Guidelines for the Use of Peer Instructors for Undergraduate Classes

Summary of UK Policy for Using Peer Instructors in Undergraduate Classes:
1. Expectations for peer instructor should be clearly defined by the teaching faculty or unit and tied directly to peer instructor evaluations.
2. Regular orientation/training on good practices must be held for all peer instructors before entering the classroom.
3. Considerations for awarding college credit (e.g., EXP courses) or compensation through Student Employment should be discussed in advance with the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education.
4. Peer instructors may be included in the course syllabus as important contacts for students, but their names will not be entered in the official UK Course Schedule.
5. Peer instruction must be evaluated in a regular and systematic manner and results analyzed to ensure quality. Evaluation results must be maintained by the hiring department and available to the Provost (or designee) in the case of a review deemed necessary to ensure instructional quality.

In order to support this effort, we have developed the following guidelines (adapted from the processes implemented by the UK Dean of Students Office for the UK101 peer instructors):

Guidelines for Using Peer Instructors in Undergraduate Courses:

DETAILS OF THE POSITION

- **Selection Criteria:** Determine how you will select Peer Instructors. 
  *For example,* the following criteria are used when selecting UK101 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 in multiple student organizations and can share with new students the process and importance of getting involved on campus.
  - Students who are good role models from a social standpoint; students who make good decisions in regards to consumption of alcohol.
  - Students who can connect with a variety of personality types.
  - Students who have a desire to mentor new students.
  - Students who are enthusiastic about the University of Kentucky and the UK 101/201 experience.
  - Interview
  - Availability to teach course.

- **Selection Process:** Determine when and how peer instructors will be selected. 
  *For example,* the Dean of Students Office sends out a call in February each year for
applications for peer instructorships and requires personal interviews before selection and class assignments are made for the following fall’s classes.

- **Hiring and Employee Performance Issues:** According to Human Resources Policy and Procedure number 17.0, UK hiring officials must use UK Temporary and Student Employee Services – see more at their website [http://www.uky.edu/hr/employment/hiring-officials/hiring-and-managing-student-employees]. Remember also to inquire about the KHEAA Reimbursing Wage Program for eligible student workers – you may be reimbursed for a portion of student wages paid out. Supervisors should follow attendance and performance guidelines for all UK employees – see for example the UK HR Temporary Employment Absenteeism Form [http://www.uky.edu/hr/employment/forms/absenteeism-form]. Contact UKPR for assistance in handling performance issues (859-257-3330).

- **Trainings:** All Peer Instructors are **required** to attend a workshop or training with their faculty instructor. Type 1 UIAs (those who will be assisting with grading) must also attend the University New TA Orientation offered before the beginning of each semester – contact the Graduate School and see their website for TAs at [http://www.research.uky.edu/gs/StudentDevelopment/TAs.html].

- **Time Commitment:** Instructors need to be clear about their expectations of how many hours per week they expect peer instructors to spend on this work. *For example,* UK101 peer instructors (for a 1 credit hour course) as expected to spend about 6 hours a week during the months they teach UK 101 or UK 201 with the following expectations described:
  - 2 of the hours are spent in class
  - 1 hour is spent meeting with the instructor planning the upcoming sessions
  - 1 hour is spent preparing for their own lessons/lectures to give in class
  - 1 hour is spent grading assignments and responding to emails

- **Compensation:** Instructors need to determine how to reward upper level undergraduates for this leadership role. This could be as simple as a personalized letter of recommendation which is always useful for undergraduates seeking external scholarships or a fellowship. Serving as the “onsite supervisor” for a field-based learning experience and signing them up for EXP 396 (Experiential Education) could be an excellent way to show on their official transcript that they have had a service-oriented experience under the guidance of a faculty mentor. For their work in UK101, for example, Peer Instructors receive tokens of appreciation that relate to the course such as:
  - UK jacket or T-shirt
  - Money on Plus Account, which can be used for coffee with a student, etc.