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ABSTRACT

In the Department of Speech Communication at Humboldt State University, there are two programs (a tutoring program and the Undergraduate Instructional Assistant program) through which undergraduate students help provide instruction to other undergraduate students. Volunteer tutors provide one-on-one assistance to students who need help in their basic speech communication classes or in preparing speeches for other classes. The Undergraduate Instructional Assistant (UIA) program offers students a different experience in aiding the educational process of fellow students. Undergraduate Instructional Assistants (UIAs) help teach a class (or more than one) with a supervising professor. Requirements of UIAs vary by supervising professors. Lessons learned about the tutoring program are (1) tutors are valuable; (2) publicity is vital; (3) tutors should be screened; (4) flexibility is important; (5) tutors must be realistic; (6) opportunities for "tutor development" should be provided; and (7) repetition of the experience is a good thing. Some lessons learned about the UIAs are: UIAs add to the class; teaching with a UIA is more work than teaching alone; instructors should be ready for the UIA to say things that are not quite correct; good people are needed; it should be made clear who is in charge; the UIA should take some responsibility; he or she should be trained; and guidance appropriate to the student should be provided. (Contains 4 references. Appendixes contain tutoring requirements; a 13-item list of tutoring readings; university policy on UIAs; and an explanation of UIA expectations.) (RS)

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"Lessons Learned While Sharing the Helm: A Supervising Professor's Perspective"

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"Lessons Learned While Sharing the Helm: A Supervising Professor's Perspective"  
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As a small Speech Communication department without a graduate program we at Humboldt State University look for experiences we can offer our students that can help prepare them for graduate school and help them stand out among their peers in graduate school. One way of doing that is to give our students the chance to experience teaching other students as undergraduates. Over the years we've found the experiences we offer our students helps them develop their abilities (Duynstee), prepare for their futures (Hennessey-Booth, Swartz), and helps the department provide instruction to other students.

There are two programs in the Department of Speech Communication at Humboldt State University in which undergraduate students help provide instruction to other undergraduate students. The first is the Tutoring Program and the other is the Undergraduate Instructional Assistant (UIA) program. This paper will describe each of the programs and identify "lessons" I've learned by being involved with tutors and UIAs.

### **Tutors**

The tutoring program was initiated by Omar Swartz when he was an undergraduate at HSU. The details of the way the program works have evolved since its inception, but the following explains the basic workings of the program.

Tutors in the program provide one-on-one assistance to students who need help in their basic Speech Communication classes or in preparing speeches for other classes. Most of the clients are students in the Fundamentals of Speech course, some are in the critical thinking courses, and a few come from oral interpretation or courses in other departments that require presentations as part of the classes. In addition, there are a few students who ask for tutoring for other courses within the Speech Communication major.

Students who become tutors either volunteer to become tutors by contacting the head of the tutoring program (usually the department chair) or are recommended by faculty who believe they will be good tutors. Tutors are usually upper division majors in the department, but a few are non-majors who were both good students in at least one basic course and who have shown an impulse to help other students while in those courses. Some excellent tutors were non-majors who came directly out of a basic speech course, with no advanced instruction in Speech Communication.

Since the university is run by the generation of student credit units, and because we have no means of paying tutors for their time, tutors are required to enroll for one unit of "Field Experience" credit. One tutor, usually the one with the most experience in the program, is designated as the "Tutoring Coordinator," enrolls for two units of credit, and has more responsibility than the other students. A copy of the syllabus for the tutoring experience is attached (Appendix A), which describes how the course is set up. Although the units for tutoring can be used to meet a requirement for the major, students usually take the units as free electives, and usually as elective units beyond what they need to graduate.

There are several things tutors must do to earn their credit. Part of their duties involve doing outreach and advertising the program. Tutors put up flyers around campus, announcing the service and how to make use of it. They also make visits to all the basic

speech and critical thinking classes to explain to the students in those classes what the service is and how to make use of it.

The tutors are required to hold a drop in tutoring office hour once a week. The drop in hours for each tutor is posted on the flyers, on the door to the tutoring office, and on cards that are handed out to students during the class visits.

The tutors are also required to tutor by appointment, which is how the majority of the tutoring is done. Students who want tutoring go to the department office and fill out a form with their name, phone number, and the class for which they want tutoring. The department secretary gives that form to the Tutoring Coordinator, who assigns the student to one of the tutors, attempting to spread the load evenly among the tutors during the semester. The tutor then has the responsibility to contact the student and make arrangements to meet with him/her.

One of the requirements for the course is for each tutor to keep a log of what they do as tutors. After meeting with students tutors are expected to write down who came in, what they wanted to work on, what the tutor did with the student, and reflect on what they did well or could improve upon. At the end of the semester they are also required to write a paper reflecting on what they learned as a result of their tutoring experience. The paper can discuss not just what they learned about tutoring, but about themselves and about the communication process.

The motto of the tutoring program is "For Students, By Students." The tutors take pride in the fact that they are in charge of the program and are doing something to help their fellow students. They also take pride in the fact that the service is free to students, does not exclude any students because they are not in a speech class, and that their efforts are voluntary instead of required.

### **Undergraduate Instructional Assistant**

The UIA program offers the students a different experience in aiding the educational process of fellow students. UIAs help teach a class (or more than one) with a supervising professor. The exact nature of the relationship varies from professor to professor, class to class, and semester to semester. Sometimes the UIA serves in an apprentice role, observing the professor and engaging in limited instruction and other duties. Other times the UIA serves in more of a team-teaching role, with expanded duties.

The department's UIA guidelines (Appendix C) describe the procedure by which students become UIAs. Some of the procedures are meant to provide some uniformity in what UIAs do, and some are the result of past experiences with UIAs that revealed policy gaps that led to problems.

