

Teaching/Teaching Resources

4.1 Graduate Assistantships (RA/TA) Orientation and Overview

Cyerra Hutchins, Room 202, is responsible for the coordination of teaching and research assistantship appointments. The terms and conditions of employment for graduate assistant employees are spelled out in the agreement between the Iowa State Board of Regents and the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America, Local 896-COGS, as well as in your offer letter.

4.1.1 Research Assistantship Appointments

Research assistantship appointments are awarded by faculty members and are funded from various research grants and contracts. Students are encouraged to identify areas of interest and begin to talk with faculty members as their course work progresses, so that individual research projects may begin as soon as possible.

Every professor within the Department is contacted early during the Spring Semester to identify students they will be supporting through RA appointments during the following academic year. Currently funded students are discussed, as well as funding availability. Also, many of the students are individually contacted. You are encouraged to maintain consistent contact with Cyerra (cyerra-hutchins@uiowa.edu), so that those in the administrative offices remain fully informed of the funding needs and academic progress of each graduate student.

4.1.2 Teaching Assistantship Appointments

The Department has recently averaged 28 teaching assistantships per year. The number of assistantships is determined by the enrollment size of the undergraduate courses and staff needed for labs, discussions, grading, and assisting in the help center.

The departmental criteria for awarding a teaching assistantship appointment are as follows:

Evaluations

Evaluations of the teaching assistants are done by the instructors of the courses, the laboratory coordinator, and the undergraduate students through the Student Perceptions of Teaching (SPOT) form and TA Performance Evaluations. The instructors' and the laboratory coordinator's evaluations are ongoing, whereas the students' evaluations are done at the end of every semester. These evaluations are reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies and assist in the determination of successive appointments.

Progress

It is expected that a teaching assistant will maintain steady and reasonable progress toward a degree. This is measured by taking into account both the grade point average as described by the Graduate College (2.75 for an M.S. degree objective and 3.0 for a Ph.D.) and adequate progress in coursework and/or an individual research project (Section 2.3). Students with assistantships are required to take a minimum of six hours during each semester of the academic year; course schedules should be worked out with a faculty advisor, and the departmental office staff will monitor and report each student's status.

Language Requirement

- Each teaching assistant must also meet the language requirements of the University. For those students for whom English is a second language, a rating by the ESL Program is required.*

If this is your first appointment as a teaching assistant and English is not your first language, you are required to demonstrate your effectiveness in English speaking and comprehension skills for teaching undergraduates in a United States university classroom situation before you are assigned teaching assistantship responsibilities. The English as a Second Language Programs Office will evaluate your language skills for this purpose. You will first take a test to evaluate your general spoken English proficiency (SPEC test) that is administered and recorded virtually via Zoom. The registration will be submitted by Cyerra Hutchins in 202 Van Allen Hall. The results of these evaluations will determine whether you are assigned full responsibility for teaching a course, or whether you are conditionally certified to teach discussion or lab sections, or to grade papers. Those who are conditionally certified must take appropriate English language courses (TAPE program) or be evaluated further to be unconditionally certified.

- The Iowa Board of Regents has adopted a policy on oral communication competence, designed to ensure that all instructors have "the ability to communicate appropriately in the language of instruction to students attending Regent's institutions." All new teaching assistants will be evaluated by the middle of the first semester of teaching, and all teaching assistants will be evaluated at the end of every semester. A question on oral communication competence will be included in the form the department uses for student evaluation of teaching.
- *Teaching assistants whose first language is not English are expected by the end of your first year as a teaching assistant to have attained a B certification from the English as a Second Language (ESL) office. The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences will not approve any appointments for second year teaching assistants who have not met this criterion.*

*For more information about the TAPE program administered by ESL see Section 4.8 below or go to the URL: <https://esl.uiowa.edu/programs/teaching-assistant-preparation-english>

Departmental Teaching Assistant Orientation

An orientation workshop is held before each Fall semester (and occasionally before Spring semesters if there have been any significant policy changes). Attendance at this workshop is mandatory for all TAs, both new and experienced. The objectives of the orientation workshop are to ensure the highest possible quality of instruction in the labs by:

- Providing new TAs with introductory pedagogical training
- Providing opportunities for experienced TAs to continue to develop their professional skills and to share them with their new colleagues
- Providing information about new materials and approaches in labs
- Fostering collegial spirit and a sense of professional identity among the teaching staff
- Providing information related to resources available to TAs at the University of Iowa and in the Department.

TAs are responsible for all content delivered during the orientation. This includes any spoken instructions from departmental faculty/staff in addition to visual presentations (PowerPoint slides, anything projected on the screen or written on the blackboard, etc.) and hard copy handouts.

Staff meetings by course

In addition to the orientation workshop, all TAs must attend weekly TA training meetings throughout the academic year specific to the course they are teaching. These meetings include training and demonstration for labs, lessons, teaching strategies, etc. Failure to attend weekly sessions and completion of lab results can result in disciplinary action. See Dr. Anthony Moeller (physics) or Andi Swirbul (astronomy) for details.

Teaching Assistant Performance Evaluations

The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences requires that all TAs receive an evaluation of their teaching performance. All TAs will be observed twice each semester. The first evaluation will be an observation which will take place before the end of the first eight weeks of classes. The second will be a written evaluation near the end of the semester. TAs will receive a copy of their observation evaluation forms which they must sign and return. The goals of such evaluations are to continue to improve teaching skills and use appropriate methodologies. These evaluation instruments include the observation, written evaluation, and online SPOT evaluations each semester.

