

Physics & Astronomy

Teaching Assistant Professional Development Program

TAPD Facilitators (2012/2013)

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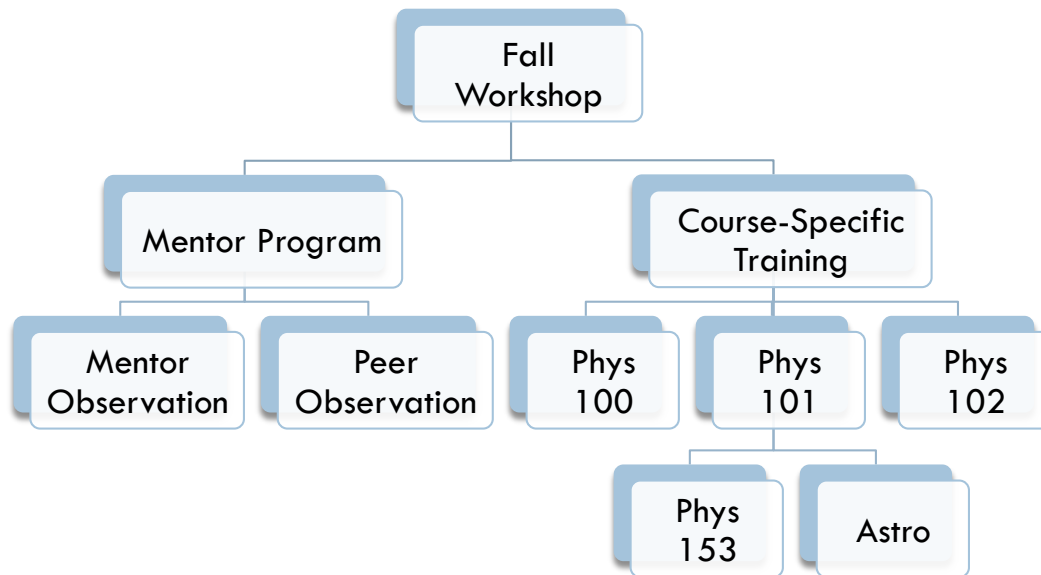
All training information, including module slideshows can be
found at:

www.phas.ubc.ca/~phys_ta

Program Overview

For New TAs

For Senior TAs



Workshop
Development

Peer Review
Training

Culture &
Diversity
Training

Peer
Mentoring

Formative
Evaluation
from Trainees

Peer
Observation

Skills & Competencies for new TAs

Fall Workshop

- Socratic questioning
- Formative evaluation
- Learning goals
- Presentation practice
- Culture & diversity

Course-Specific Training

- Marking
- Presenting particular labs/tutorials
- Ongoing support & follow-up

Mentor Program

- In-situ feedback
- Deliberate practice
- Reflection
- Ongoing support & follow-up

Skills & Competencies for senior TAs

Coordinators

- Fall workshop development & delivery
- Facilitation of all TAPD programs
- Funding & budget
- Peer mentoring
- Culture & diversity training
- Gather feedback throughout the term