Unlike the tutors, UIAs must be upper division Speech Communication majors. As co-teachers they are expected to know more about the discipline than is required by tutors, and there is more need for them to have a theoretical grounding.

To apply to become a UIA a student makes a connection with a faculty member with whom they would like to teach. Sometimes, though, the faculty member initiates the contact, and asks a student if she/he would be a UIA.

After agreeing to work together the student submits a letter of application to the department chair, and the faculty member submits a letter of acceptance, so it is clear that

both individuals are willing to work together. A least one other letter of recommendation from a faculty member in the department who is familiar with the student is required. The letters are considered by a panel of at least three other faculty members, who vote to approve or deny the application. The procedure was created to avoid situations in which a student who was unable to gain the agreement from any faculty who are familiar with him/her goes to an unfamiliar faculty member and persuades him/her to let him/her be a UIA. The process has the added advantage of making it clear to students that they do not become UIAs just because they want to, but that it is something for which they will be carefully considered.

Requirements of UIAs vary by supervising professors. A sample of my requirements is attached as an example (appendix D, but it is by no means a department policy. Some of the things I address in my requirements are expectations for attendance, expectations for teaching involvement, UIA's role in grading speeches, expectations of an office hour, and expectations for individual meetings to discuss what we will do in class. I try to stress that the role of the UIA is to help the students in the class.

Grading UIAs can also be difficult because there isn't anyone to compare them to. Unlike most other classes you can't justify a grade because the student didn't perform as well as someone else in the class. So, normative and individualized grading becomes important. I have my UIAs keep a journal about their experiences similar to that required by the tutors. They are expected to write about what happened in every class session and every other meeting with me or with students, and reflect on what happened in a thoughtful way. I also require them to write a final paper summarizing the experiences, noting areas of weakness and strength, and explaining what they would do differently if they had a chance to repeat the experience.

#### **Lessons learned about tutors**

Lesson #1: Tutors are valuable. The tutoring program has turned out to be a tremendous service to students needing tutoring, students doing the tutoring, and to the department. The program is a service to students who are struggling with a variety of classes and provides them with additional help and a means to succeed. The program is a service to the students who do the tutoring by helping them see how they can put their knowledge and skills to work. It also helps them recognize that they have the aptitude to teach others. And the program is a service to the department because it provides a way to increase what the faculty has too little of--time--and helps us better do what we want to do--teach.

Lesson #2: Publicity is vital. Outreach is extremely important to make the tutoring program work. While we would all like to think that students who need help will make use of opportunities offered to them that doesn't seem to be the case. An important part of the program involves the tutors publicizing their availability by visiting classes, posting notices, and whatever other means are possible. To make the program work it's also important that faculty tell their students they would benefit by going in to see the tutors and refer those students to the tutors. I've found that referrals don't always work because students have the option of ignoring them, but I believe they do help in many cases.

Lesson #3: Screen the tutors. It is vital to only accept students as tutors who are likely to be good tutors. Tutors are representatives of the department and meet with vulnerable students individually, so tutoring should not be seen as either a right that every major can take advantage of nor a requirement that every major must fulfill. The impression tutors give not only reflects on the department but can also influence tutees

perceptions of themselves and their abilities. Tutors also have to be trusted to work on their own, with little direct supervision, and the department cannot take the risk that unreliable students will work one-on-one with fellow students.

When I say the students should be “good tutors” I think there are several characteristics that are important. First, they should know what they’re talking about when they’re working with other students, so they need to be academically qualified. As noted above, that doesn’t mean that they need to be majors with several advanced speech communication courses completed. Very good tutors have been non-majors who successfully completed the course for which they will tutor.

Tutors also need to be patient, because many of the students they will work with are coming for tutoring precisely because they don’t always “get it” the first time, or the second time, or the third time, etc. I also think it helps if the tutors are friendly, so they can make the experience a pleasant and positive one. Arrogant and intimidating people do not make the best tutors. People who want to help others seem to make very good tutors.

Sometimes the best students academically aren’t good tutor material. They may know the subject very well, and they may be able to quickly identify how presentations can be improved, but they may not be able to work with less knowledgeable, less skilled, or less confident students to help them improve. I’ve found some very good tutors were recruited straight out of basic speech classes because they showed the characteristics in those classes that make the experience good for everyone.

Lesson #4: Flexibility is important. In tutoring, as in teaching, often times things come up that aren’t anticipated, and sometimes tutors take on responsibilities that weren’t anticipated. For example, when I first started working with the tutors I expected that they would primarily help students work on the delivery of their speeches. I’ve found that students seek more help choosing topics, learning to use the library for research, outlining their speeches, and using computers. This semester, one of our tutors was introduced to a student with a learning disability and has wound up attending the class with him, and working with him in class as well as during out of class sessions. That’s a situation that has turned out to be very good, but only because the tutor was flexible in what she would do.

Lesson #5: Tutors must be realistic. The ideal tutoring situation might include students who come in early enough that the tutors can really help them prepare their performances, and who come in with a good idea of what they need help with, and who take the tutor’s advice and prepare for the next tutoring session. Our experience has been that is not what happens.

It helps to remind tutors from the outset about the realities of the tutoring situation. They will probably have to work with several students with varying degrees of communication apprehension, and part of the apprehension may involve waiting until it’s too late to seek help or being reluctant to identify what they need help with.

My experience working with students who really need help is that they often have some advanced communication skills as getting the helper to suggest enough that the helper does the work for them. I remind tutors that their job is to help students with their speeches, not write their speeches for them.

I’ve also found that there will be some times during the semester when tutoring will be very slow, and other times that will be very busy. That can also vary from semester to

semester. Tutors need to be prepared for that, or they become worried when students don't come in or overburdened when they all want to come in at once.