Teaching Assistant Expectations

Physics

TAs assigned to lab sections

Physics TAs perform under the supervision of the Laboratory Coordinator (Dr. Anthony Moeller) and the faculty member responsible for the course to which you are assigned. Any or all of the following are activities that TAs typically perform:

- Lab preparation:
 - Attending the weekly TA lab meetings (usually Fridays)
 - Doing the lab experiment after the lab meeting but before Monday morning. If the lab equipment is set in advance, you may do the lab before the meeting with permission from the lab coordinator. Some experiments have safety hazards that may require you to wait until after the meeting to run through the lab. You must do the lab each time you teach a course. Doing the lab in a previous semester is NOT sufficient for this requirement.
 - Filling out the lab worksheet or writing a lab report. You must complete a new lab report each semester you teach the course.
 - Turning in the worksheet/lab report by 10:00am on Monday the week of the lab. Your lab report will be evaluated by the laboratory coordinator on a 10-point scale. Details are described during the orientation workshop.
- Teaching the assigned lab and/or discussion sections.
- Collecting student lab reports at the end of each lab. The method used for turning in student lab reports may vary by course and will be determined by the laboratory coordinator. For most courses, students will turn in hard copy paper lab reports. For some courses students will submit lab reports via ICON.
- Administering and grading examinations and other written assignments as needed.
- Returning all graded assignments promptly. Unless explicitly explained otherwise by either the primary course instructor or laboratory coordinator, for lab reports this means by the next lab period.
- Holding a minimum of 2 hours of office hours and meeting with students individually as needed.
- Arranging for a substitute in case of absence and seeking approval from Cyerra Hutchins in advance if possible, or in the case of emergency or sudden illness, soon afterwards.
- Participating in the Orientation Workshop.
- Participating in departmental TA evaluation procedures (online SPOT evaluations). NB: All TAs who are assigned a lab section are responsible for having students complete the online SPOT evaluations related to their experience in the lab.
- Ensuring that students attending your lab are registered for your section.
- Conducting all lab sections in accordance with assigned syllabi and methodology.
- Creating and maintaining a syllabus with specific requirements.
- Behaving at all times in a manner consistent with university policies on sexual harassment, consensual relationships, and human rights.
- Sharing ideas and concerns with other TAs and supervisors.
- Be on time for your assigned lab sections, office hours and/or Physics Help Center hours. Note that the labs are locked. Therefore, being on time to lab means arriving 15 minutes before lab starts to allow students to enter the room, get situated, and be ready to start lab on time.
- Establish an effective relationship with the course instructor.

Promptness and preparedness are vital to the understanding and administration of a lab course. The students' comprehension of lab procedures and experiments is essential to succeeding in these courses. Therefore, the teaching assistants' responsibility for clarifications and explanations is important. Safety is an important responsibility for the TA. Strictly enforce safety regulations. You must be present in the laboratory at all times even if you only have one student. **DO NOT LEAVE THE LABORATORY FOR ANY REASON WHILE STUDENTS ARE PRESENT.**

TAs assigned to discussion sections

Physics TAs perform under the supervision of the primary course instructor for the course to which you are assigned. Discussion TA expectations include most of the abovementioned lab TA expectations, in addition to the following:

- Active Learning:
 - TAs are expected to create and maintain an Active Learning environment in group-based work by:
 - Setting up groups of 3-5 students
 - Preparing 3-4 questions per Discussion section (in collaboration with the course instructor)
 - Presenting the questions to the groups and allowing for some time for them to think about the problems and puzzle them out together
 - Asking students leading questions instead of giving them answers
 - Supervising the room to encourage students to work collaboratively together
 - Providing a quick overview of the answer to each problem after a reasonable amount of time
 - Posted the full solutions after class is over to the course website

Astronomy

Astronomy TAs perform under the supervision of the Laboratory Coordinator (Andi Swirbul) and the faculty member responsible for the course to which you are assigned. Any or all of the following are activities that TAs typically perform:

- a) Preparing lab activities and teaching the assigned lab and/or discussion sections.
- b) Familiarize yourself with all software packages.
- c) Administering and grading examinations and other written assignments as needed.
- d) Returning all graded assignments promptly (as per faculty member's instructions).
- e) Holding office hours (2-3 hours/week) and meeting with students individually as needed.
- f) Arranging for a substitute in case of absence and seeking approval from Cyerra Hutchins in advance if possible, or in the case of emergency or sudden illness, soon afterwards.
- g) Attending weekly astronomy laboratory meetings.
- h) Participating in the Departmental Teaching Orientation Workshop.
- i) Participating in departmental TA evaluation procedures (online SPOT evaluations). NB: All TAs who are assigned a lab section are responsible for having students complete SPOT forms related to their experience in the lab.
- j) Ensuring that students attending your lab are registered for your section.
- k) Conducting all lab sections in accordance with assigned syllabi and methodology.
- l) Creating and maintaining a syllabus with specific requirements.
- m) Behaving at all times in a manner consistent with university policies on sexual harassment, consensual relationships, and human rights.

- n) Sharing ideas and concerns with other TAs and supervisors.
- o) Be on time for your assigned lab sections and office hours.
- p) Establish an effective relationship with the course instructor.
- q) Take out and return astronomy lab equipment neatly and promptly after using each lab session (note: do not leave any telescopes on the roof, in the hallways or in the lab rooms; these must be returned to the storage room in VAN 655A).
- r) TAs are expected to proctor exams for courses they are TAs (both lab TA and grader) for.

Promptness and preparedness are vital to the understanding and administration of a lab course. The students' comprehension of lab procedures and experiments is essential to succeeding in these courses. Therefore, the teaching assistants' responsibility for clarifications and explanations is important. Safety is an important responsibility for the TA. Strictly enforce safety regulations. You must be present in the laboratory at all times even if you only have one student. **DO NOT LEAVE THE LABORATORY FOR ANY REASON WHILE STUDENTS ARE PRESENT.**

Physics Help Center Expectations (formerly "Tutorial")

The Physics Help Center is located in room 650 Van Allen Hall.

The Physics Help Center will be staffed by TAs who are assigned to help students learn strategies for solving homework assignments and help students prepare for quizzes and exams. TAs will be assigned one of the following courses (see list below) and should meet the instructor of the course and ask to be added to the course ICON site, so that the TA can keep up with the weekly topics and homework assignments.

