INTRODUCTION

Welcome and thank you for your interest in supporting students and staff as an Instructional Assistant (IA) in our ASL Studies Program. The Instructional Assistant program is run by the Faculty Supervisor and the IA Coordinator(s). This manual is designed to provide an overview of the expectations and duties for IAs and to help you work with students in an effective and professional manner.

Faculty Supervisor: A designated member of the ASL faculty who supervises the tutoring program and works closely with the Instructional Assistant Coordinator(s). The supervisor provides training and support, assigns grades, and generally supervises all aspects of the program.

Instructional Assistant Coordinator: A student who oversees the scheduling of IA’s, works with the supervisor in providing training and orientation for IA’s, and serves as a communication liaison between IA’s and the faculty supervisor for any emergency needs. The coordinators solicit applications and conduct interviews for IA position vacancies.

Instructional Assistant: A student who provides academic and tutorial support.

QUALIFICATIONS

Instructional Assistants must be an undergraduate student and have completed the course in which they will assist with a grade of B or better. In rare cases, an IA may be assigned to a course they have not taken if they are recommended and approved by one of the ASL,
Deaf studies or interpreting faculty. While no specific overall GPA is required, the IA is expected to be in good academic standing.

Students who are interested in serving as an IA should submit an application form during the semester before the term they want to begin work. Application forms can be obtained from the Supervising Faculty. Applications are sent at the end of the semester by the IA coordinators.

CREDIT

IAs must enroll in ASLN 3292 Experiential Learning for two or three credits each semester they serve as an IA. This course has the following requirements:
- Permission numbers should be obtained from the Faculty Supervisor.
- Credits are based on class time and the amount of office hours signed up for during the week. Upon signing up for the course, the student should change the number of units for the credits desired.
  - For 2 credits, students will sign up to hold 1 hour of office hours a week
  - For 3 credits, students will sign up to hold 3 hours of office hours a week
- Students will attend training and IA meetings throughout the semester.
- Students will complete the self assessment form at the end of the semester (see attached).
- The Faculty Supervisor and assigned professor will assess the student using the IA self assessment form and provide feedback.
- Based on the student’s performance, in the ARC, the number of logged hours, a required brief report, and the Faculty Supervisor’s evaluation, a grade will be assigned. The IA coordinator may provide the Faculty Supervisor with information, but will NOT evaluate or grade their fellow student.

As for the permission numbers for ASLN 3292, you will select your option between the two available sections: section 001 or 002.
- If you will be working exclusively online, you should opt for ASLN 3292-001.
- If you plan to work anytime at the ARC, then you should sign up for ASLN 3292-002.
Please notify the Faculty Supervisor your choice.

EXPECTATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities During Class

Responsibilities in class vary based on the discretion of the ASL professor. Start each class by taking attendance. Follow what the professor asks of you during each class. You are not expected, and not permitted to teach or sub for any class in any way.

Make sure students are not talking during class. Encourage them to sign. Do not allow them to talk to you as the IA. Use ASL. An exemption can be made for students in ASLN
1101 who have limited or no skills in ASL. With the consent of the professor, you may speak to students for instructional purposes only.

IAs may help proctor quizzes and exams. You are there to help make sure no one is cheating as much as is possible given that we deliver the course in an online environment.

**Introduction to Students**

At the start of the semester, an email should be sent to the students in your assigned class on behalf of yourself, your Co-IA (if applicable), and the professor. In said email and also in the meeting on the first day, you will introduce yourself as an IA and explain briefly the role of the IAs. Most importantly, explain the ARC (ASL Resource Center) function and provide the Office Hour Spreadsheet. Also include any policies or information requested by your professor. Within the first few weeks you should monitor the addition or transferring of students into your class and make sure they are updated on any information important for your course.

**Tutoring in the ARC or online**

The American Sign Language Resource Center (ARC) is located in Oak, 357. Tutoring sessions will be held at ARC or online. Each IA will have his or her schedule arranged in collaboration with the Coordinator and posted on the door and the LMS (Learning Management System). In some cases, tutoring is also available during the summer and winter sessions.

The purpose of the tutoring sessions is to provide further explanation or clarification, to answer questions related to course content and to practice and review what was learned in class. Tutorial assistance is provided for students at their request and/or the advice of their professors or academic counselor. Students who wish to meet with a tutor can view the tutor schedule and meet with a tutor when desired. The schedule for office hours should be provided to all students at the beginning of the semester and should be posted on the ARC door. Because it is such an important role, it is asked that IAs commit to the program from the inception of the assignment through final exams. The IA must be present for class time and assigned office hour time, any other times working shall be at the discretion of the IA themselves. You are not required to hold study sessions or anything additional.

**Preparation**

You should be able to tutor with a minimal amount of preparation, but you must be certain you come to every tutorial session thoroughly familiar with the topics discussed in class. You have every reason to expect that students will come to the session prepared, with all relevant texts and papers and having worked through as much of the material as possible (it is important that you let the Faculty Supervisor know if this is not the case.) Students
have the right to expect that you will be prepared as well. Be honest when you are not sure of an answer and feel free to ask for help or refer students to the professor of their section.