Tutors are expected to put in a total of 45 hours a semester into tutoring for one unit of credit (at HSU), but they're not expected to go beyond that if they don't want to. I've found it's important to stress that, because some tutors think anything beyond their office hour each week is working beyond the requirement, so became resentful when more was expected. Other tutors thought they were required to accept every request for their time, so became overburdened and felt their other classes suffered as a result. I try to encourage tutors to use the time when there aren't many requests to work on their other classes so they don't find it such a burden when requests come in.

Lesson #6: Provide "tutor development" opportunities. It helps to have something else for tutors to do during the drop in tutoring times. Nobody can force students to take advantage of the drop-in tutoring opportunities, and there are times when nobody comes to see the tutors during their office hours. One semester I had a student who had no drop-ins and no appointments the entire semester. She was very disappointed, but it wasn't her fault. Because tutoring is done for credit, however, tutors can't expect to use that time as a general "study hall."

To help the tutors make better use of that "down time" for tutoring I've photocopied articles from our journals that seem to be most related to the tutoring experience, put them in a binder, and made the binder available to the tutors during the times when they have their drop-in tutoring times. I was rather surprised to be unable to find any research concerning tutoring in the Speech Communication field. The articles I included (see attached bibliography, Appendix B) are primarily about Communication Apprehension, since tutors can expect to face a lot of apprehensive students. When tutors write their journals they are expected to summarize an article and its implications for tutoring for each day when no one comes in during their drop-in times. Tutors can also find their own readings if they want, as long as they're related to the experience of tutoring or teaching.

Since creating that notebook I've been able to add another option, which is to use the time to develop their knowledge about library resources that could be helpful in tutoring. Since tutors shouldn't leave the tutoring room during their drop-in times, we are going to install a hand-me-down computer in the tutoring room and have it hooked up to the campus system so they can access library indexes and the World Wide Web. Then, when no one comes in, they can pick some electronic indexes to familiarize themselves with, and work with them. Then their journal entry can describe what they found out about the various indexes. This will have the added advantage of allowing the tutors to show students how to use the computer research resources from the tutoring room.

Lesson #7: Repeating the experience is a good thing. I've found that some tutors like to tutor for several semesters in a row. That's good for them because they can learn from their experience, become better at it, and help students more. It's good for the program because it provides continuity and the tutors can share their experiences with each other. It also helps the program because as they become more familiar with tutoring they can make suggestions of how to improve the program. Repeating the experience also provides background for the tutoring coordinator, who can take on the position with some knowledge of what goes on instead of learning to tutor and learning to coordinate other tutors at the same time.

## Lessons learned about Undergraduate Instructional Assistants

**Lesson #1: Undergraduate Instructional Assistants add to the class.** I've had three UIAs in six different classes, and in all cases they added to the classes in important ways. Students in classes report that they feel UIAs give them someone they can relate to more, and that makes the class a better experience compared to other classes they have. Since the UIA is closer to the other students in age and experience, they can use examples that are more immediate for the students. For instance, when Janet disclosed that she became a Speech Communication major because she was afraid to make speeches, the suggestions she gave for overcoming communication apprehension seemed to carry more weight.

I've found UIAs also add to classes simply by providing variety in the format. Even when we follow the same lesson plan I follow when I teach alone, the UIA's very presence adds to the mix, creating a presentation that's more interesting to attend. I find that very helpful for maintaining attention and making the class more exciting in an MTV age.

UIAs also add to classes by reinforcing ideas. Their ability to bring in alternative examples that I would not have thought of helps give students a better chance to understand ideas. My repertoire of examples to clarify concepts has its limitations, and being able to draw on someone else's ideas has been very helpful.

One of the big changes I made between my first UIA, which was Mindi Golden, and my second UIA, who was Janet Duynstee, was to try to lecture less and do more group work in class. That's something I decided to do regardless of whether I worked with a UIA or not. I think some lectures are necessary, though, but students are less willing to sit through fifty minutes of uninterrupted lecturing, so I've tried to break up my lectures with different things happening throughout the fifty minute class periods. I refer to it as my MTV format. Now, rather than have the UIA take over the class for the entire session and lecture, we are both involved in the lectures, sometimes alternating major sections, sometimes alternating subordinate ideas within major sections. I find it helps most students to have two people involved in the lectures there to break things up. I've also found that it doesn't work so well with the non-traditional or re-entry students. They seem to prefer a more traditional lecture approach.

UIAs also improve the class when students are working in groups. Once a group exercise begins students often have questions about what they're doing or need some encouragement to stay on task. The UIA doubles the number of facilitators available to help the groups in their exercises and I think more gets done as a result.

Working with UIAs also improves the class in another way: they keep me on my toes. When I tell them that they should do some things when they teach it also reminds me that I should do the same things, and that makes me more aware of how I'm teaching. I wish I could say that I don't need those reminders, but I do. Just as Janet points out that teaching improved her presentational skills (Duynstee) I find working with UIAs improves my teaching skills.

**Lesson #2: Teaching with an Undergraduate Instructional Assistant is more work than teaching alone.** Working with another person requires more advanced planning, more coordination, and more thinking of the other instructor than does teaching alone. When I'm teaching by myself I can afford to wait later to decide what I will say and what examples I will use, sometimes making those decisions while I'm talking. I've been



teaching long enough that I'm comfortable with that and I can easily make last minute changes because I don't have to coordinate those changes with someone else.