Students who typically use the Physics Help Center are those enrolled in:

- Basic Physics (PHYS:1400)
- College Physics I (PHYS:1511) or College Physics II (PHYS:1512)
- Intro Physics I (PHYS:1611) or Intro Physics II (PHYS:1612)
- Physics I (PHYS:1701) through Physics IV (PHYS:2704)

How to help students in the Physics Help Center:

- Be friendly and helpful to students.
- Help students develop the methods to solve homework problems.
- Physics Help Center TAs are not expected to, nor should they, solve homework problems for students.
- Work with the students on their level, i.e., talk in a manner that is easily understood. Remember, many of these students are taking the physics course as a requirement for their major or program of study, which may not have anything to do with physics. The students may be very stressed about taking a physics course.
- Introduce yourself to the course instructor, have the instructor add you to the ICON site for the course.
- Request the textbook for the course you are working with from the front desk in 203 VAN.

You are expected to be on time and present for your scheduled tutorial room hours. If you are unable to attend, it's your responsibility to find a substitute. If an emergency arises that requires your absence, please contact Cori Langfitt (335-0654 or cori-langfitt@uiowa.edu). Failure to cover your hours can result in disciplinary action.

Graders

You are assigned a specific amount of grading hours per week for an individual class. This is the average number of hours per week that you are expected to work for this class; the load will likely vary from week to week. In either the week before class or early in the first week of class, you will need to meet with the faculty member in charge of that course to determine how the grading for the class will occur. You may be asked to provide solutions for the problems to be graded or these solutions may be provided to you depending on the individual faculty member. The faculty member will give you specific expectations related to:

- a) which problems to grade and the date they are due back to the faculty member.
- b) how grades are to be recorded and when these should be provided to the faculty member (you are responsible for recording the homework grades).
- c) if you are providing solutions – when solutions need to be made available to the class via web posting, library notebook, etc. – please indicate when the solutions will be available.

The assignment will vary to meet the specific faculty member's needs for the class. It is your responsibility to work with the faculty member to ensure that grading is completed in a timely manner. If the average amount of time you spend on grading responsibilities exceeds the amount assigned, you should inform the faculty member to find a way to accomplish the grading in the assigned amount of time. As with any work situation, you are required to perform your assigned grading tasks regardless of other commitments such as coursework or personal time. If an emergency arises that requires your absence, please contact Cyerra Hutchins (467-1517 or cyerra-hutchins@uiowa.edu) as soon as possible.

Teaching Load

The TA assignments are designed to account for an average of 20 hours of work per week over the course of the semester. The 20 hours includes preparation time, laboratory sections, grading and help center hours. Not all TAs will have identical assignments, however, our goal is for each TA to have a 20 hour per week coverage commitment for the TA appointment. Fractional appointments have the 20 hours commitment adjusted proportionately. Graders are also expected to proctor exams for courses they are graders for.

Assignments are determined by Cyerra Hutchins, the Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with the faculty and the Laboratory Coordinator (Anthony Moeller or Andi Swirbul). If the TA appointment requires more than 20 hours per week on average, a TA should notify Cyerra Hutchins.

Summer Session Teaching Assistants

A very limited amount of teaching assistantships are usually available in the summer for TAs at a stipend equal to $\frac{2}{9}$'s of the academic year salary. Eligibility is restricted to continuing students. In addition to strong academic and teaching credentials, appointments made in previous summers are taken into account, in an effort to reward eligible students not previously supported during a summer session. Summer school teaching appointments are made by the Director of Graduate Studies, the Director of Undergraduate Studies, and the Graduate Coordinator.

University Policies

The Council of Graduate Schools Resolution Regarding Graduate Students, Fellows, Trainees, and Assistants, to which the University of Iowa is a signatory, states that “acceptance of an offer of financial support for the next academic year by a prospective or enrolled graduate student completes an agreement that both the student and the graduate school expect to honor. In that context, the conditions affecting such offers and their acceptance must be defined carefully and understood by all parties.” Further, “students are under no obligation to respond to offers of financial support prior to April 15; earlier deadlines for acceptance of such offers violates the intent of the Resolution. In those instances, in which a student accepts an offer before April 15, and subsequently desires to withdraw that acceptance, the student may submit in writing a resignation of the appointment at any time through April 15. However, an acceptance given or left in force after April 15 commits the student not to accept another offer without first obtaining a written release from the institution to which a commitment has been made. Similarly, an offer by an institution after April 15 is conditional on the presentation by the student of the written release from any previously accepted offer.”

Harassment Prevention

The purpose of this policy is to prevent harassment within The University of Iowa community and to provide a process for addressing all forms of harassment if and when it occurs. The University of Iowa is committed to maintaining an environment that recognizes the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and that fosters tolerance, sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect. This commitment requires that the highest value be placed on the use of reason and that any harassment in the University community be renounced as repugnant and inimical to its goals. Harassment destroys the mutual trust that binds members of the community in their pursuit of truth.

The University also is committed strongly to academic freedom and freedom of expression. In upholding these ideals, the University will be guided by the following principles:

- a. The primary function of the University of Iowa is the discovery, improvement, transmission, and dissemination of knowledge by means of research, teaching, discussion, and debate. To fulfill this function, the University of Iowa must strive to ensure the fullest degree of intellectual freedom and free expression allowed under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
- b. It is not the proper role of the University of Iowa to shield individuals from speech protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which may include ideas and opinions an individual finds unwelcome, disagreeable, or even offensive.
- c. It is the proper role of the University of Iowa to encourage diversity of thoughts, ideas, and opinions and to encourage, within the bounds of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the peaceful, respectful, and safe exercise of First Amendment rights.
- d. Faculty, staff, and students have the freedom to discuss any problem that presents itself, assemble, and engage in spontaneous expressive activity on campus, within the bounds of established principles of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions, as defined in this Operations Manual, that are consistent with established First Amendment principles.

