

The Peer Instructor Position

The UK 101 and UK 201 Peer Instructor position is a very competitive position to get. Typically, more than double the number of applications are submitted as there are spots available. Students who are not selected their first time applying are encouraged to apply again the next year.

DETAILS OF THE POSITION

- **Selection Criteria:** We look for the following when selecting Peer Instructors:
 - Students who have proven their ability to succeed academically at UK. A cumulative GPA of a 3.0 or higher is preferred.
 - Students who are involved on campus in multiple student organizations and can share with new students the process of getting involved on campus.
 - Students who are good role models from a social standpoint. We look for students who make good decisions in regards to consumption of alcohol.
 - Students with personalities that can connect with a variety of different types of students and have a desire to mentor new students.
 - Students who are enthusiastic about the University of Kentucky and the UK 101/201 experience.
- **Selection Process:**
 - [Applications](#) become available each year on February 1st.
 - Applications are due the Friday before Spring Break.
 - Interviews are held the 3 weeks following Spring Break.
 - Teaching Availability Forms are due the end of the Registration Window.
 - Selection and class assignments happen the end of April.
- **Trainings:** There are 4 trainings that Peer Instructors are expected to attend.
 - August Training: 4 hours in length on the Saturday after school starts.
 - Training 3 weeks into class: 1 hour on a weeknight.
 - Training 6 weeks into class: 1 hour on a weeknight.
 - Training 9 weeks into class: 1 hour on a weeknight.
- **Time Commitment:** Students can plan on spending about 5 hours a week during the months they teach this course.
 - 2 of the hours are spent in the class
 - 1 hour is spent meeting with your co-instructor planning the upcoming sessions
 - 1 hour is spent preparing your lesson plans and lectures
 - 1 hour is spent grading assignments and responding to emails
- **Compensation:** Unfortunately, Peer Instructors are not paid for their service. Instead, each receive some small perks and tokens of appreciation such as:
 - Jacket or sweatshirt
 - T-shirt
 - Umbrella
 - Leather Portfolio/Folder
 - Messenger Bag
 - Other benefits:
 - Looks good on a resume; Gain valuable leadership skills; Get to serve as a mentor to new students; Get to know a faculty or staff member better and usually can get a great letter of recommendation; Will sharpen communication skills; Can earn EXP 396 credit.

Role and Expectations of the Peer Instructor

Peer Instructors play a very important role in the success of UK 101 and UK 201. Therefore, we have very high expectations for those students who serve in this significant role. Below you will find a lot of important information about the position, broken down by categories.

DURING THE SUMMER / BEFORE THE SEMESTER BEGINS

- Before the semester begins, meet with your co-instructor to work on the following:
 - Discuss philosophies, goals, ideas, and format for how you want your class to be run. What sort of culture do you want to create for your class? It is important that you get off to a good start and present a united front during the first class.
 - Divide roles and responsibilities. Decide things like:
 - Who will take attendance?
 - Who will grade assignments and record them? (NOTE: Peer Instructors are NOT to be responsible for the majority of the grading.)
 - How will you split up teaching responsibilities?
 - Plan syllabus together.
 - Use as few guest presenters as possible.
- Schedule a weekly meeting with your co-instructor where you will plan the upcoming class session. Periodically, discuss progress of course and students in class.
- Set up a listserv to communicate with your students.

BEFORE EACH CLASS SESSION

- If you are having a guest presenter, please contact them several days in advance of their session to remind them.
 - If a guest speaker is facilitating the class, introduce yourself so the guest will know that you are the peer instructor. Ask guest presenter if you can help with anything.
- Come to class prepared! Review lesson plan and assignments, and do the readings! Students may have questions about the assignments.
- Prepare a list of announcements about activities/organizations/campus resources to share at the beginning of every class.
 - Check your e-mail to see if the Dean of Students Office has sent any announcements. Print off the email to read in class and forward on to your students.
 - You might also want to review the Kernel, Campus Calendar, or join listservs to gather other ideas.
- Arrive to class a few minutes early to chat with students.
- Make sure you are dressed appropriately to teach class.
- If you are going to miss class for any reason, please notify your co-instructor so they are aware.

DURING EACH CLASS SESSION

- Assist with attendance, collecting or returning assignments, name cards, etc.
- Learn student names! You need to take on a major role in helping students get to know one another.
- At beginning of each class announce upcoming activities or highlight a student organization or a campus resource. When you announce events, be sure that you know the details (where, when, cost).
- You are expected to be engaged in the class. You should not be working on a crossword puzzle or Sudoku during a lecture from the instructor or a guest presenter. Sleeping or not participating in class is unacceptable.
- Reinforce points made in class by your co-instructor. Remember, you are a “reality check” for students. (e.g. “Yes, I really do study that many hours a week.” or “Yes, I really do write down all my assignments in a planner...”)
- Be willing to share your personal experiences and examples with the class. But, do not give students the impression that you are better than they are. This can intimidate the students so they don’t feel comfortable coming to you for answers to their questions. It is important that they feel that you were a freshman once.
- Participate in small group activities or discussions. Join a different student group for each discussion.
- Have follow-up conversations with your students. (e.g. “How did the Calculus test go?” “How many of you went to the football game? Did you have fun?”)
- Be on the lookout for warning signals and other cues from students who may be experiencing problems.
 - Sleeping in class
 - Not participating in class
 - Not attending class
 - Inappropriate behavior in classFollow up with these students by talking with them after class or emailing or phoning them. You also may consider referring them to the Counseling & Testing Center.

AFTER EACH CLASS SESSION

- If your schedule permits, linger a few minutes to talk with students.
- Tell your students when and where you are available outside of class.
- Read and/or check collected student assignments (journals, library assignments, etc.) and respond where appropriate.

- Respond to e-mail messages from students. Help your students find the information they need to answer their questions. Refer students to appropriate resources and professionals on campus.

OUTSIDE OF CLASS

- Say hello to your students when you see them on campus.
- Make time for impromptu lunch gatherings or grabbing coffee or a coke.
- Offer a campus tour the first week of class.
- Be a positive role model for your students (academically and socially).

MISCELLANEOUS THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- If a student is having personal problems that he/she has shared with you, refer him or her to the Counseling Center for an appointment and offer to walk the student there.
- Plan a social event with the class (cookout; pot luck at instructor's home or campus facility; football game; movie, etc.).
- Consider planning a UK 101 class reunion at the end of the semester.
- Follow up with students by phoning or e-mailing them after the course ends.
- Remember that the instructors have the final say if there is ever a disagreement on an issue.
- Review your Facebook profile and make sure it is appropriate for a college instructor, mentor, and role model.

Thou Shalt Not List for Peer Instructors

1. Thou shalt not miss class.
2. Thou shalt not come to class unprepared.
3. Thou shalt not sit in a place separated from the students or interact with only a few students.
4. Thou shalt not act bored or fall asleep in class.
5. Thou shalt not be an inappropriate role model for students.
6. Thou shalt not sit back and do nothing when guest speakers present.
7. Thou shalt not be negative about the teacher or class or contradict the instructor.
8. Thou shalt not allow the faculty member to do all the teaching.
9. Thou shalt not blab or gossip about anything you read in the student journals.
10. Thou shalt not curse or use inappropriate language.
11. Thou shalt not make decisions for students.
12. Thou shalt not replace professional services for the students.
13. Thou shalt not engage in dishonest or illegal activities with the students.
14. Thou shalt not date anyone in UK 101 class.