

STETSON UNIVERSITY

UNDERGRADUATE TEACHING APPRENTICES GUIDELINES AND POLICIES

Undergraduate teaching apprentices (TAs) assist in an undergraduate course under the supervision of a faculty member. Apprenticeships are expected to have educational value for the apprentice and to enhance the learning experience of students enrolled in the course. Apprentices learn directly from the professor, observe the professor's pedagogy, and work with students under the professor's supervision. Students receive a half unit (2 credits) of P/F credit, or the equivalent in the School of Music, for undergraduate teaching apprenticeships. A half unit conveys the expectations of 5-6 hours of effort per week, on average, throughout the semester.

Prior to the first day of class, faculty mentors should meet with their TA(s) to clarify roles, plans, and expectations both in and out of regularly scheduled class sessions. In these initial meetings, faculty should ensure that TAs under their supervision understand University guidelines and policies governing their work with students. These include expectations for professional ethics including preserving the confidentiality of student information, upholding academic integrity, observing policies on discrimination and harassment, and maintaining appropriate professional relationships with students enrolled in the course. TAs are expected to alert instructors to any conflicts of interest arising from personal relationships with students in the course. TAs must refer all inquiries about grades and grading to the instructor and must never represent themselves as having the responsibility for the class.

To ensure a significant learning experience, faculty are expected to mentor the apprentice. Faculty should meet regularly with the apprentice to discuss the course, to debrief after a unit or lesson, and to discuss strategies/goals for upcoming weeks. Conversations might focus on pedagogical philosophy or techniques, class dynamics, engaging students in discussion, developing assignments and exams, or responding to challenges or problems that emerge in the course of the semester. Students may also be assigned readings on pedagogical issues in the field. TAs serving FSEM should also expect regular meetings with the faculty coordinator of FSEM and with Student Success staff.

The following guidelines apply:

- 1) In disciplinary courses, TAs are expected to be upper-division students; in entry-level general education courses such as FSEM, they may be sophomores.
- 2) Students are not permitted to assist in courses in which they are concurrently enrolled.
- 3) Apprentices are expected to model strong study skills and undergraduate scholarship. Thus, in disciplinary courses, TAs should have a minimum GPA of 3.3. Departments or Schools may establish higher GPA requirements if they wish. In FSEM courses, TAs should have a minimum GPA of 3.0.
- 4) Faculty are responsible for course content and for maintaining the overall quality of instruction, including supervision of the TA. Faculty are responsible for all grades given in the course.
- 5) Undergraduate students may earn credit for up to two teaching apprenticeships. Only one unit, or the equivalent, of teaching apprenticeship may count toward the total units required for graduation.

Typical teaching or teaching-related activities for undergraduate teaching apprentices include:

- 1) Facilitating discussion groups or other forms of collaborative learning as part of regularly scheduled class meetings;
- 2) Facilitating student study sessions or tutorials at times other than regularly scheduled class meetings;

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- 3) Assisting the instructor in other teaching-related activities (e.g., providing feedback to the instructor based on class observations, acting as a catalyst for engaging enrolled students in discussion, developing assignments, leading writing workshops, helping students prepare oral presentations);
- 4) Developing course materials or maintaining course websites, with review and approval of the instructor;
- 5) Developing, in consultation with the instructor, short units or lessons as part of a regular class session; and
- 6) Providing formal or informal feedback on work in progress or assignments (feedback on graded assignments should be reviewed by the instructor before it is shared with the student).

Undergraduate Apprentices should NOT be involved in the following:

- 1) Conducting regular class meetings, lectures, or seminars. Experienced apprentices might, as noted above, present a lesson or short unit after consulting with the instructor, with the instructor observing so as to be able to provide feedback, but should not be expected to assume substantive responsibility for delivering course material or shaping the core learning experience of the enrolled students);
- 2) Assigning grades to papers, quizzes, or exams;
- 3) Calculating or assigning final grades;
- 4) Discussing grades with the student, his or her friends, or family members;
- 5) Performing work unrelated to the course.

Independent Study Courses on Pedagogy (ISY): In some cases, with instructor, chair, and dean approval, a student may combine a half-unit teaching apprenticeship with a half-unit research course. In such cases, the student should expect to spend 10-12 hours weekly on work, about half as TA for the course, and half in the scholarly ISY. A second half-unit for a teaching apprenticeship will be available, if approved, for these students.