About Consensual Relationships (excerpts)

The integrity of the University's educational mission is promoted by professionalism that derives from mutual trust and respect in instructor-student relationships. Similarly, the University is committed to the principle of protecting the integrity and objectivity of its staff members in the performance of their University duties. It is therefore fundamental to the University's overall mission that the professional responsibilities of its instructors be carried out in an atmosphere that is free of conflicts of interest that compromise these principles.

Romantic and/or sexual relationships where one member of the University community has supervisory or other evaluative responsibility for the other create conflicts of interest and perceptions of undue advantage. There are also special risks in any sexual or romantic relationship between individuals in inherently unequal positions of power (such as teacher and student, supervisor and employee). Such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision and evaluation provided, and the trust inherent particularly in the instructor-student relationship. They may, moreover, be less consensual than the individual whose position confers power believes. The relationship is likely to be perceived in different ways by each of the parties to it, especially in retrospect.

Moreover, such relationships may harm or injure others in the academic or work environment. Relationships in which one party is in a position to review the work or influence the career of the other may provide grounds for complaint when that relationship gives, or creates the appearance of, undue access or advantage to the person involved in the relationship, or when it restricts opportunities or creates a hostile environment for others.

Such relationships also have the potential for other adverse consequences, including the filing of charges of sexual harassment and/or retaliation under [II-4 Sexual Harassment](#) if, for example, one party to the relationship wishes to terminate the relationship to the other party's objection. In those circumstances when sexual harassment is alleged as the result of a romantic and/or sexual relationship, the existence of the relationship is not a per se violation of the Policy on Sexual Harassment. However, the apparent consensual nature of the relationship is inherently suspect due to the fundamental asymmetry of power in the relationship and it thus may be difficult to establish consent as a defense to such a charge. Even when both parties consented at the outset to a romantic involvement, this past consent does not remove grounds for or preclude a charge or subsequent finding of sexual harassment based upon subsequent unwelcome conduct.

Sexual or romantic relationships between a student and a faculty or staff member who functions in an instructional context with the student are prohibited by this policy. Other relationships, such as a relationship between a faculty member and a student in the same department or college but where no instructional context exists, while not prohibited, may present the appearance of a conflict of interest or may run the risk of developing into an actual conflict of interest which would place the relationship in the prohibited category.

This policy applies to consensual romantic and/or sexual relationships between individuals of the same sex or of the opposite sex. Regardless of who initiates the relationship, the instructor is responsible for complying with this policy.

University Policy on Human Rights

The University of Iowa brings together in common pursuit of its educational goals persons of many nations, races, and creeds. The University is guided by the precepts that in no aspect of its programs shall there be differences in the treatment of persons because of race, creed, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, pregnancy, disability, genetic information, status as a U.S. veteran, service in the U.S. military, sexual orientation, gender identity, associational preferences, or any other classification that deprives the person of consideration as an individual, and that equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all. These principles are expected to be observed in the internal policies and practices of the University; specifically in the admission, housing, and education of students; in policies governing programs of extracurricular life and activities; and in the employment of faculty and staff personnel. Consistent with state and federal law, reasonable accommodations will be provided to persons with disabilities and to accommodate religious practices. The University shall work cooperatively with the community in furthering these principles.

Student Disability Services

The University of Iowa, as authorized by Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Vietnam Era Veterans Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974, shall take affirmative steps to employ and advance the employment of qualified individuals with disabilities and qualified disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era at all levels of employment. The affirmative action policy applies to, but is not limited to, the following employment practices:

- a) Hiring
- b) Upgrading
- c) Demotion
- d) Transfer
- e) Recruitment
- f) Recruitment advertising
- g) Layoff
- h) Termination
- i) Rates of pay/other forms of compensation
- j) Selection for training (including apprenticeship).

The University of Iowa endeavors to make reasonable accommodations for the functional limitations of applicants, employees, and students with disabilities and disabled veterans pursuant to applicable federal and state law. Applicants and employees with disabilities seeking accommodations should contact Faculty and Staff Disability Services (<https://hr.uiowa.edu/fsds/>). Students with disabilities should contact Student Disability Services (<https://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/students/>).

Applicants, employees, and students with disabilities at The University of Iowa are protected from coercion, retaliation, interferences, or discrimination for filing a complaint or assisting in an investigation of a complaint under the aforementioned acts. Inquiries and complaints should be directed to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity for a confidential investigation.

Disabled applicants/employees, disabled veterans, or veterans of the Vietnam Era desiring more information should contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity. To obtain a copy of the Affirmative Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities, Disabled Veterans, and Veterans of the Vietnam Era, see <https://diversity.uiowa.edu/office/equal-opportunity-and-diversity>.

4.2 Sample Syllabi –

Note that the Course Supervisor must approve your syllabus before it is copied for your students.

****EXAMPLE****

PHYS:XXXX Course Name – LABORATORY Fall/Spring/Summer 202X

TA: John Smith
Office: xxx Van Allen Hall
Office Hours: Day and time
(Additional hours by appt.)
Phone: Optional, only if you have an office phone and use it
E-mail: john-smith@uiowa.edu

Required Equipment: Only for courses that use either an iOLab or Lab Kits – iOLab device (rent/purchase here <https://store.macmillanlearning.com/us/product/iOLab-Version-2.0/p/1464101469>) OR Lab Kits will be provided on the first day of lab for in person section. Students in online sections must pick up their Lab Kit in 203 VAN before the first lab.

Lab Manual: *Lab Manual Title*
Lab Manual Author(s) and edition year

Lab Sections: PHYS: XXX:YYYY Day Time xxx Van Allen Hall

Laboratory: Topics of this laboratory include (*insert brief list of major topics here, for example, classical mechanics and sound*). A pre-lab and a lab report are required for each lab. Your work in lab is worth xx% of your final grade, so you should take it seriously. Misconduct in the lab will not be tolerated.

