

School of Arts & Sciences Policy for Undergraduate Teaching Assistants
(Adopted by Arts and Sciences Council – November 14, 2018)

1. An undergraduate Teaching Assistant (UTA) is a student who earns academic credit, and/or pay, or other compensation to assist a faculty member in providing instructional support.
2. The faculty member must provide a syllabus or internship agreement that includes the following information:
 - Number of credits to be earned.
 - Description of UTA’s duties (such as attending lectures, holding office hours, organizing review sessions, etc.)
 - Average number of hours per week expected to work on this course. Detail this through inclusion of the following:
 - Schedule for regular meetings with instructor and teaching assistant.
 - Schedule of regular class sessions at which the teaching assistant is required to attend.
 - Schedule of outside-of-class meetings with students the teaching assistant is required to attend (if applicable).
 - Schedule for the teaching assistant’s outside-of-class preparation work.
 - Student Learning Outcomes.
 - Teaching assistant’s role in helping students with assignments.
 - The method by which the instructor will evaluate the teaching assistant.
 - A statement that confidentiality must be maintained regarding students with whom teaching assistants work.
 - Attendance policy for teaching assistant.
3. For students receiving internship credit—in addition to the requirements stated in this document—the faculty member and student will also follow the Experiential Education Office’s procedures for internships.
4. Students may earn no more than 12 total credit hours as UTAs over the course of their college careers.
5. UTAs can add value to a course by assisting faculty with planning, preparation, discussion, demonstrations, group projects, and/or other aspects of teaching in undergraduate lectures, studio courses, or laboratory sections. However, the primary purpose of an undergraduate teaching assistantship is for the UTA to obtain a valuable learning experience, and therefore all work done by the UTAs must clearly be of sound pedagogical value. Moreover, under normal circumstances instructors are expected to be present during class time rather than leaving the UTA alone to teach students.
6. UTAs must review FERPA guidelines provided by the College and sign a statement of understanding at the start of the semester¹.
7. UTAs are in a position of power relative to their peers in the course. This situation could present opportunities for such offenses as “grade selling” or coercion of either the test-taker or UTA. For this reason, UTAs may not participate in scoring student assignments² unless all five of the following criteria are met:
 - *UTA training*: Prior to the start of the course, faculty member meets with UTA(s) to discuss FERPA, confidentiality, plagiarism, cheating and conflicts of interest that may arise while navigating the dual roles of peer and UTA.
 - *Student opt-out clause*: A statement appears in the course syllabus that allows students to opt-out of having their assignments scored by the UTA. For instance:
 - This course has an undergraduate Teaching Assistant (UTA) who will be responsible for holding office hours, holding review sessions, and tutoring. The UTA will also score some assignments, but the instructor will review those scores and will be responsible for the final course grade. If you do not wish to have a student score your paper or exam, you have the right to opt out of the process. In that case, the instructor will score your work. To opt out, see the instructor after class.
 - *Blind scoring*: All identifying information is removed from any assignment scored by the UTA.
 - *Faculty review*: Instructors review a sample of scores assigned by the UTA to ensure accuracy. In cases where multiple correct answers are possible, or assessment is subjective rather than based on a fixed rubric or answer key, instructors review all assigned scores.
 - *Score entry*: Instructors are solely responsible for entering scores in the course gradebook.
8. All faculty who will be engaging UTAs (for credit, pay, or internships) will complete a *Proposal for an Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship* and submit it to the Department Chair for approval; the chair will submit it to the Dean of the School of Arts and Sciences for approval. Proposals should be submitted by no later than the Friday of the first week of classes in the semester of the teaching assistantship.
9. Under normal circumstances, credit hours for a UTA’s work activities—such as attending class, meeting with the instructor, meeting with the students, preparation, and other course activities—are as follows:
 - 1 Credit = 3 hours per week = 40 hours/semester
 - 2 Credits = 6 hours per week = 80 hours/semester
 - 3 Credits = 9 hours per week = 120 hours/semester

¹ https://www.potsdam.edu/sites/default/files/documents/offices/registrar/faculty/FERPA_Employee_Statement.pdf

² Scoring is defined as the assigning of points or other measure of value to any element of a student’s performance that is used in the calculation of a course grade.