teacher, she said.

Her nomination was unexpected, she said. "I was really surprised. Latin doesn't usually get that much recognition."

Tracy Smith, a freshman from Winston-Salem in Calamia's Latin class, said Calamia was a great teacher. "It's really hard for her because the class is eight o'clock in the morning," she said. "Not very many people participate, but she tries to liven things up."

### Lynn Rankin

Lynn Rankin, a teaching assistant in the psychology department, said she wanted to continue teaching psychol-

ogy because it offered a broad range of opportunities.

"I can do teaching, research and clinical work if I remain teaching," she said.

"I am interested in marital therapy and relationships," she said. "I would love to be here, but there's already someone here in marital therapy."

Joseph Lowman, Rankin's teaching adviser, said Rankin was a natural teacher. "She is one of the best I've ever seen," he said. "She has such a sense of energy, clarity, and her classes are well-attended and interesting. She's also very sensitive to students as people."

Susan Williams, a senior from Charlotte in Rankin's psychology class, said, "She's a good teacher because she brings the class into the discussion and tries to get a lot of input from the class."

Rankin said, "It (being nominated) is really exciting because I didn't expect to like teaching so much. It's been so much fun for me."

### Deborah Austin

Deborah Austin said the relationship between teachers and students was a give-and-take one.

"There's a reciprocal relationship going on here," she said. "I'm always learning from my students."

Austin has been a teaching assistant since the fall of 1990 and has been teaching since the fall of 1991. She was an undergraduate at UNC from 1971 to 1975 and returned in 1990 to do her graduate work.

Professor Virgil Balthrop said Austin had the strongest course evaluations in his 16 years at the University. "She has the ability to find richness and complexity in almost any material," he said.

Tonia Lea, a student from

Yanceyville who took Austin's African-American literature class, said Austin always was interested in helping her students inside and outside class.

"Just knowing she was concerned how things were going outside of class made her a great teacher," Lea said.

After finishing her graduate work, Austin plans to attend the University of Southern Florida where she has been accepted in a doctoral program.

### Steve Killion

Steve Killion, a teaching assistant in English, has been at UNC since 1981 and has been teaching since 1985. Killion said it meant a lot to him to be a finalist for the award.

"It's an honor," Killion said. "It means a lot coming from the students."

Karleton Fyfe, a senior from Durham who took Killion's English 23 class, said Killion once held a review session at 10 p.m. in the library. "He goes completely out of his way to help his students," Fyfe said.

Killion plans to teach at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, New York, after completing his graduate work at UNC.

### Will Nash

Will Nash came to UNC in 1986 after attending Centre College in Danville, Va., and began teaching in 1989.

Nash said he was pleased that he had affected students through his teaching. "I feel really good that I've had enough of an impact on a student to be nominated," he said.

Clara Powell, a sophomore from Macon, said Nash was a good teacher because he was easy to get along with. "He's very open-minded. He was always very understanding."

Nash said his goal was to become a professor of African-American literature and folklore.

### Michele Ware

Michele Ware, a teaching assistant in

the English department, has been at UNC since 1986 and received her master's degree in English in 1988. Ware said being considered for the award was an honor because teaching was important to her.

"I really take my teaching seriously," she said. "This kind of acknowledgement is rare."

Robert Greer, a student from Atlanta said although Ware taught him almost three years ago, he still keeps in touch with her for advice.

"She really gets down to the student's level," Greer said. "She is an adviser as well as a teacher."

Ware said she was working on her doctorate degree and hoped to find a teaching position at the university level after completing her work at UNC.

### Robert Porter

Robert Porter, a teaching assistant in Afro-American studies, said he teaches a lecture class so large that he has his own TA.

"I like everything about teaching," Porter said. "I really enjoy interacting with students, lecturing, and class discussions."

Porter, who has been teaching at UNC since 1989, is a doctoral candidate in history. He said the nomination meant a lot to him because it showed his students appreciated his love for teaching.

"It means a great deal to me to be nominated for this award," he said. "I really love teaching, and I'm most grateful to the students for recognizing my efforts."

Brad Bills, a junior from Charlotte and one of Porter's former students, said he enjoyed Porter's class because he showed interest in his students.

"Mr. Porter is original," he said. "He's an excellent role model who is genuinely concerned with his students."

Janet Clark, Porter's TA, said Porter was a good teacher because he made students his first priority.

## Campus Calendar

**THURSDAY**  
10 a.m. Seniors: Sign up for free one-year membership in The Educational Foundation (Rams Club) until 2 p.m. in the Pit.  
TARP will be promoting Zero Garbage Day and will be having a bike sale until 2 p.m. in the Pit.  
11 a.m. Walk for Humanity Registration until 2 p.m. in the Pit. Information: 962-2333.  
3:30 p.m. UCPPS will offer a Resume-Writing Workshop for undergraduates interested in internships in 306 Hanes.  
5:30 p.m. Association of International Students will meet in 208-9 Union.  
Amnesty International Urgent Action Group will have a letter-writing meeting in Lenoir North Dining Room.  
6 p.m. Minority Business Forum dealing with

diversity in the workplace will be held in T-2 Carroll.  
"Brothers" discussion group for and about African-American male students will meet in the first-floor lounge of Hinton James. Dean Harold Woodard will discuss "Dating and Communication."  
7 p.m. Leadership Matters will have a skills workshop in Cobb Training Room. Information: 966-4041.  
Food Issues Team will give a talk about the consequences of our food choices in Frank Porter Graham Lounge of the Union.  
Mangum Medal will be given to a graduating senior for the best oration in the Dialectic Chambers of New West.  
9 p.m. UNC Pauper Players will hold an open forum to discuss possible shows for next year in the Great Hall of the Union.

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