YOUR TA WILL HAVE THE LAB UNLOCKED AND READY FOR YOU TO ENTER 10 MINUTES BEFORE YOUR LAB IS SCHEDULED TO START. PLEASE DO NOT ARRIVE MORE THAN 10 MINUTES EARLY. PLEASE DO NOT CONGREGATE IN THE HALLWAYS BEFORE LAB.

The University of Iowa encourages students, faculty, and staff to be vaccinated and boosted against COVID-19. The university also welcomes students, faculty, and staff to wear a face mask while on campus, in classroom settings, and during in-person office hours. However, face mask usage is not required except in specified healthcare settings.

What to Bring to Lab (May want to reword this as “What to have available for lab” for online sections):

1. Varies by course – Your iOLab device and included accessories. Your Lab Kit, OR your **entire** lab manual.
2. Any materials your TA has requested you to bring to this particular lab.
3. For iOLab or Lab Kit labs only: Your own Windows or Mac laptop computer (optional). A limited amount of software is required for this lab course. You may find it more convenient to work on your own personal computer. If you do not have, or do not wish to use, your own computer, departmentally owned computers are available for your use.

Lab Schedule:

Week of:							
Lab							

Week of:							
Lab							

Laboratory Organization:

- Before Lab: Read the lab manual. Complete and submit your pre-lab questions (via ICON for iOLab/Lab Kit Labs, paper copy if course uses a hard copy lab manual)
- Beginning of period: Find an open seat. No more than two students per table. OR Join the Zoom meeting with your webcam turned on.
- First 10-20 minutes: Discuss lab, explain apparatus and procedure.
- Rest of lab: Perform lab and write lab report.
- End of period: Turn in lab report as instructed in Grading section below.

- In person labs only: If using departmentally owned computer, log off at the end of lab, but do not shut it down. If you are in the last lab section for the week you will be required to put the computer in the laptop cart in storage room XXX VAN.
- In person labs only: Clean the lab bench before you leave. I will check your lab bench before I give you any credit for clean-up.

Grading: Give lab report due date information (end of lab, midnight of day of lab, etc.) and submission method (turn in paper copy, submit electronically via ICON, etc.) Your graded lab reports will be available to you by the following lab.

Makeup labs: To attend a lab section you are not registered for (makeup labs) you must have permission from the professor, both TAs involved. Permission must be requested at least one week in advance except in the case of an emergency. No student can go into a section that is already full.

Permission is not automatic and may be denied due to lack of equipment, experiments requiring close TA scrutiny, or other circumstances.

As stated in the University's Course Exam Schedule Conflict Policies: "When there is a conflict between an exam scheduled outside of class time and a regularly scheduled course, the regularly scheduled course will take precedence." It is up to the instructor of an exam scheduled outside regular class hours to arrange a makeup exam for the students who have a schedule conflict.

Course Home

For Undergraduate Courses: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the add and drop deadlines, the “**second grade only**” option (SGO), academic misconduct policies, and other undergraduate policies and procedures. Other UI colleges may have different policies. For Graduate Courses: The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is the home of this course, and CLAS governs the policies and procedures for its courses. Graduate students, however, must adhere to the [academic deadlines set by the Graduate College](#).

Academic Honesty and Misconduct

All students in CLAS courses are expected to abide by the [CLAS Code of Academic Honesty](#). Undergraduate academic misconduct must be reported by instructors to CLAS according to [these procedures](#). Graduate academic misconduct must be reported to the Graduate College according to Section F of the [Graduate College Manual](#).

Student Complaints

Students with a complaint about a grade or a related matter should first discuss the situation with the instructor and/or the course supervisor (if applicable), and finally with the Director or Chair of the school, department, or program offering the course.

Undergraduate students should contact [CLAS Undergraduate Programs](#) for support when the matter is not resolved at the previous level. Graduate students should contact the CLAS [Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Outreach and Engagement](#) when additional support is needed.

Drop Deadline for this Course

You may drop an individual course before the deadline; after this deadline you will need collegiate approval. You can look up the [drop deadline for this course](#) here. **When you drop a course, a “W” will appear on your transcript.** The mark of “W” is a neutral mark that does not affect your GPA. Directions for adding or dropping a course and other registration changes can be found on the [Registrar’s website](#). Undergraduate students can find policies on dropping and withdrawing [here](#). Graduate students should adhere to the [academic deadlines](#) and policies set by the Graduate College.

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) Course Policies

[Attendance and Absences](#)

University regulations require that students be allowed to make up examinations which have been missed due to illness or other unavoidable circumstances. Students with mandatory religious obligations or UI authorized activities must discuss their absences with me as soon as possible. Religious obligations must be communicated within the first three weeks of classes.

[Exam Policies](#)

Communication: UI Email

Students are responsible for all official correspondences sent to their UI email address (uiowa.edu) and must use this address for any communication with instructors or staff in the UI community.