Planning a Session

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the IA or coordinator within a timely fashion to arrange tutoring sessions. You are responsible for responding to students within 48 hours of receiving any requests. Students are also welcome to attend any of the open scheduled office hours arranged by the IA Coordinator and posted on the ARC door and website.

If you cannot attend class or your scheduled office hours due to conflicts in your schedule such as illness, family emergency, etc., it is YOUR responsibility to make sure your hours are covered by another IA (If missing class, then you need to inform your professor and co-IA, if applicable, as soon as possible). If you need help with getting your shift(s) (office hours and/or class) covered, let the IA Coordinator know.

Reporting a Tutoring Session

Make sure students sign in when they visit the ARC (ASL Resource Center) for office hours. A paper form can be found in the ARC and should be filled out by both the IA and student. The form should be placed on the desk in clear view when finished with it. Should the forms be filled, let the IA coordinators know and they can print more out. If the professor wants the list of their students that went to office hours, they should be logged in the appropriate computer document each week. The recording of sign-ins should be kept current in case of the accidental loss of the paper copy in the ARC.

Grading

IAs and Coordinators are not responsible, nor are they allowed to issue or determine grades. You may evaluate the student's work in terms of the progress which he or she has made with you in the tutorial sessions. Avoid guessing what kind of grade the student may receive on a specific assignment or test. Refer the student to their professor for more specific assessment of their progress.

IAs assist with correcting student work, using a key provided by the professor. Follow the guidelines of the instructor when correcting and ask about anything that is not completely clear. However, if the time required or expectations asked by any instructor interferes with your personal academic responsibilities, make this known to the instructor, IA partner (if applicable), IA Coordinator or Faculty Supervisor.
PROFESSIONALISM AND INTEGRITY

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is understandably of the utmost importance and is essential in a tutoring relationship. Never do any work for any student. If you are ever asked to do more than help a student understand the material, you must make it clear that you cannot and will not do so. Any conversation of this nature should be reported to the Faculty Supervisor.

Conduct

IA’s must conduct themselves in a professional manner in all aspects of their relationship with the student. In addition, you must be honest and upfront with the professor(s) you work with. It is important that you never criticize (directly or indirectly) an assignment, a course, or a professor. Please keep in mind that, while the relationships in our program will end up feeling more like a family, you must maintain a professional demeanor; this means complaining about students and the professor(s) on the job is unacceptable! If you notice other students doing so, try to diffuse the situation. Bullying is not tolerated. If any students are having an issue with one another, please intervene in a professional manner and try to alleviate the situation immediately. If you do not feel comfortable with the situation, contact the IA coordinators or the Faculty supervisor for assistance.

Professionalism

IA’s are expected to behave in a professional manner. Professionalism ensures a comfortable environment for all IAs, students and Professors. Inappropriate behaviors will not be tolerated at any time. Inappropriate behaviors include, but are not limited to, sexual harassment, physical or verbal abuse, inappropriate language, and drug and/or alcohol use before/during appointments. If any of these behaviors are reported and verified, the IA will be terminated and may face additional disciplinary action. If an IA feels as though any student is acting inappropriately, the Faculty Supervisor is to be contacted immediately.

IA’s must be punctual and prepared for all tutoring sessions. Be aware of what is currently being taught and any current assignments. It is critical that all IA’s maintain good communication with other IA’s to make sure there are no(t) (many) discrepancies in signing between IA’s. Answer students’ questions to the best of your ability. If you are unsure of a sign, DO NOT guess what it is and relay it to the student. If this happens to you, be honest and let the student know that you will get back to them about the sign if a professor is not available to ask at the time.

If you find yourself in a relationship with another IA or a student, we expect professional behavior in the ARC and/or in the classroom. The Faculty Supervisor will determine the impact, if any, of the relationship on the program and the service being provided. In addition, it is advised that IAs do not tutor or supervise roommates or suitemates.
Confidentiality

Confidentiality is one of the most important aspects of your relationship with the student. Mutual respect and trust are at the heart of any tutoring relationship. If a student feels that they can trust you, they are more likely to cooperate fully and learn from you. Therefore, you must be particularly careful in your conversations not to discuss the students you work with, either their academic progress or their personal lives. Even the most harmless remark may be perceived as a form of invasion of the student’s privacy and betrayal of trust. Any lapses in confidentiality may be viewed as grounds for dismissal.

ARC RULES

Note: There are specific rules related to the pandemic.
They will be provided as soon as possible as an addendum to this document.