Working with a UIA necessitates making firmer decisions earlier, so I can let the UIA know about them in time that she can prepare to adapt to them. Mindi gave the example of being put on the spot by being asked to discuss her philosophy without knowing she would be called upon to do that ahead of time. That sort of thing can easily happen, and in some ways may be inevitable in a dynamic communication situation like the classroom, but it's certainly something the supervising instructor wants to avoid as much as possible.

Working with a UIA also requires me to flesh out my notes more, because the notes that give me clear guidance don't mean nearly as much to someone else. That takes time that I usually do not have to use when I teach by myself, and makes me do it far enough in advance to get the notes to the UIA.

Working with the UIA also requires more time spent discussing the experiences we had as we taught together. Time has to be established to talk to the UIA about what was done in class as well as to talk about what is coming up in class. When I'm working by myself I find I do a lot of that while I'm doing other things, like driving to work or eating lunch. With a UIA that has to be scheduled into both my time and the UIA's time.

Lesson #3: Be ready for the UIA to say things that aren't quite correct. UIAs are in the learning process, and are in a situation where they represent the supervising instructor and that instructor's ideas rather than their own. There will very likely be times when the UIA, in trying to explain something to students, will honestly misinterpret policies or expectations, or will phrase ideas in a way that is not quite correct. Both the supervising instructor and the UIA have to be prepared to deal with that eventuality. It's not something that can always be specifically anticipated, because students sometimes ask questions that no one would ever predict.

The first step in dealing with such a situation is to bring it up right from the start. I've learned supervising instructors should, early in the process of preparing UIAs to teach, let them know that they should expect, at some time, to say something that is incorrect. UIAs should also be informed that sometimes the supervising instructors will have to correct such statements before they are taken as unchanging truth by the students in the class. Doing so is not a sign that the UIA has made a grave and irreparable error, and is not likely to hurt the UIAs credibility among the students, but it is something everyone will probably have to cope with.

Secondly, when a misstatement happens supervising instructors must quickly decide if it is important enough to call for a correction. There have been times when a UIA has given advice that is different from what I would give, but I've let it go because the advice is not really out of line, it's just different. There have been other times when the advice has been a significant departure from policies established in the syllabus, for example, and a clarification was needed so students aren't confused by conflicting instructions..

Third, the supervising instructor must try to be sensitive to the challenge of making the correction without undermining the UIA. As Mindi points out in her paper, that may not be very easy to do. I'm sure different people have different ways of doing it, and the situation makes a lot of difference, so I have no more specific advice to give on this matter, other than be aware that you're not just correcting the information, but are also saying something about the UIA.

I accept misstatements and the need to correct them as a normal part of teaching. I don't think it's something that happens with just UIAs or inexperienced teachers. There have been times when I've had to correct myself because I said something that contradicted the syllabus, so it doesn't surprise me when it happens with someone else. I think it's a lot better for everyone to simply acknowledge the error, correct it, and go on rather than try to make it seem like there was no error. So I try to deal with it in a matter of fact way, both trying to provide consistent information without making it appear that the UIA was somehow less informed than she should be

Lesson #4: Get good people. The UIA experience is not the place to turn someone with little capacity as a teacher into a teacher. There is a lot for anyone to learn about teaching, and it isn't all going to happen in a one semester apprenticeship. I do believe people who are not "natural" teachers can learn to become good teachers, but this is not the way to do that. Instead, people who already have some teaching skills can use the experience to put those skills to use, learn more about teaching, and learn more about their capabilities as teachers.

There are some students in classes who seem to have a teaching impulse. When other students are struggling those with the teaching impulse help them out. They provide ideas. They give encouragement. They avoid making other students feel bad about their performances. That is, I think, a very important characteristic of a good UIA.

Other characteristics are those I think most of us would think of when we think about hiring someone as a teacher. A good UIA is dependable, responsible, enthusiastic, and sensitive. Good UIAs are also leaders who are willing to speak up, yet at the same time they are able to take direction from the supervising instructor. A good UIA also projects enough confidence that they seem to know what they're talking about, yet do not project a sense of arrogance that would intimidate students who need help.

I think it is very helpful to have a department policy for the selection of UIAs, to reduce the chance that unsuitable students become UIAs. The policy at HSU developed when a student "shopped around" for a supervising instructor. He was turned down by all the instructors who knew him, and finally went to one who didn't know the student and was willing to give the student a chance. It turned out to be a bad experience for everyone. Our application policy is not very formal, but it does give people who know the student a chance to be involved in the decision.

Lesson #5: Make clear who is in charge. This is not something that I've ever had a problem with, but I can certainly envision a situation in which the UIA believes that he/she is an independent instructor, or has the same decision making authority as the instructor of record. Problems can be avoided if there is a clear agreement that the UIA is an assistant, and is there to help the instructor of record, not supplant him or her. Such an agreement does not in any way diminish the value or contribution of the UIA, but does create a situation which clarifies who has the ultimate authority in the class. Any time two people collaborate in teaching a class different approaches will arise. In a situation of more equal authority differences will be resolved through negotiation between the two instructors. With a UIA there is still opportunity for negotiating, but one person has been hired to be the instructor, and that person has the final responsibility for what happens in the class. That's the person who should make the ultimate decisions, and the UIA should agree from the outset to abide by those decisions.

Some UIAs may feel the designation of who is in charge unnecessarily reduces their role in the course, but it would be very unfair to the UIA to give him/her too much

responsibility. As Mindi pointed out, there is more that goes into teaching than always meets the eye, and a UIA doesn't yet have the background needed to make the final decisions about what to do in a class. Certainly they should have some input, but they must be ready to abide by the decision of the supervising instructor.

Lesson #6: Let the UIA take some responsibility. Although supervising instructors are the ultimate authorities, UIAs will get more out of their experiences if they are allowed to take some of the responsibility. Sometimes it will probably be a little scary for UIAs to have the responsibility, and sometimes it will probably be a little scary for supervising instructors to relinquish responsibility. But taking on and giving opportunities for responsibility is what makes the UIA experience more valuable.