University Policies

[Accommodations for Students with Disabilities](#)

[Basic Needs and Support for Students](#)

[Classroom Expectations](#)

[Exam Make-up Owing to Absence](#)

[Free Speech and Expression](#)

[Mental Health](#)

[Military Service Obligations](#)

[Non-discrimination](#)

[Religious Holy Days](#)

[Sexual Harassment/Misconduct and Supportive Measures](#)

[Sharing of Class Recordings](#)

4.3 Sample Performance Evaluation

Physics/Astronomy Lab TA Final Review by Laboratory Coordinator

Employee	<input type="text"/>
Academic Year	<input type="text"/>
Date of Review	<input type="text"/>
Courses Taught	<input type="text"/>

Ratings

		Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion	N/A
The TA is an enthusiastic and dependable attendee of weekly lab meetings.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	<input type="text"/>						
The TA has turned in timely and complete lab reports showing mastery of the material (if relevant).		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	<input type="text"/>						
The TA grades labs promptly and regularly to provide performance feedback to students.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	<input type="text"/>						
I recommend this TA for future Physics/Astronomy lab teaching assignments.		<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	<input type="text"/>						

Additional Comments

Lab Coordinator Signature: _____ Date:

TA Signature: _____ Date:

Physics/Astronomy Lab TA In-Lab Observation by Laboratory Coordinator

Employee	_____
Academic Year	_____
Date of Review	_____
Courses Taught	_____

Ratings

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree	No Opinion	N/A
In advance of the observation, it was known the TA had already taken steps to prepare for the weekly lab: the TA was an active attendee of the weekly lab meeting, turned in a timely and complete lab report showing mastery of the material, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					
On the day of the observation, it became evident the TA took additional steps to prepare for the weekly lab: the TA arrived early and started lab on time, developed an introductory lecture that was appropriately detailed and on the correct level covering all key concepts, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					
The TA communicated their introductory lecture effectively, transitioning and summarizing appropriately and sharing all relevant instructions of the lab materials, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					
In the introductory lecture, the TA was engaged with students, utilizing eye contact and pauses for effect, giving students opportunities to ask questions, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					
After the introductory lecture, the TA remained engaged with students, circulating the room, helping students and answering questions, troubleshooting lab equipment, guiding students through the lab rather than doing the work for them, and promoting a positive, learning-focused, and collaborative atmosphere.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					
I recommend this TA for future Physics/Astronomy lab teaching assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments	_____					

Additional Comments

Lab Coordinator Signature: _____ Date: _____

TA Signature: _____ Date: _____

4.4 Checklist of Techniques

CHECKLIST OF CLASSROOM TECHNIQUES*

1. General Classroom Environment
 - (a) Make sure the room is well lit.
 - (b) Shut the door if the hallway is noisy.
2. Speech
 - (a) Look at the students when you talk to them, not at the blackboard.
 - (b) Speak clearly and with sufficient volume.
 - (c) Speak more slowly than you think you need to.
 - (d) Don't be afraid to stop and think.
 - (e) Try to avoid phrases like "you know" and "like".
 - (f) Show enthusiasm and interest in the material.
3. The Blackboard
 - (a) Erase the blackboard completely before starting.
 - (b) Make sure your writing is large enough for everyone to see.
 - (c) Write legibly, even if it takes longer.
 - (d) Draw all diagrams clearly.
 - (e) Do not stand in front of your writing; make sure that all students can see what you have written.
 - (f) Never make partial erasures to manipulate equations.
 - (g) Allow students time to copy what you have written.
 - (h) Make sure that the symbols that you use are consistent with the text.
4. Content
 - (a) Present solutions to problems in an organized and coherent manner. However, first start with STEP 0 – how you figured out what kind of problem it is.
 - (b) Give references in the book for specific techniques.
 - (c) Do not quote the book verbatim. Students like to hear DIFFERENT approaches to the same problem.
 - (d) Try to give insights to different problem-solving techniques.
 - (e) Clearly explain all steps in the solution.
5. Student Interaction
 - (a) Ask the class questions. Allow sufficient time for answers. (Try counting to yourself slowly to 10.) Reduce the risk by asking the students what they GUESS the answer is.
 - (b) Never ridicule a student for giving a wrong answer; be supportive!
 - (c) Praise students for correct answers or correct parts of answers. Express confidence in the students' ability to learn.
 - (d) Be careful in your use of language. Avoid phrases that are profane, vulgar or suggestive. Remember that your behavior and language set the tone for the class and reflects on the field as a whole.
 - (e) Treat students with respect and caring and promote students' interest.
 - (f) Do not try to show off how smart you are in class.

*From Notes and Suggestions for Teaching Assistants, by A. Bodek and P. Auchincloss, UR-1348 (August 1995.)

4.5 Assisting Students with Disabilities

Helping Students with SDS Accommodations: Policy and Procedures

We want to remind you of key Student Disability Services (SDS) accommodation policies and procedures.

As required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, instructors **must** provide reasonable academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities who present an official SDS letter to the instructor about such accommodations. A list of common accommodations is available [here](#).

Students without an official letter from SDS should be referred to that office for further help.

[Student Disability Services](#)

3015 Burge Hall (located in the lower level)

Phone: 319-335-1462

sds-info@uiowa.edu

Please review these key points about procedures and exam proctoring services for students with SDS accommodations.

1. A statement about SDS accommodations must be included on the course [syllabus](#). The statement below is recommended by the College and is included on the official CLAS syllabus [insert](#), available for any instructor to use. Many departments also provide this official insert for instructors.

Accommodations for Disabilities: Syllabus Statement

The University of Iowa is committed to providing an educational experience that is accessible to all students. A student may request academic accommodations for a disability (which includes but is not limited to mental health, attention, learning, vision, and physical or health-related conditions). A student seeking academic accommodations should first register with Student Disability Services (SDS) and then meet with the course instructor privately in the instructor's office to make particular arrangements. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between the student, instructor, and SDS. See <http://sds.studentlife.uiowa.edu/> for information.

Instructors should announce in class at the beginning of each semester the procedures for arranging for official accommodations as approved by SDS. Remind students **that they must present the official letter from SDS** that outlines the student's entitled accommodations before accommodations are arranged.

2. Accommodations and SDS status should be handled discreetly, keeping in mind the importance of a student's privacy as required under [FERPA](#). Remind students that

because of privacy concerns, you will meet with each student during your office hours rather than before or after class.

