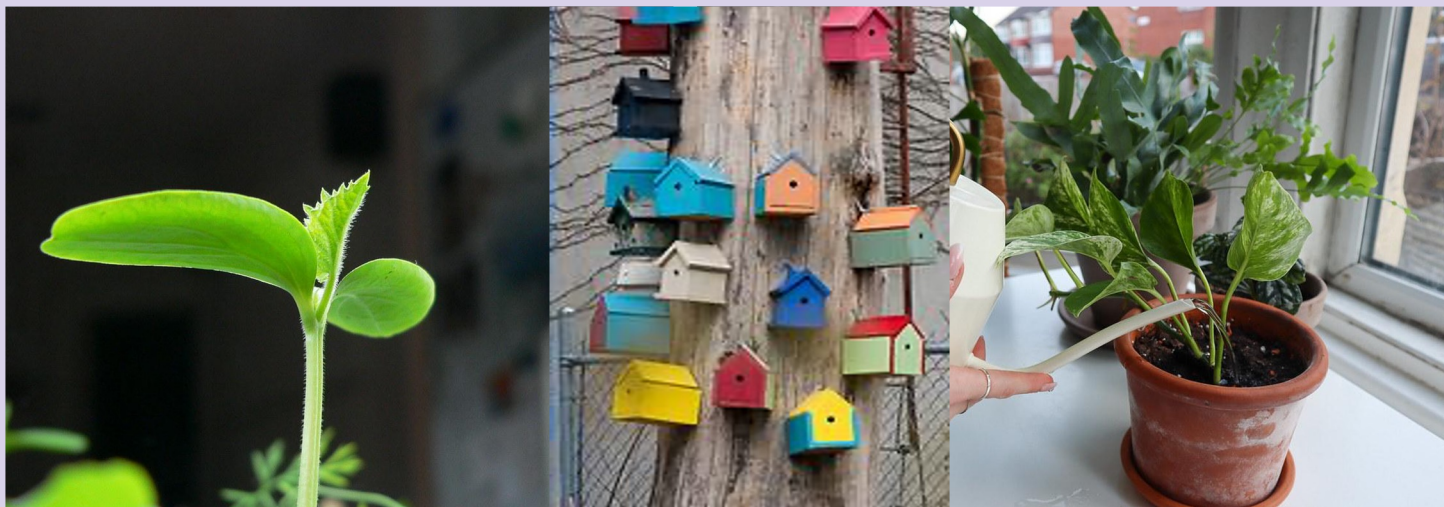


TA Training CoP

Mentorship Programs for TAs



Session Workbook

November 2023



Questions to Consider when developing a Mentorship Program:

- Why do I need a Mentorship Program? (What are the **intended outcomes**?)
- What should the **program look like**?
 - Structure/Process
 - Duration (start and end time)
 - Activities you want mentors and mentees to engage in
- Who will be the **mentors** and **mentees**?
- How do you **recruit Mentors** (i.e. Senior TAs)?
- What kinds of **training opportunities** can you provide for your mentors?
- How do you encourage Mentee participation? What kinds of **incentives** can you provide?
- How do you check-in on their **progress** throughout the term? And assess program **impact**?
- **Anything else?**

Aligning TA Needs to Your Mentorship Program

1. Consider the tasks that TAs in your discipline do (**grading, teaching, dealing with students, etc.**)
1. Think about who is (are) the best person (or people) to provide this support? **Is it their peers** or **other members of the UBC community**?

New TAs (mentees)	
Tasks TAs (may) need Peer Mentorship support for	Tasks TAs (may) need other kinds of mentorship support for (i.e.: from faculty members, UBC staff, etc.)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication with students and instructors • Navigating difficult conversations with students • Leading small-group discussions • Writing constructive feedback on student work • Grading (how to balance efficiency and quality of comments) • Troubleshooting canvas issues • Addressing conflict with instructors • Gaining comfortability interacting with students in classrooms; strategies for increasing student engagement, etc. • Receiving (potentially negative) student feedback • Negotiating with instructors about time allocation • Inequity in a TA team, where one seems to be doing more than others • • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing conflicts • Recommendations to sensitive campus services (Centre for Accessibility, etc.) • Applying for course related grants, awards • Supporting students with different needs • • Addressing grade complaints from students, academic misconduct, plagiarism • Professional development/career guidance • Workplace related issues (union as a point of contact) • Common accommodations and how to support

What do you need to do in the program to address the tasks/needs you have written above...

Collaborate with other university entities (e.g., CUPE, Centre for Accessibility) to provide resources or activities outside the peer-to-peer scope

Use role play or case studies to show examples of and/or practice managing difficult conversations with students or instructors

Discuss strategies for speaking with course instructor/other TAs or students (when there is a conflict)

Draft or revise a time allocation plan together

Collaborate on creating a lesson plan for discussion groups based on course readings etc.