I think it's important to give the UIA some authority from the first day of class. When I introduce the UIAs there is no way of hiding the fact that the UIA is a fellow student, so I don't try to do that. But I do try to introduce the UIA in a way that emphasizes her knowledge and experience, and I try to stress that she should be considered by the students as one of their teachers, and that the students should give her the same respect and attention as they would any other teacher.

In addition, I try to have the UIA do something in the class as an instructor as soon as possible, rather than sit and observe for a while before participating. If there's group work to be done the UIA visits with groups and provides advice and encouragement, which they are usually much better at doing than I am. If there are lectures to be done I try to have the UIA take part in the lectures as close as possible to the amount that I take part.

Part of the responsibility of being a UIA can include being involved in the grading process. As Jennifer indicates, some supervising instructors prefer to have the UIA not be involved in the actual grading, but participate in a kind of "mock" grading (Hennessey-Booth). While I think that's a valid approach, I prefer to have the UIA involved in grading that counts. I grade the written work and exams all by myself, just because it's more efficient, but I have my UIAs participate in grading the speeches in the classes we teach, and I have their grades count equally to mine.

Involving the UIA in the grading process does create an opportunity for problems, and efforts should be made to avoid those problems. The most significant problem I can think of might come up if a student believes he or she was unfairly graded by the UIA. It's one thing to dislike the grade assigned by someone who has gone through a screening process and hired as a member of the faculty; it's quite another to dislike the grade assigned by someone who is another student.

Fortunately, I've never had a student complain about being unfairly graded by a UIA. Partly, I think, that is due to the fact that there usually isn't much of a difference between the grades the UIAs and I assigned. The difference between the average scores we assign on speeches is usually very minor. Partly the lack of complaints may be due to the policy I use for the grading, which is to drop the lowest of the speech grades, regardless of who it came from. In my classes there are three major, graded speeches. When there's a UIA that means there are a total of six grades, and only the highest five of those six count. So, in those cases when there is a significant disparity among our grades, the student gets the benefit of the doubt. That system doesn't make much difference in the students' final grades, but I think it makes a lot of difference in their attitudes about being graded by another student.

I also think credit for the lack of complaints also goes to the UIAs I've had. They justify the grades they assign, and very conscientiously try to be fair to all the students. They're also approachable, so if a student has a question about a grade they go to the UIA and talk about it. Janet wrote about a time when that happened with her, and I think working it out with the student was not only a good experience for Janet, but also enhanced her credibility (Duynstee).

Lesson #7: Train the UIA. When I worked with my first two UIAs I didn't give much thought to preparing them for involvement in the grading process. Partly that was due to my naiveté, partly it was due to my perception that the process of teaching the students in the class what was expected was also training the UIAs, and partly it was due to the fact that I trusted the people I was working with to be able to recognize when students did what they should in speeches and grade fairly.

I've been proven right to trust the UIAs I've had, but there is still need for training. As noted in the other papers, UIAs who take their role seriously are concerned that the grades they assign be appropriate. When there is a discrepancy between the supervising instructor's assigned grades and those of the UIA, the UIA tends to feel they've assigned the "wrong" grade. I've been teaching and doing Forensics long enough to know that two people will rarely assign exactly the same score to a speech, and I accept the differences as inevitable. I've found that UIAs usually don't see it that way.

Part of the training I now do when I have a UIA is to talk about the role of grades and grading. I believe there are too many variables in a speech to be able to set down any hard and fast rules, but I can provide some general guidelines. The other part of the training I now do is to "evaluate" some video taped speeches together. Prior to the first graded speech we watch a few speeches together, score them according to the criteria I use in my class, and talk about what we saw, the scores we assigned, and the comments we wrote. That gives the UIA a chance to either adjust scoring expectations before grading an actual speech, and to clarify what the criteria for the speeches and the scores are. That helps us be more consistent in our scoring, and it helps the UIA have more confidence in the scores she assigns.

The training is also on-going during the semester. I've found it is helpful to meet with the UIA at least once a week both to review what happened the previous week and to talk about what's going to happen the next week. That gives the UIA a chance to express her concerns, gives me a chance to talk about any problems I've noticed, and gives us both a chance to make as sure as possible that we know what we're going to do in the next few classes.

Lesson #8: Use carbonless paper. Even with the training I want to be able to check what the UIA writes on the critique sheets, and carbonless paper lets me do that. I'm one of those people who believe in immediate feedback to students, so I give them their evaluations at the end of the class in which they gave their speeches. Obviously, if we did that and didn't have a record of what we wrote I'd either have to get the critiques back from the students or I wouldn't really know what the UIA wrote.

Lesson #9: Provide guidance appropriate to the student. Each UIA is different, and each needs somewhat different guidance. Some may need to have everything spelled out in clear detail. Some need to have some freedom to try things and make their own mistakes. Some need to be encouraged to try something different and some need to be kicked out of the nest. The trick, I find, is to figure out what kind of guidance each needs. I confess that I usually find that out, if I find it out at all, after they've had a negative experience and let me know they wish they had more guidance.

One type of guidance I believe I need to become better at doing is praising the UIAs when they're doing well. When you get good people as your UIAs it should be pretty easy to praise them. Still, I find myself failing to praise them as much as they deserve because they appear so confident and seem to know they're doing well, or because I feel the praise would be repetitive. By choosing good people to work with I'm also choosing people who don't appear to need the reinforcement, although intellectually I know that's shouldn't matter. I'm often surprised when I find that UIAs feel they've done something poorly, because it seems obvious to me that what they did worked well..