3. During this private meeting, the accommodations as well as the responsibilities of the student and instructor should be clarified. A student without the SDS letter should be referred to SDS for help.
4. Information on notetaking accommodations and how to provide them may be found on this [page](#) while attendance related accommodations may be found [here](#). Some students require [captioned films and online media](#) while others are allowed to use a calculator. Please see the SDS website for more information.
5. Students with accommodations allowing for **100% time or more for exams** and/or **very specialized services** (such as assisted technology, a scribe, or a reader or any accommodation marked by an asterisk*) take proctored exams **at the SDS office**. According to the SDS policy, exams during the semester must be scheduled at least 7 days in advance of the exam date while final exams must be scheduled at least 21 days before the exam. SDS must receive exam materials at least 2 business days before the exam or the exam will be cancelled. Other guidelines are on [this page](#). The instructor and student should decide on the date and time of exams as soon as possible, with the instructor submitting this form: [Request Form for SDS to Proctor Exams](#). Remind students that SDS exam rooms fill quickly.
6. Exam Services in the Division of Continuing Education, located downtown on the upper floor of 30 S. Dubuque Street, provides exam proctoring for students **needing 50% more time for exams and/or reduced distractions accommodations. A form is available for instructors to use and to fill out during the student's visit to the office to discuss accommodations**; visit this [website](#). Please remember that students may not request this proctoring service themselves; the form must be submitted by the instructor. The instructor must also submit the exam materials in a timely fashion. See the detailed instructions on the page with the form for more information.

We appreciate your attention to these very important matters. As questions arise, please let us know since we are more than happy to discuss these policies and procedures.

4.6 CLAS Classroom Procedures

You MUST take roll frequently the first couple of weeks of class.

If you have a student in your class who is not on your list find out why. If they are making up a lab, they should have followed the procedures for doing a makeup lab outlined below. If they say they are supposed to be in your lab, find out if they added it or if they are actually supposed to be in a different section that meets at the same time in a different room. Check with the list in room 203, if they have added, they will be on it. If they are supposed to be in a different section, have them attend the one they are registered for. If they are in yours because they want to add or

switch to your section, they need to come to room 202 and do a section change. (*See DROP/ADD SLIPS.*) If your section is full according to our records, we will put them on a waiting list and try to get them in. It is **not** your decision to let a student into your lab without checking with the General Office. We may have a waiting list for your section; these people would have priority.

If you have a student that keeps showing up on your class list that is not attending lab you should try the following: check in 203 to see if they have dropped or switched sections or check with other TAs of the same course to see if they are attending the wrong section. **Physics TAs only** - Check with the professor of the course to see if they have been excused from taking the lab due to a 2nd grade option or check in 203 to see if they have a lab card from a previous semester. If there is a lab card on file for them but they have not contacted the professor to be excused, the student will need to be contacted. Being excused from the lab portion of the course is not automatic when doing a 2nd grade option.

DROP/ADD SLIPS:

Students can change their schedule, drop or add classes online until 11:59 pm on the 6th day of the semester. After that, drop/add requests need to be approved in the general office by Cori Langfitt, Room 202 VAN, **only**. If a student comes to you asking about a late drop/add, send them to Cori in room 202 VAN. We sometimes have waiting lists for several sections, and we keep track of the number of students enrolled in each lab section. Let us know if you feel that you have room in a lab that we show as being full and a student wants to add your section. We will consider the situation and may approve their add request if there is not a waiting list.

OFFICE HOURS:

You should post your office hours outside of your office and provide this information to the general office and course instructor.

ABSENT OR LATE:

Call the general office at 335-1686 if you are going to be absent or late for your lab or help center hours.

MAKEUP LABS:

Students are not allowed to attend sections they are not registered for (makeup labs) except under the following conditions.

1. The student must have permission from the professor, both TAs involved, and, for physics labs, the laboratory coordinator. Permission must be requested at least one week in advance except in the case of an emergency.
2. No student can go into a section that is already full.

Permission is not automatic and may be denied due to lack of equipment, experiments requiring close TA scrutiny, or other circumstances.

As stated in the University's Course Exam Schedule Conflict Policies: "When there is a conflict between an exam scheduled outside of class time and a regularly scheduled course, the regularly scheduled course will take precedence." It is up to the instructor of an exam scheduled outside regular class hours to arrange a makeup exam for the students who have a schedule conflict.

PHYSICS HELP CENTER EXPECTATIONS:

The Physics Help Center is located in room 650 Van Allen Hall.

TAs who are assigned to the help center are expected to help students who are having problems with homework assignments and help students prepare for exams. Students who typically use the physics tutorial room are those enrolled in Basic Physics (PHYS:008), College Physics I (PHYS:1511), College Physics II (PHYS:1512), Intro Physics I (PHYS:1611), Intro Physics II (PHYS:1612), Physics I (PHYS:1701), Physics II (PHYS:1702), Physics III (PHYS:2703), and Physics IV (PHYS:2704).

How to help students:

- Be friendly and helpful to students.
- Help students develop steps to solve homework problems. **Physics Help Center TAs are not expected to, nor should they, solve homework problems for students.**
- Work with the students on their level - talk in a manner that is easily understood by students.
- Familiarize yourself with the textbooks of these courses.

To review these books, please visit 202 VAN.

You are expected to be available during your scheduled help center hours. If you are unable to attend, it is your responsibility to find a substitute. If an emergency arises that requires your absence, please contact Cori Langfitt (335-0654 or cori-langfitt@uiowa.edu). Failure to cover your hours can result in disciplinary actions.

GRADERS:

You are assigned a specific amount of grading hours per week for an individual class. This is the average number of hours per week that you are expected to work for this class; the load will very likely vary from week to week. Either in the week before class or early in the first week of class, you will need to meet with the faculty member in charge of that course to determine how the grading for the class will occur. You may be asked to provide solutions for the problems to be graded or these solutions may be provided to you depending on the individual faculty member. The faculty member will give you specific expectations related to:

- a. which problems to grade and the date that they are due back to faculty member
- b. how grades are to be recorded and when these should be provided to the faculty member (you are responsible for recording the grades of the homework that you grade)
- c. if you are providing solutions, when solutions need to be made available to the class via web page, library notebook, and/or posting and by what date the solutions are to be made available.

