

Guidelines for the Participation of Undergraduates as Teaching Assistants

Undergraduate students participate in a variety of teaching and grading roles across campus. These experiences can be both educational and beneficial to the undergraduate acting as a teaching assistant, and can greatly aid the faculty member being assisted to deliver a high quality experience for the students enrolled in the course.

CWRU encourages the responsible use of undergraduate teaching assistants (UTAs). Since undergraduate students may have little experience in delivering education and/or dealing with complex academic situations, CWRU recognizes the special obligation to provide adequate mentoring and guidance for UTAs so they can properly fulfill their duties. The guidelines listed below are intended to provide the structure for the responsible involvement of undergraduates in teaching assistant roles.

- 1) **Faculty members are responsible for ensuring that the undergraduate student has the necessary background and abilities to function as an UTA in his/her course.** Normally, the UTA would be expected to have previously taken the course in which the assistance will be utilized, or to have taken a higher level course in the same topic area. Faculty members should become acquainted with the UTA to ascertain whether he/she has appropriate skills and depth of knowledge to carry out the intended teaching or grading assignment.
- 2) **Faculty and UTAs should work together to identify any potential peer conflicts for the UTA.** The course roster should be examined at or prior to the start of the semester to identify potential conflicts of interest. UTAs should not be placed in a position wherein they asked to evaluate the academic work of their friends.
- 3) **UTAs should identify and resolve scheduling constraints that may hinder the UTA in performing his/her duties.** UTAs should understand the scheduling of assignments and exams in the courses in which they themselves are enrolled and manage their time in a manner that allows them to fulfill their teaching or grading assignment.
- 4) **UTAs are responsible for attending mandatory training sessions offered by Educational Services for Students (ESS) prior to or concurrent with their first teaching assignment. Faculty members are expected to provide any additional course-specific training necessary for the UTA to complete his/her assignment.** Training sessions are offered by ESS at the beginning of each semester.
- 5) **Faculty members must supervise the activities of UTAs and review the work they produce.** Faculty members may not allow UTAs to prepare course materials without oversight; course materials produced by UTA must be evaluated by the faculty member before the students enrolled in the course receive them. Course materials include, for example: the content of lectures or recitations; questions for homework, quizzes, or exams; answer keys; study guides. Once the teaching or grading assignment is underway, faculty members should continue to monitor the performance of the UTA.
- 6) **Faculty members are expected to set the grading policies for the course.** Grading rubrics, assignment of partial credit, policies about regrading work, and other issues related to the assessment of the performance of students enrolled in the course must be determined by the faculty member.