Lesson #10: Repeating the experience can be very good. Janet has worked with me as a UIA for three semesters in a row, because she's liked the experience and has added to the classes so well. I've found that kind of repetition to be good because, as she indicates in her paper, she's developed her ability more and more each semester, which has allowed me to let her take more and more responsibility, and has resulted in her being more and more innovative. She also seems to have increased her confidence each semester. I find it very gratifying to be involved in that process. The repetition also helps us to work together better, as we become more and more used to how the other works.

Student tutors and Undergraduate Instructional Assistants do add a great deal both to the educational opportunities for the students involved and to the ability of the department to provide the best instruction. I've been very pleased with what each UIA has added to my classes, and by what our tutors have done over the years. I don't recall ever hearing anyone say anything negative about either the tutors or the UIAs they've worked with, and there seems to be growing interest among our majors to be involved in either experience.

I'd encourage any other department to institute either the tutoring program, the UIA program or both. They provide significant benefits to the students and to the faculty, and are well worth the effort.

## APPENDIX A

### TUTORING REQUIREMENTS

Tutoring will be graded based on how reliably and well you do the following. The tutoring coordinator will be consulted concerning how well each tutor met their responsibilities. The tutors will be consulted concerning how well the tutoring coordinator met his/her responsibilities.

1. Maintain one hour each week of the semester as an office hour for drop-in tutoring. Be in your "office," which is room 5 in House 54, during your office hour.
2. Check the tutoring mailbox every day to see if a tutor request has been filled out for you. If a request is in the box contact the student and arrange a time and place to tutor her/him. (The tutoring coordinator is responsible for checking with the department secretary each day to see if any requests have come in, and is responsible to distribute the requests equitably to the tutors. The coordinator is also responsible to make sure tutors followed up on requests and to provide the instructor with a list of tutoring assignments made during the semester.)
3. Keep a journal of your tutoring activity. The journal is the major record of what you did during the semester, so an incomplete, inadequate, or poorly written journal could result in a lower grade for the course. The journal must be well written and include all of the following:
  - A. A log of what you did each office hour, whether or not anyone came in for tutoring.
  - B. A log of what you did to encourage students to use the tutoring service. The tutor coordinator is responsible for developing efforts to make faculty and students in basic courses aware of the availability of tutors, their purpose, how to get tutoring, and tutor office hours. Other tutors are responsible to help the coordinator in those efforts.
  - C. A log of what you did in each tutoring session, whether it was during your office hour or a separate appointment. The log should include:
    1. The name of the student you tutor
    2. The class the student needs help with
    3. The specific need the student has for help
    4. What you did in the session (which should be described in sufficient detail that whoever reads the journal would have a good idea of what you did)
    5. The time the session started and the time the session ended
    6. What you learned from specific experiences tutoring. The learning may involve insights about communication, public speaking, or critical thinking, that you didn't have before you tutored. It could also involve reinforcement of ideas you already knew. It should also include whatever you discovered about the process of teaching and your aptitude for doing it as a result of tutoring.
    7. A summary of what you got from your experiences as a tutor during the semester, what you wish you would have gotten, what you would do differently if you could do it over again, and other thoughts you might want to include.

After you've made a few entries in your log you should turn it in so I can let you know if you're doing what is expected in time for you to improve if needed.

4. If you are not already very comfortable using the library resources typically used in lower division speech communication classes (both print indexes and electronic resources) be sure to go to the library and become more familiar with them. The department faculty have expressed the need for students to receive more help in gathering information for their speeches, so as a tutor you must be prepared to go to the library and help them learn the resources. Time spent going to the library to become more familiar with the resources should be included in your log.
5. If no one comes in during your office hour you are expected to use that time developing your skills and knowledge for tutoring. It is not expected to be a general study hall. You can use the time in one of three ways. First, you can read one of the articles compiled in the notebook, which were selected because they provide more information about topics typically covered in basic speech classes. Second, you can find and read articles of your own, as long as they also provide more information relevant to tutoring. Third, you can use the time reading course material (photocopy packets, texts) being used in current Speech Communication General Education courses, so you are more familiar with what is being taught in the various courses. Fourth, once the computer is installed in the tutoring room, you can use it to become more familiar with the on-line library resources and Web research resources.

Whichever alternative you decide to use on a date when no one comes to your office hour, you should write about what you did in your journal, using the general guidelines listed in #3 above.

Keep in mind that the general rule of thumb for receiving SC 495 credit is you spend approximately 45 hours for each unit of credit. That's about 3 hours per week. You'll only spend one hour a week in your office hour, and the rest would be in appointments and activities to try to get students to use the service. Since the number of people who come in for tutoring is out of your control to a large degree (as long as reasonable efforts have been made to get tutees) I will not add up the hours you indicated in your journal to make sure they add up to at least 45 hours. But I will also expect that you will use your office hour for tutoring related activities and that you will be available beyond your office hour.

## APPENDIX B

## TUTORING READINGS

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- Rosenfeld, Lawrence B., Charles H. Grant III and James C. McCroskey. "Communication Apprehension and Self-Perceived Communication Competence of Academically Gifted Students." Communication Education. (44) January 1995, 79-86.
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## APPENDIX C

**HUMBOLDT STATE UNIVERSITY SPEECH COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT  
POLICY ON UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS (UIA):  
(APPROVED 11/8/89)**

"The primary goal of the department's use of undergraduate instructional assistants is enhancing the education of those students authorized to serve in this position. The secondary goal is to provide various kinds of assistance to instructors. UIA (Undergraduate Instructional Assistants) are never the instructor of record, but are authorized to assist the faculty member in a variety of educational tasks such as planning the course and constructing the syllabus, presenting occasional lectures, assisting in demonstration as facilitators or group leaders, and giving individual or group tutoring. While the UIA may assist in grading some assignments, all final decisions in grading shall be made by the instructor of record. The role of the UIA should be to observe, to be involved when possible (but only under the direction of an instructor), and to make the course better for the students who are enrolled as a result."