This assignment will vary to meet the specific faculty member's needs for the class. It is your responsibility to work with faculty member to ensure that grading is completed in a timely manner. If the average amount of time you spend on grading responsibilities exceeds the amount assigned, you should inform the faculty member to find a way to accomplish the grading in the assigned amount of time. As with any work situation, you are required to perform your assigned grading tasks regardless of other commitments, such as coursework or personal time. If an emergency arises that requires your absence, please contact the faculty member in charge of the class and Cyerra Hutchins (467-1517 or cyerra-hutchins@uiowa.edu) as soon as possible.

GENERAL TA EXPECTATIONS:

If anything arises that prohibits you from doing your job to the best of your ability, please reach out to the office, to the DGS, or to your course instructor as soon as possible.

TAs cannot change a student's grade under any circumstances without prior approval from the course instructor/faculty member, including missing labs.

4.7 TA Certification for Students Whose First Language is not English

<http://clas.uiowa.edu/esl/esl-credit-classes/english-proficiency-requirement>

English Proficiency Requirement

If you are an international student and your first language is not English and your TOEFL score is below 600 on the paper-based test, or 100 on the internet-based test, you are subject to this requirement.

The English Proficiency Requirement ensures that speakers whose first language is not English know English well enough to

- study without being hindered by language problems,
- understand class lectures and discussions, and
- participate successfully in class discussions.

All international students with a TOEFL iBT score of less than 100 (600 paper-based) are required to take the English Proficiency Evaluation (EPE) prior to their first registration. Some graduate departments require all students to take the exam, regardless of TOEFL score. If you took the IELTS instead of the TOEFL, contact the Admissions Office for information about acceptable score ranges. Students are not allowed to register until this evaluation has been taken. The University charges students' accounts \$120 for the EPE.

The components of the requirement are:

- the completion of an on-campus English Proficiency Evaluation (EPE) before initial registration for classes at the University
- all students are required to satisfactorily complete any course(s) specified as a result of the evaluation
- undergraduate students are required to complete their English as a Second Language

(ESL) courses during their first year and before registering for Rhetoric. Students are required to enroll in classes each semester until they are completed. Completion of English as a Second Language courses is a requirement for graduation.

- graduate students are required to register for at least one English as a Second Language course during their first semester. Students who fail to do so will not be allowed to register for the following session.

How to Fulfill the English Proficiency Requirement

Complete the English Proficiency Evaluation (EPE) before your first registration for classes at the University. An appointment will be made by International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) for you to take the EPE. In some rare situations, a student will not be required to check in at ISSS. If this is the case, make arrangements to take the EPE with the ESL Programs Office by sending an e-mail to esl-program@uiowa.edu. Be sure to include in your message that you are not required to check in at ISSS.

The EPE takes two hours and comprises an oral interview (15 minutes), a writing sample (30 minutes), a multiple-choice reading test (45 minutes), and a listening and note-taking test (30 minutes). Based on the results of the evaluation, you may

- be allowed to take a full academic course load excluding ESL courses;
- be required to enroll in one or more of the following ESL courses:
 - ESL:4100 Academic Oral Skills (3 semester hours)
 - ESL:4130 Academic Listening Skills (3 semester hours)
 - ESL:4160 Grammar (3 semester hours)
 - ESL:4190 Academic Writing for Undergraduate Students (3 semester hours)
 - ESL:4200 Academic Reading Skills (3 semester hours)
 - ESL:6000 Writing Skills for Graduate Students (3 semester hours); or
- be required to enroll in one or more non-credit ESL Transitional courses or Iowa Intensive English Program (IIEP) courses until desired proficiency is met. These courses require separate tuition costs beyond the base University of Iowa tuition. Enrollment in these courses may impact scholarships. Please contact the Office of Admissions (admissions@uiowa.edu) with any questions.

If the EPE indicates that coursework is necessary, the courses are required for graduation. For more information on ESL credit courses, including course policies and descriptions, see [ESL Credit Courses](#).

Questions about the English Proficiency Requirement should be directed to the Office of Admissions at 1-800-553-IOWA or 319-335-1549.

ESL Course Descriptions

ESL:4130 Listening Skills, 3 s.h.

This course focuses on developing listening skills necessary for success in a U.S. academic setting. Students learn strategies for listening to academic lectures, practice note-taking skills, and participate in fast-paced classroom discussions.

ESL:4100 Academic Oral Skills, 3 s.h.

This course provides a structured opportunity to develop fluency in spoken English. Class members study and practice speaking skills needed to function appropriately in a U.S. academic setting as well as in U.S. society in general. Students also study and practice pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary related to the goal of communicative competence.

ESL:4160 Grammar, 3 s.h.

This class studies the structures of English with particular focus on patterns of grammar which are frequently troublesome for nonnative speakers of English. Students practice applying these structures through extensive speaking and writing, and by completing a variety of exercises and writing brief essays.

ESL:4190 Academic Writing Skills, 3 s.h. (for undergraduate students)

The emphasis of this course is on discourse considerations, more complex grammatical constructions, and the usage of formal vocabulary of the type expected of university students. Students practice various styles of organization, types of argumentations, and methods of analysis used in academic writing.

ESL:4200 Reading Skills, 3 s.h.

This course focuses on increasing reading speed and comprehension of the sort of writing and vocabulary encountered by university students. Exercises, discussion, and note-taking assignments are used to develop skills of critical analysis.

ESL:6000 Academic Writing Skills, 3 s.h. (for graduate students)

This course focuses on discourse considerations and styles of organization in academic writing at the graduate level. Students identify and practice different types of argumentation and methods of analysis expected of graduate students with respect to general academic work and their specific area of study.

ESL credit courses are offered only in the summer, spring, and fall semesters. Up-to-date schedule information is also available on MyUI.