

**PIE Associate Working Proposal for Departmental TA training  
(DRAFT)**

**By**

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**College: Arts and Sciences**

**Department: Oceanography**

***Introduction***

The department of Oceanography will basically be starting from the scratch since there was no previous PIE – Associate to coordinate the departmental TA activities. At present there is a total of eight TA's in the department, but the majority of these are newly recruited and have had minimum or no experience in their TA roles.

This initial PIE organizational task will thus require the collaborative effort of all the TA's to come up with the required departmental proposal for the TA needs.

As the majority of the TA's were engaged in various summer activities, many of them were not available to provide inputs to this proposal draft. Only the departmental Graduate Coordinator and one TA (of the 8) were available at the time of this drafting. It is however expected that those who were initially unavailable will have an opportunity to participate in the refining of this document during the upcoming TA workshop during Fall (tentatively scheduled for October).

***Overall Goal***

The main goal of this proposal is to increase mentoring relationship within the department, and to some extent with external departments, with a view to successfully meeting the challenges and responsibilities of TA's.

***Expected Outcome***

The desired outcome of this proposal is to come up with a formal peer-mentoring program that offers support and direction to new TA's in the department by matching them with experienced TA's. This will result in increase in knowledge of the department's requirements as the TA's receive guidance, support and advice. During this process, TA's will also learn more about the department and other resources available on campus.

***Expected Final Product***

Responsibility Guide for TA's in the Oceanography Department, or Department of Oceanography TA Manual.

- the minimum product expected initially is at least a working basic outline for the “Departmental TA Manual.”

### ***Proposed Immediate Plan of Action***

In view of the fact that unlike in other departments where there has been the presence of previous PIE Associates, at the department of Oceanography, this is essentially the first time that the PIE program initiative is being implemented and therefore the expected attendant challenges of this inauguration evidently requires an immediate plan of action backed by all the relevant possible collective support in order to ensure its success. In line with these expectations therefore, the following systematic activities are planned to take place so as to fast track the achievement of the above envisaged goal:

#### Fall’08 Activities:

- September 08: Department meeting with the Chair, PIE liaison, TA Supervisor/PIE liaison faculty and the “PIE staff.” This meeting will mainly be an introductory one aimed at reviewing the Department draft Proposal with respect to consensus on activities, available CTL resources for the department and other related matters. Connie will explain further on the importance of this meeting and also mention the planned TA department workshop in Fall.
- October 17: Tentative date for TA Departmental Workshop (to be confirmed)
- October 21: Group 2 scheduled general Associate Meeting (UCC 4502).
- October 22: Associate workshop attendance of CTL scheduled TES conference “Engaging Students with Technology”
- November 7: Steering committee and Graduate Coordinator and/or Faculty member meeting to fine tune and discuss the outcome of Workshop and start work on TA Manual draft outline. Set deadlines for the draft outline and other important dates for TA activities.
- November 18: Group 2 scheduled general Associate Meeting (UCC 4502).
- December 19: Virtual Associate Meeting (mid year report).

#### Spring’09 Activities:

- January 8: Department (brown-bag) meeting with TA’s for general orientation (of new TA’s) and discuss progress on the TA Manual draft outline. Set agenda for forthcoming Department Workshop in February.

- January 13: Group 2 scheduled general Associate Meeting (UCC 4502).
- February 11: Associate workshop attendance of OGS workshop “Grant Proposal Writing in Science”
- February 17: Group 2 scheduled general Associate Meeting (UCC 4502).
- February 27: Tentative date for TA Departmental Workshop (to be confirmed).
- May 8: Virtual Final Meeting – Year end Report, Evaluation.

***Proposed Activities***

There are a number of proposed activities that when formalized, will go a long way toward enhancing the achievement of the set goal in our department. The possible activities will be discussed at depth during the departmental TA workshops and those found viable will be retained and incorporated in the envisaged TA Manual draft outline. These activities include but not limited to those listed below:

- organize TA orientation
- arrange mentoring with experienced TA/peer observing new TA
- arrangement for mentoring of TA’s with a faculty member
- organize a general TA responsibilities guide/manual
- attendance at PIE Conference/Workshops
- Bb organizational site
- organize informal monthly brown-bags without any set topic
- organize monthly brown-bags around specific topics
- attendance of workshops on related topics by the department
- arrange hands on experience for TA’s in teaching seminars/undergraduate classes
- organize Bb training sessions
- develop simple TA evaluation criteria
- consider additional teaching challenges for TA’s for teaching activities on related topics, in outside departments such as other departments on campus and/or colleges and high schools
- organize possible formal networking with other related departments for additional TA experience. Examples of related departments include: Environmental studies, Biology, Aquatics Center, Chemistry, Physics, Education, Law. This would go a long way in giving hands on opportunity to the TA’s to share their, as well as gain expertise/knowledge within their respective Oceanography fields, as they network with these potential “outside” partners in knowledge. Currently, there is minimal or no teaching provision for our TA’s, neither is there any substantial networking with the external departments.

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