

### Course Description:

#### **HAA 1904: Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship. 1 – 3 credits. S/N grade.**

This course enables advanced majors to partner with a faculty member as a teaching assistant in a pre-existing departmental course. This collaborative project will result in the enrichment of the course and improve the teaching-learning enterprise for all parties (faculty, undergraduate teaching assistants, and students enrolled in the course).

Given the distinctive aspects of this learning experience, there is no official syllabus, however students and faculty who participate in this course are required to submit a signed contract to the department prior to the start of the semester in which the teaching assistantship will occur which is subject to approval by the undergraduate committee. This course can be taken for 1, 2 or 3 credits (see below for criteria and details). However, in almost all cases, a student will receive no more than 2 credits for a UTA position. Please consult the departmental contract to determine how many credits are appropriate. HAA 1904 is an S/N course and is not taken for a letter grade.

### **HAA 1904: Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship GUIDELINES + CONTRACT**

Note: these guidelines, in part, were taken from the School of Arts and Sciences website for faculty:

<http://www.as.pitt.edu/faculty/teaching/guidelines-teach.html> (October 17, 2010)

**The activities in which undergraduate teaching assistants are involved are to enrich or enhance the courses they are supporting and improve the teaching-learning enterprise.**

The goals of HAA 1904 are to use the students' ability to communicate with their peers to enhance the effectiveness of the class and to introduce the assistant to the broad mechanics of teaching -- which can include some research -- but the credits for HAA 1904 are designed to foster more the presentation of knowledge and of its material components than about its production. Students and faculty wishing to undertake more sustained research to develop a new course or significantly modify course content should consult the guidelines for HAA 1909: Undergraduate Research Assistantship.

#### **Suggested teaching or teaching-related activities appropriate for undergraduate teaching assistants are as follows.**

Tasks of educational value to the undergraduate TA (working in close consultation with the faculty member):

- Facilitating discussion groups or other forms of collaborative learning activities as part of regularly scheduled class sessions
- Facilitating student study sessions or tutorials in support of a particular class at times other than regular class sessions. (This may include visits to local museums or galleries.)
- Developing review and study materials

- Developing low-stakes assignments (in consultation with and approved by the faculty member)
- Providing advice and guidance on how to complete a research project or provide studying tips
- Provide tutorials on the basic mechanics and tools of research in the discipline
- Serve as a peer-mentor, providing guidance on the opportunities that are available to departmental majors, and encouraging the types of activities that will foster learning inside and outside the classroom.
- Conducting some minimal research for supplementary course material
- Designing websites (courseweb or otherwise) or other materials that support the course
- Designing field-trips that relate to and support course content
- Reviewing new textbooks or finding and evaluating new texts that could be used for pre-existing or new courses
- Undertaking foundational research that enables a faculty member to develop a new course or revise content for a pre-existing course

No more than 25% of an undergraduate Teaching Assistant's time should be devoted to administrative or clerical tasks which include but are not limited to the following:

- maintaining websites
- managing visual resources
- scanning and photocopying
- typing and data entry

**Undergraduate teaching assistants should NOT be involved in the following.**

- Conducting regular class meetings, lectures, or seminars
- Grading papers, quizzes, or exams
- Assigning final grades
- Work unrelated to the class

**Faculty members who are working with undergraduate teaching assistants should:**

- Meet with the student or students regularly throughout the term.
- Review regularly with the students any work the teaching assistant will be using in a study group or other activity involving students in the supported class.
- Notify the chair of the undergraduate committee and the student if the quality of work and effort is insufficient to earn a passing grade for the course PRIOR to the monitored withdraw deadline.
- Provide an evaluation of the learning experience and the UTA's performance to the department upon completion of the teaching assistantship.