- The ARC can only be accessed by IA’s, coordinators and faculty and can only be used for ASL-related activities.
- Please keep in mind, the ARC is located next to faculty offices, so please try to prevent noise from becoming disruptive.
- For students who are studying ASL or enrolled in an ASL course, encourage students to use only ASL as the mode of communication. Remember, you are within sight of faculty offices and therefore must be considerate towards them and their involvement in our communication.
- Under no circumstances are students allowed to be alone in the ARC.
- The ARC has books and materials for IA’s and are considered property of the university. All textbooks must be returned at the end of each semester.
- Please DO NOT let students use the computer for personal use! The computer and printer should only be used by the IA or IA Coordinator and be used for work-related functions, not personal use!
- The computer can be accessed using your personal Net ID and password.
- During office hours, the door to the ARC must remain open unless you need to leave the room, in which case make sure the door is closed and locked while you are away.
- If you are locked out, you can ask the secretary in the Linguistics office to open the door for you.
- When you leave, (especially if you are the last to leave) turn off the computer and lights. Also, make sure the ARC stays clean!
- With departmental approval (because of the pandemic), the ARC can be used for an after hours meeting (ASL club officers, Alternative Spring break committee, etc.) please notify the Faculty Supervisor and schedule through the IA coordinators.
SELF ASSESSMENT AND DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS

Self Assessment

Each IA is asked to complete a self evaluation at the end of the semester (see attached). The Faculty Supervisor and/or course instructor will do the same for each IA. The purpose of the self assessment is to see if expectations and responsibilities were met, to determine your overall grade for your experiential learning course requirements and to provide feedback and suggestions for individual performance and any program needs. You must also satisfy the requirements stated above in the “credit” section of this manual in order to receive full credit. It is important to keep in mind that appointment as an IA is not guaranteed for the following semester or anytime during your UConn career.

Disciplinary Actions

This program is a benefit and a privilege, therefore, it will not be tolerated if any of these rules or privileges are taken advantage of or disregarded. Disciplinary action may include but not be limited to, loss of access to the ARC, grade reduction and may result in termination of your responsibilities as an IA.

CONCLUSION

As an IA, you are a valuable resource for the Department of Linguistics and for students who choose to study ASL or Deaf and interpreting related courses. This manual has been designed to answer frequently asked questions, discuss policies, procedures and expectations regarding the tutorial program.
INSTRUCTIONAL ASSISTANT
SELF ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION

Instructional Assistant Name: ____________________________________________________________

Course: ___________________________________ Semester: _____________________________

This form is to be completed separately by the IA and the Faculty Supervisor and/or course instructor at the end of the semester. Please also include comments, ideas, and suggestions on the back of this form. How would you rate yourself for the following attributes:

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<th>Needs Significant Improvement</th>
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<td>Prepared</td>
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<td>Able to tutor at appropriate level</td>
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<td>Available to work with students</td>
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</table>
How were you most effective as an IA?

What areas do you feel you can improve upon?

What suggestions would you like to make, if any, to improve the service provided to students?

What grade would you give yourself, and why?

Please make any additional comments if desired?

Comments from IA Coordinator, course instructor and/or Faculty Supervisor:
Agreement Form
for
Instructional Assistants

I understand that as a student of the University of Connecticut that I am responsible for upholding the University’s Community Standards and appropriate student behavior: http://community.uconn.edu/the-student-code-preamble/

I have read and understood the Student Policy on Sexual Harassment and Misconduct, Student Policy on Alcohol and Illegal Drugs and Rules of Student Confidentiality). http://policy.uconn.edu/2015/12/29/policy-against-discrimination-harassment-and-related-interpersonal-violence/

I have read and understood the provisions of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act (FERPA). http://ferpa.uconn.edu/

I have read and understood the netiquette. https://onlinestudent.uconn.edu/netiquette/

I have read and understood the policies stated in the Instructional Assistant Manual.

I understand that my performance as an IA will be monitored and evaluated.

I understand the appointment of this position is for the following semester(s): _________

I, ________________________________, hereby state that I have reviewed / received and understand the policies governing the tutoring program, and agree to all the conditions and requirements stated therein.

_________________________________________  ________________________
(Signature)                                  (Date)
Contract for ASLN 3292 Experiential Learning

Undergraduate experiential learning requires students to provide tutorial support and assistance to faculty as Instructional Assistants for students enrolled in courses within the ASL Studies Program. Responsibilities and requirements for this opportunity are detailed in the Instructional Assistant Manual. IAs are required to complete the Instructional Assistant Self-Assessment and Evaluation at the completion of the course in order to receive a grade and credit.

Instructional Assistant Name:_________________________________________________

Email: ________________________________________________________________

Cell Phone: ____________________________________________________________

Semester: ______________________________________________________________

Faculty Supervisor: Sherry Powell
Department of Linguistics, U-1145
University of Connecticut
Storrs, CT 06269-1145
Department Office: 860-486-4229
sherry.powell@uconn.edu

IA Responsibilities: Refer to IA Manual

Grading Policy/Requirements: Refer to IA Manual

Hours per week: _______________________________________________________

Days and Times: _______________________________________________________

Units of Credit: _______________________________________________________

Note: This contract must be completed and signed by all parties by the second week of the semester.

Signature of Student: __________________________________________________

Signature Faculty Supervisor: _____________________________________________