- 1) MINIMUM CRITERIA FOR BECOMING AN UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT (NOTE: This means eligible for consideration but not automatically guaranteed a position)
  - a) Needs to be a Speech Communication Major (or its equivalent) of Upper Division Standing (Jr. or Sr.), preferably with at least one year "in the department."
  - b) Needs to have completed at least one skills course beyond Speech 100 which involves public speaking (such as Persuasive Speaking, or Business & professional Speaking, or Forensics--certain prepared speaking events). (NOTE--Our presumption is that UIA will serve mainly in Speech 100. However, in special circumstances, they could also serve in other courses, which would require different skills course preparation, such as having completed Speech 308 or done a variety of oral interpretation events in Forensics in addition to having completed Speech 108 to help qualify a person as a UIA in Speech 108.)
  - c) Needs to have a minimum grade point average (overall) of 3.00.
  
2. METHOD OF APPLICATION TO SERVE AS AN UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT
  - a) Obtain written consent of an instructor willing to have the student as UIA. The written consent may be very brief--one sentence or paragraph. (NOTE: No instructor is obligated to work with someone desiring to become a UIA)
  - b) Obtain letter(s) of recommendation from at least one faculty member of the department familiar with the student's work in class (NOTE: Letter(s) of recommendation may be brief--one page. If only one letter of recommendation is received, it must be from someone different than the instructor noted in section 2a above if this is a first appointment. HOWEVER, for a second or subsequent appoint as UIA, a single letter of recommendation from an instructor with whom a UIA has worked previously and wishes to work with again is acceptable.)
  - c) The letter of consent (2a) and letter(s) of recommendation (2b) shall be turned in to the Department Chair (preferably at least two-three weeks in advance of the semester when the applicant would like to serve as UIA), accompanied by a brief (one page) written statement indicating why the applicant would like to become or continue as UIA.
  - d) In applying, any person selected to become a UIA has consented in advance to follow the same professional code of teaching which is required of all faculty members (and will be provided with sections 2-A through 2-M of Appendix U, "A Statement of Professional Responsibility," from the HSU Faculty Handbook).

## 3) DECISION-MAKING BODY FOR APPROVAL OF UIA APPLICANTS

- a) For a first-time appointment, a committee of three persons (to include at least two probationary or tenured faculty members in the department) will make the decision after viewing the materials presented to the Department Chair in Step #2c. The committee may choose to interview the applicant or other persons as part of the decision-making process.
- b) For a second or subsequent appointment, the Department Chair may make the decision or delegate the decision to a committee (as in Step #3a). Part of information for second/subsequent decisions shall include information about the UIA's performance in previous appoint(s) (see Step #4 below).
- c) Each applicant will receive either a positive decision (i.e., "Your application to serve as a UIA has been approved") or a negative decision (i.e., "Your application to serve as a UIA has been denied") in writing from the deciding body.
- d) In the case of a "negative" decision, the applicant may meet with the committee or Department Chair (as appropriate) to discuss the reason(s) for the decision.

## 4) EVALUATION OF UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

- a) At the end of any period of service, a UIA shall have a written evaluation (brief to long, depending on need) of his/her performance completed by the instructor with whom he/she served. This performance evaluation shall be turned in to the Department Chair, and shall be made available to the UIA after service in a course has been completed.

## 5) CREDIT FOR UNDERGRADUATE INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANTS

- a) The UIA and the supervising instructor shall establish a contract (written or oral) concerning the level and types of service to be performed in the class involved.
- b) A UIA shall receive 1-2 units of Speech Communication 495 credit for his/her work, depending on level of service.

## 6) REMOVAL OF A UIA FROM A POSITION OF SERVICE

- a) The Department Chair and the supervising instructor may at any point in the semester remove a teaching assistant from service in the classroom for good cause.
- b) The Department Chair and/or supervising instructor shall discuss reason(s) for removal with the former UIA, and must put the reasons for removal into a written statement.
- c) Should a UIA be removed from a position of service, he/she will receive a NO CREDIT or F grade in Speech 495 for work done (which grade to be determined by the supervising instructor).

ATTACHMENT: HSU FACULTY HANDBOOK, Appendix U ("A Statement of Professional Responsibility"), Sections 2-A - 2-M

HSU Faculty Handbook  
Appendix U  
A Statement of Professional Responsibility  
(SPE) indicates taken from the AAUP Statement on Professional Ethics  
(SFR) indicates taken from the AAUP Statement on Freedom and Responsibility

2. As a teacher, the professor
  - a. encourages the free pursuit of learning in students. (SPE)
  - b. holds before students the best scholarly standards of the discipline. (SPE)
  - c. demonstrates respect for the student as an individual. (SPE)
  - d. adheres to proper role as an intellectual guide and counselor. (SPE)
  - e. makes every reasonable effort to foster honest academic conduct. (SPE)
  - f. makes every reasonable effort to assure that any evaluation of students reflects their true merit and is based on their academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance; whether personality, race, religion, degree of political activism, or personal beliefs. (SPE and SFR)
  - g. respects the confidential nature of the relationship between professor and student. (SPE)
  - h. does not refuse to enroll or teach students on the grounds of their beliefs or the possible uses to which they may put the knowledge to be gained in a course. (SFR)
  - i. refrains from forcing students by the authority inherent in the instructional role to make particular personal choices as to political action or their own part in society. (SFR)
  - j. does not persistently intrude into the presentation of subject material which has no relation to that subject. (SFR)
  - k. presents the subject matter of his or her course as announced to the students and as approved by the faculty in their collective responsibility for the curriculum. (SFR)
  - l. allows students the freedom to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in a course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion. (SFR)
  - m. avoids any exploitation of students for private advantage. (SPE)

## APPENDIX D

## UIA EXPECTATIONS

Below is an explanation of the initial expectations I'll have for you as a UIA with my SC 100 classes in the spring. If you have any questions or other responses to any of this, please feel free to get in touch with me.