Compile a document with common issues and suggested solutions for more consistent approaches/support/skills (like an SOP).

Seek faculty input and feedback.

Setting up TA Mentorship Programs

GROUP 1 - Observing classroom teaching activities (teaching, leading discussions etc)

Let's think about elements/components/**building blocks** of a mentorship program...
What are some of your "**must haves**"?

LOGISTICS

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

Identify mentors and mentees-how?

How would an observation take place? Mentor attends a class? Instructor permission?

How many times are they meeting?

Are there official check-ins? E.g., mentors meet together?

How are results reported? E.g., formal report back from mentor/mentees?

Closing the relationship between mentor/mentee

Will mentor role be compensated? Through TA training program or their TA hours?

Duration? Hours? Start and end dates?

Support for mentors

Documentation of observation? Training manuals?

Is there a pipeline to move from mentee to mentor? Repeat mentors

Record keeping. What is being kept and by who, for how long, where?

MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

How to match mentor and mentee (e.g., compatibility, expertise)

What are parameters for giving feedback-in and out of scope?

Troubleshooting relationships (e.g., someone not available, not getting along)

How will we collect feedback on the program?

How will feedback be shared with mentor and by who (the mentee? Other?)

Determine the goals of the mentee

How will feedback be given to mentee?

When would a mentor step-in during an observation?

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

Meeting between mentor and mentee to review goals

Invitation to become a mentor or mentee?

3. Mentee leads a discussion/mentor observes

1. Mentee visit the mentor's class to observe good teaching

Celebration with all mentors and mentees at end

Feedback survey for both mentors and mentees to program organizers

Is it mandatory? voluntary?

Training for mentors

4. Debrief activity immediately after the observation

2. Collaborate on designing a lesson plan that mentee will deliver

Who will have access to feedback given to mentees?

ACTIVITIES

Setting up TA Mentorship Programs

GROUP 2 - Marking Support

Let's think about elements/components/**building blocks** of a mentorship program...
What are some of your "**must haves**"?

LOGISTICS

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

Advertising/R ecruitment	Pairing mentees/mentors (e.g., discipline specific, 1 vs 2 terms, type of marking)	Planning events	Facilitating activities (e.g., individual meetings)	Evaluation of the program	Planning wrap up
Needs assessment (e.g., type of marking)	Evaluating commitment to the program	Check-in	Collaborators (e.g., faculty/staff involvement)	Retaining mentors and mentees (e.g., mentee to mentor pipeline)	Ensuring funding/resou rces for following year (s)

MENTOR-MENTEE RELATIONSHIPS

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

Facilitate initial meeting	Establishing communication, expectations, goals	Evaluation of support/com munication	Incentives for mentor/mentee (e.g., gift cards)	Providing space for continued communication (e.g., group chat)	Wrap up social event
Reviewing assignments/ marking	Pairing of mentors/ment ees	Observation of mentor/mentee (e.g., participation, presentations)	Provide space social activities	Feedback for pairing	Incentive/cele bration (e.g., certificate)

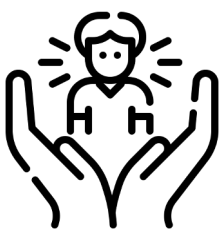
ACTIVITIES

Start of the program

During the program

End of the program

Introductions, ice breakers	Workshop? (e.g., equitable marking)	Collaborative marking sessions	Preparing for end-of-term summative assessments	Marking final assessments	Wrap up feedback event
Group guidelines (e.g., communication, expectations)	Mentor panel?	Workshop? (e.g., marking participation, providing written feedback)	Answering tough questions from students	Exam Invigilation support	Mentee panel?



Developing a Mentorship Program

GROUP 1

TA Needs

What exactly do your TAs need support for? (i.e: how to do X task? How to improve on X task? Receive feedback on x task? etc.)

To design and deliver an effective lesson plan, including ways to engage students in discussions

When is a good time for your TAs to receive that support? (when in the academic year/during their TAship)

Earlier in the term would allow to receive feedback and implement it.

The Structure of your Mentorship Program

Who will be the mentors? How will they be selected? (application? Recommendation? etc)

Hired as senior TAs with incentive such as paid role, letter of recognition.

Ask instructors/faculty for recommendations.

Which courses need mentors? Stats, lab courses need specific skill set.

Who will be mentees? Is it voluntary? Is it required for all courses? Specific courses?

In stats-all new TAs have a TA trainer/mentor observe labs and give feedback (using a form, e.g., clear speaking)

What would be the role of Mentor?

Stats has 3-4 mentors each year, selected. Mentees are assigned to mentors.

Role is observation with advice and check in during term 2 to see how implementation went.