**Arts and Sciences students interested in undergraduate teaching experiences or assistantship roles:**

- Should be University of Pittsburgh Arts and Sciences undergraduate students in good academic standing with a GPA of 3.0 or higher.
- Must have completed the course for which he or she will serve as a UTA with a grade of B or higher if the supporting teaching activity involves direct facilitation of activities for students in a particular course.
- Should expect to attend the lectures or other class meetings.
- Should work responsibly toward the completion of assigned tasks by the required due date.
- Should keep a journal or log that tracks the tasks assigned and hours required

- for the completion of these tasks
- Should provide an evaluation of the learning experience to the department upon completion of the research assistantship.

## Earning Credit

An undergraduate teaching assistant should receive credit through the departmental course HAA 1904 commensurate with effort (i.e., the number of hours per week the student works on the teaching project). The following examples indicate the relationship between the number of hours a student spends on a teaching-related assignment and credit.

Number of Credits to be earned	Student Involvement: attending lectures, meeting with faculty mentor, completing assignments and preparations outside of class time, and direct peer teaching-related activities.
1 credit	5 hours per week
2 credits	10 hours per week
3 credits	15 hours per week

In only exceptional circumstances should a student receive 3 credits for an undergraduate teaching assistantship in the department. Most UTA commitments are not as heavy, in terms of workload, as a regular academic 3-credit course. If a student and the faculty mentor believe an assistantship should receive more than 2 credits, the Director of Undergraduate Studies must approve this in consultation with the Department Chair.

### Policy on Academic Integrity

Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment, or enabling a student enrolled in the course for which you are serving as a teaching assistant to engage in plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Students found to be in violation of academic integrity will receive a failing grade for the course and will be referred to the dean's office for disciplinary action pursuant to the University's Academic Integrity Code (<http://www.fcas.pitt.edu/academicintegrity.html>).

### Disability Policy

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you must contact your faculty mentor and the Office of Disability Resources and Services [216 William Pitt Union, 412-648-7890; 412-383-7355 (TTY)] early in the term. DRS will verify your disability and determine reasonable accommodations for this course.

### E-mail Policy

Each student is issued a University e-mail address ([username@pitt.edu](mailto:username@pitt.edu)) upon admittance. This e-mail address may be used by the University for official communication with students. Students are expected to read e-mail sent to this account on a regular basis. Failure to read and react to University communications in a timely manner does not absolve the student from knowing and complying with the content of the communications. The University provides an e-mail forwarding service that allows students to read their email via other service providers (e.g. Hotmail, AOL, Yahoo). Students that choose to forward their e-mail from their pitt.edu address to another address do so at their own risk. If e-mail is lost as a result of forwarding, it does not absolve the student from responding to official communications sent to their University e-mail address. To forward e-mail sent to your University account, go to <http://accounts.pitt.edu>, log into your account, click on **Edit Forwarding Addresses**, and follow the instructions on the page. Be sure to log out of your account when you have finished. (For the full E-mail Communication Policy, go to [www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html](http://www.bc.pitt.edu/policies/policy/09/09-10-01.html).)

Faculty and students seeking to establish an undergraduate teaching assistantship must complete the information requested below, sign this document, and return it to the departmental office no later than the first day of class for which the teaching assistantship will occur.

FACULTY MENTOR:	
HAA COURSE IN WHICH STUDENT IS ASSISTING:	
SEMESTER:	
NAME OF STUDENT SERVING AS TA	
# OF CREDITS TO BE EARNED BY STUDENT	

Please list the tasks and responsibilities the student will undertake this semester as a teaching assistant, with a description of how many hours per week are to be devoted to each activity.

**NOTE: NO MORE THAN 25% OF THE STUDENT'S WEEKLY TIME CAN BE DEVOTED TO TASKS THAT ARE ADMINISTRATIVE AS THEY ARE DEFINED ABOVE:**

TASK	HOURS PER WEEK

I HAVE READ THE HAA 1904: UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANTSHIP GUIDELINES LISTED ABOVE AND THE SPECIFIC TERMS THAT PERTAIN TO MY ROLE IN THE SPECIFIED COURSE AND I AGREE TO ABIDE BY THEM.

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Signature of Faculty Mentor

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Date

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Signature of Undergraduate TA

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Date

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Signature of Chair of Undergraduate Committee or Department Chair

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Date