First of all, I'd like to approach this more as co-teaching the class rather than PROFESSOR and student assistant. I think if we can give the students the impression that you're pretty much my equal it will give you more credibility. (It will also help to try to avoid the impression of treating you like a subservient female.) Working as equals is tricky to do, though, because I am still ultimately responsible for the class, I've got more experience to draw from so I might dominate discussions, and I am supposed to help guide your experience rather than just turn you loose to sink or swim in the class. And, since I've been your teacher in another class it can be hard for either of us to shake off the student/teacher roles as we work together. Still, that's the goal. So, while I'll design the course and assignments I want you to make suggestions or raise concerns, and I'll try to fit in what you'd like to do, too. In class, as much as possible, I'd like you to take on the role of another instructor, not a student.

There are some things that past experience has shown me works to help give the UIA the appearance of a second teacher. I realize that some (or all) of them may seem obvious, but I still think it's better to bring them up explicitly:

- Appearance: when you come to class it will be better if you dress professionally rather than student attire. For a general idea of what that entails I'd say follow the lead of women on the faculty of the department.
- Demeanor: when you're in class, act like you're a teacher. There's a fairly broad range of what this can mean, but generally it means don't look to me for approval or permission while we're in class. Do what you think is right with confidence and enthusiasm. There may be some times when I add to what you say, or give a different perspective, and there should be some times when you do the same for me, but I'll try not to contradict you and I don't want you to feel like you have to check out everything you do with me. There should also be some times when, because everything isn't scripted out, we may interrupt each other, or think the other is about to speak and end up with a silent pause. That's all natural in a team teaching situation, and it's ok. Hopefully, we'll minimize all that, but the first time working as a team is going to have some awkward times. I think you'd have to do things very out of character to make me feel a need to stop you during class.
- Preparation: It's important that you be at least a step ahead of the students in the readings and knowing what will happen. We'll need to schedule a time each week when we can meet, both to talk about what happened in the previous week and to talk about what will happen in the next week.
- Reliability: As the teacher it's important that you be in class all the time, except in cases of serious illness.
- Office Hour: You'll have to schedule an office hour at least once a week. It will probably be very similar to your experience with your tutoring hour this semester, but you need to be available just in case. It shouldn't be the same time as your tutoring office hour.

Part of what you'll do is some of the lecturing for the course and, since I want to give the impression that you're as much a teacher as I am I'd like you to lecture just about as much as I do. Right now I'm thinking of two ways to handle the lectures, and I'm leaning towards doing both ways at different times. The first is simply to alternate lecturing: you do one subject, I do another subject., etc. The other is to do "tag team" lecturing, where we both lecture on the same subject, but we alternate on the specific points. (For instance, if we were talking about five things they

should do in an introduction, you'd talk about the first thing, I'd talk about the second, you'd talk about the third, etc.)

I want to try cutting down on the lecturing and spend more time "coaching" the students before they give their speeches. We'll still need to do some lecturing but, except for a couple of days the plan is to make them shorter. That will put more emphasis on the students reading the text and keeping up. So, for most of the days that do include lectures, I'm thinking of using the following format:

- Start with a short quiz over the chapter they were supposed to read. (5 minutes)
- Talk about a general principle of communication. (We could alternate these day by day.) (5 minutes)
- Mini-lecture about what we're looking for in their speeches, related to what was in the chapter. (We could tag-team these.) (10-15 minutes)
- Work with the students on what they can do in their particular speeches to make sure they do what we're expecting. (15-20 minutes)

I think of this as my MTV format for short attention spans.

There are also some things I will also have you do to get credit for your UIA experience, aside from the actual teaching. They'll include:

- A statement of your personal "philosophy of teaching" applied to SC 100. This would be a paper in which you explain what you think makes a good teacher for this kind of course, what you think the course is all about, what you think the course goals ought to be, how you think the course ought to be approached, and what you personally will try to do to make SC 100 a good course. The idea is that you should give some thought to what you'll do and try to put your thoughts on paper. This would be something to think about over the break and give to me in the first week of classes (or earlier).
- A journal of your experiences as a teacher in the class. This would be a day by day account of what you did in the class and what you got out of doing it. It would also include any "special" things that came up: like accounts of exceptionally good experiences with students, accounts of negative experiences with students or while teaching, insights that come to you in or out of class, etc. This would be due probably three times during the semester.
- A final paper analyzing what you get out of the experience, explaining what you'd do the same and what you'd do differently if you taught the class all by yourself, and a syllabus for a SC 100 course of your own. This would be due during finals week.

I'm pretty excited about having you do this. I think you'll help make the class better and I think it will be interesting to work with you. I'm still working on getting a set of "notes" for the days when the student's won't be giving speeches, and I'll get those to you as soon as I can.

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- Hennessey-Booth, Jennifer. "An Opportunity for Early Pedagogy: From the Role of Student to Teacher." Paper presented at the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association. November 25, 1996.
- Swartz, Omar. "The Value of the Undergraduate Teaching/Tutoring Experience for Graduate School Success: A Personal Narrative." Paper presented at the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Speech Communication Association. November 25, 1996.

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