

## **Provost Policy**

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### **Use of Undergraduate Students as Instructional Assistants**

**Name of Policy:** **Undergraduate Instructional Assistants (UIA) – Appropriate Roles and Training**

**Oversight of Policy:** **Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education**

**Rationale:** Undergraduate students can play important roles in classroom/laboratory/help desk/tutoring session instruction, but their function is different from that of a Graduate Teaching Assistant. They should be distinguished from Graduate Teaching Assistants not only by their duties, responsibilities for student oversight, training, and on-going support, but also by their titles. Undergraduate students who formally provide instructional assistance may go by different titles including Undergraduate Instructional Assistant, Peer Assistant, Peer Leader, Peer Instructor, Peer Tutor, and Undergraduate Laboratory Assistant. Undergraduates cannot be referred to as Teaching Assistants (TAs) and must be classified in one of the following UIA types.

**Type 1: UIA-I has primary responsibility for assisting instruction in laboratory and discussion sections.**

UIA-Is may assist a TA or faculty member in laboratory or discussion sections by providing assistance in monitoring procedures and materials, assisting students with procedures, distributing and sorting materials; and maintaining laboratory safety, as applicable.

UIA-Is may provide assistance in grading exams and evaluating student work. They may proctor (but not grade) exams in other courses. UIA-Is may not deliver lectures or have full classroom responsibilities for any course. Furthermore, UIAs may not have access to the cumulative grades of students outside their section. When UIA-Is assist with grading exams and evaluating student work, the following conditions must be met:

1. The supervisor and/or faculty member in charge of the course must be responsible for providing the UIA-Is with clear grading rubrics and with guidance in using the rubrics effectively. The instructional faculty must present the UIA-Is with rubric calibration models to ensure grading accuracy and consistency.
2. The faculty member in charge of the course must spot-check the UIA-Is evaluative work when assigning grades to students and must be responsible for reassessing the work of students who wish to dispute grading conducted by UIA-Is.

3. The UIA-I must alert his/her supervisor or faculty member in charge of the course to any potential conflicts of interest to his or her particular assignment. The supervisor or faculty member, in turn, must take appropriate steps to mitigate any conflicts.
4. The faculty member assigned to each course must be ultimately responsible for assigning students their overall grades.

UIA-Is must meet the following educational criteria: (1) must have at least junior year status; (2) must have taken and earned at least a B in the course to which they are assigned; and (3) must have at least an overall 3.0 GPA. UIA-Is may only be hired after the hiring department has made an effort to fill all TA positions with qualified graduate students (from the hiring department and related departments). UIA-Is will be selected by the DGS of the hiring department, with advice from other faculty and staff who know the applicant. UIA-Is may only be assigned to lower-division (100- and 200-level) courses.

**Type 2: UIA-II has primary responsibility for supporting class instruction.**

UIA-IIs may assist TAs and faculty in teaching situations that do not involve direct supervision of students, such as setting up and operating equipment for classroom instruction; taking attendance in large classes; serving as Peer Instructors for workshop sessions such as Chem Excel, Math Excel, and similar peer teaching models; sorting, filing, collating, and designing classroom materials; assisting a TA or faculty member in preparing review materials; holding extra review sessions; facilitating study groups; preparing and managing a course web page, bulletin board, or discussion site; or managing and responding to routine course-related e-mail.

UIA-IIs may not:

1. provide direct supervision of undergraduate students;
2. be responsible for assigning letter grades on any work;
3. be responsible for correcting or assigning points to assignments that influence worth more than 10% of a final course grade; or
4. have primary responsibility for supervising a class session.

UIA-IIs must meet the following education criteria: (1) must have taken and earned at least a B in the course for which they are providing support; (2) must meet any additional requirements required by the hiring department; and (3) must have at least an overall 3.0 GPA.

**Type 3: UIA-III has primary responsibility for providing academic support and enhancement.**

UIA-IIIs may serve at Help Desks, computer labs, the MathSkellar, the Study, Learning Services Center, or similar resource functions.

UIA-IIIs must meet the following education criteria: (1) must have at least an overall 3.0 GPA; and (2) must meet any additional requirements required by the hiring department.

**Training for All UIA Types**

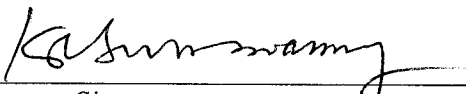
Training for UIAs is of the utmost importance. The vast majority of UIAs will have never served in such a role. As a result, participation in a formal, well-developed orientation/training program is required of all UIAs. At minimum, the orientation/training must include the following:

1. University policies on sexual harassment and racial harassment;
2. providing a safe instructional environment;
3. student rights and responsibilities;
4. the roles and responsibilities of UIAs; and
5. conflict of interest regarding friends or siblings, including appropriate professional behavior with peers.

UIA-Is must also attend the University New TA Orientation, offered before the beginning of the semester each fall and spring. Home departments or programs are responsible for training their UIAs in their specific duties and providing ongoing support.

### **Evaluation of UIAs**

All UIAs must be evaluated by their supervisors and by individual students where appropriate. Supervisors are responsible for analyzing the evaluation results and ensuring quality. Evaluation results must be filed in a standard file established and maintained by the hiring department and must be available to the Provost or his/her designee for accreditation documentation or in the case of any other review deemed necessary to ensure instructional quality.

  
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Provost Signature

3/8/10  
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Date