What should happen as part of this program: Events(s)? Activities(s)? Meeting(s)? Observation(s)? Follow-up(s)

General TA orientation/introduce mentorship, they arrange observations and feedback. End-of-year celebration.

What will be the format of the above (meeting(s), Obs, etc.): online? Face 2 face? Email? Formal? Informal?

Face-to-face informal meetings with formality only for the observation.

What should happen in the meetings/communication?

What are the boundaries of this mentorship relationship (What will be the focus and what shouldn't happen in meetings, communication?) - (i.e.: focus on grading and not other TA tasks)

The observation form keeps the mentors/mentees on track re what to focus on.

Focus on teaching.

Emotional support/stress concerns are outside the program-refer.

Time commitment: How many mentees per mentor?; Total time commitment per mentor-mentee; Duration and how often for each component of the program (if there are several components such as meetings and observations)

Depends on funding. Stats-3-4 mentors have about 10 mentees each.

Training/Support/Compensation for Mentors

What kinds of training and/or support will be provided for Mentors?

How will you incentivize and/or compensate mentors?

Allocate hours to mentors and mentees and determine compensation. Define specific # of hours for each. E.g., pre-observation, observation, post-observation.



Developing a Mentorship Program

GROUP 2

TA Needs

What exactly do your TAs need support for? (i.e: how to do X task? How to improve on X task? Receive feedback on x task? etc.)

How to improve marking in terms of fairness and effective feedback across written, presentation, and participation domains?

When is a good time for your TAs to receive that support? (when in the academic year/during their TAship)

Throughout their TAship (types of support may differ throughout the year)

The Structure of your Mentorship Program

Who will be the mentors? How will they be selected? (application? Recommendation? etc)

Senior TAs, those that have completed teaching workshops. Selection may vary by faculty, but low-barrier (e.g., volunteer) recommended.

What would be the role of Mentor?

Meet with and provide support for mentees. Observe mentees and provide feedback.

What should happen as part of this program: Events(s)? Activities(s)? Meeting(s)? Observation(s)? Follow-up(s)

Workshops to provide base knowledge/training (e.g., equitable marking, providing written feedback). Regular meetings between mentor/mentees to discuss marking. Observation of mentor/mentee and follow up for marking certain activities (e.g., presentations, participation). Collaborative marking.

What will be the format of the above (meeting(s), Obs, etc.): online? Face 2 face? Email? Formal? Informal?

In-person where possible. Formal kick offs, workshops, wrap up. Mostly informal collaborative marking meetings at the discretion of the mentor/mentee.

What should happen in the meetings/communication?

Identifying challenges with grading and working through them. Providing feedback.

What are the boundaries of this mentorship relationship (What will be the focus and what shouldn't happen in meetings, communication?) - (i.e.: focus on grading and not other TA tasks)

Focus on marking and evaluation; however, the mentorship may provide support for other TA challenges/experiences. Know when to refer to other resources.

Time commitment: How many mentees per mentor?; Total time commitment per mentor-mentee; Duration and how often for each component of the program (if there are several components such as meetings and observations)

Depending on interest/experience of the mentor/domain of mentor, could have small groups of 2-3 mentees for each mentor. Mentor may not be required to meet all mentees as a group (e.g., could be 1-on-1) depending on needs.
Estimated time commitment: 5 - 10 hours over the semester. For collaborative marking, suggest minimum of two sessions, but may be dependent on course. For observation, may be course dependent, but suggest 1 observation of a relevant activity (e.g., presentation, participation)

Training/Support/Compensation for Mentors

What kinds of training and/or support will be provided for Mentors?

Community of Practice. Training may be provided via workshops, but will depend on needs identified by mentors.

How will you incentivize and/or compensate mentors?

Providing an honorarium, professional development (e.g., formal certificate of completion), food at events :)

How will you evaluate your program?

Pre/post assessment. Evaluate whether mentors/mentees reached established goals. Participation/attendance for events and meetings.

Getting granular about logistics: **Dos and Don'ts**

Considerations	Dos	Don'ts
Recruiting and pairing mentors and mentees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - highlight the benefits of participating - pair mentors and mentees based on area of teaching - Encourage mentees to become future mentors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - no requirements for mentors - Pair mentees/mentors without consideration for their common experiences (courses/assignment types).
Encouraging reflection & feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide a form or rubric to guide reflection and feedback - Make feedback reflective of needs (identified by participants) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't leave it open to interpretation
Checking in on the progress the mentor-mentee pairs have made during the program (evaluation)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Make it predictable e.g., "you will give feedback every month" or just at the end - schedule check-in times in advance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't have mentors submit formal report to faculty, staff in your unit about the mentee (Keep process confidential)
Providing incentives and compensation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide appropriate compensation for the amount of effort (e.g., multiple mentees; hours of commitment) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Don't penalize prospective mentors who choose not to participate.