Head TAs

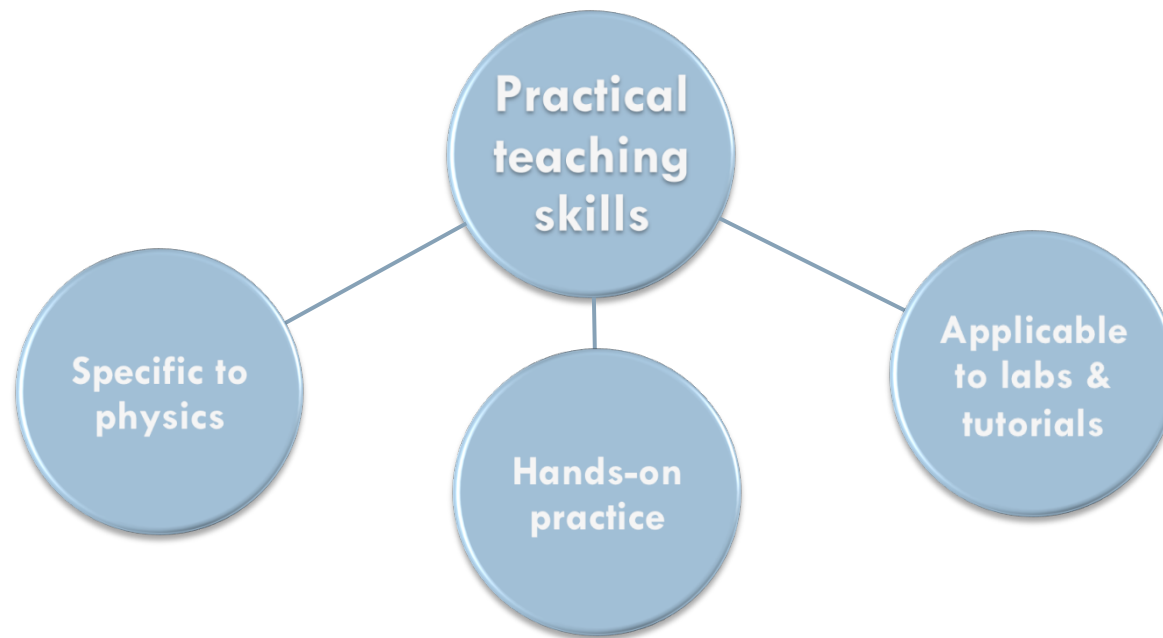
- Development & delivery of course-specific training
- Peer mentoring
- Course administration & development
- Receive feedback through final surveys
- Culture & diversity training

Mentors

- Peer review training
- Mentoring & role model experience
- Observing other teaching styles
- Culture & diversity training
- Receive feedback from observations & discussions

Course-Wide Core Workshop

- Developed by graduate students for graduate students
- The workshop is a paid mandatory training for all new TAs
- All graduate courses are cancelled for the duration of the workshop to ensure participation



Core Workshop

Module 1

From Learning to Teaching

TAs explore their own positive and negative learning experiences to determine the important aspects of teaching

- Effectively sets the stage for later modules by demonstrating the difference between learner-centred and teacher-centred learning
- Serves as an ice-breaker and sets a tone of open dialogue for the rest of the workshop

Core Workshop

Module 2

Teaching by Questioning

TAs watch and critique recordings of real TA-student interactions and imagine what they would do if they stepped in and took over

- Introduces the use of Socratic questioning techniques in the classroom
- Videos are from the University of Maryland PER group

Core Workshop

Module 3

Learning Goals in the Lab

TAs discuss learning goals and their role in the lab setting. They are given the opportunity to examine a sample lab from a first year physics course and develop a proper set of learning goals for it.

- Motivate the importance of learning goals in a lab or classroom setting for both *teaching* and *learning* purposes
- TAs learn how to make their learning goals specific, measurable and attainable.

Core Workshop

Module 4

Course-Specific Training

TAs attend a training session specific to the course they will TA in the upcoming semester. The training is coordinated by the courses' Head-TA(s) and provides all the necessary tools and training TAs will need to comfortably lead their first lab or tutorial.

- Allows TAs to practice delivering a properly structured introduction to their peers
- Provides a platform for receiving and giving constructive feedback and evaluation
- Focuses on skills specific to courses, such as marking, working with large groups, and problem solving

Core Workshop

Module 5

Formative Evaluation

TAs learn effective techniques for obtaining constructive feedback from students

- Highlights the different roles of feedback in the classroom, such as
 - ▣ Improving one's performance as a TA
 - ▣ Assessing the students' understanding as new concepts are introduced
- Refers to techniques and questionnaires that TAs have already seen and participated in throughout the workshop

Core Workshop

Module 6

Creating inclusive classrooms

TAs explore the impact of their identity/culture on their teaching and learning experiences and discuss sensitive situations presented via several case-studies.

- Fosters an open and interactive environment ideal for discussion of complex gender and diversity issues
- Focuses on issues that could be encountered in a classroom, which are relevant to the TA positions

Note: TAs in leadership roles also receive formal training from the Center for Inter-Cultural Communication (CIC) so that diversity can be incorporated into all elements of the training program

Ongoing Course-Specific Training



Head TAs also have the opportunity to:

- Conduct optional workshops later in the term to:
 - ▣ Help refine new TAs' teaching techniques
 - ▣ Address any issues that may have arisen since the fall workshop
- Assist the course instructor with course development
- Facilitate communication between the TAs and the instructor

Note: Head TA duties vary widely depending on the nature of the course

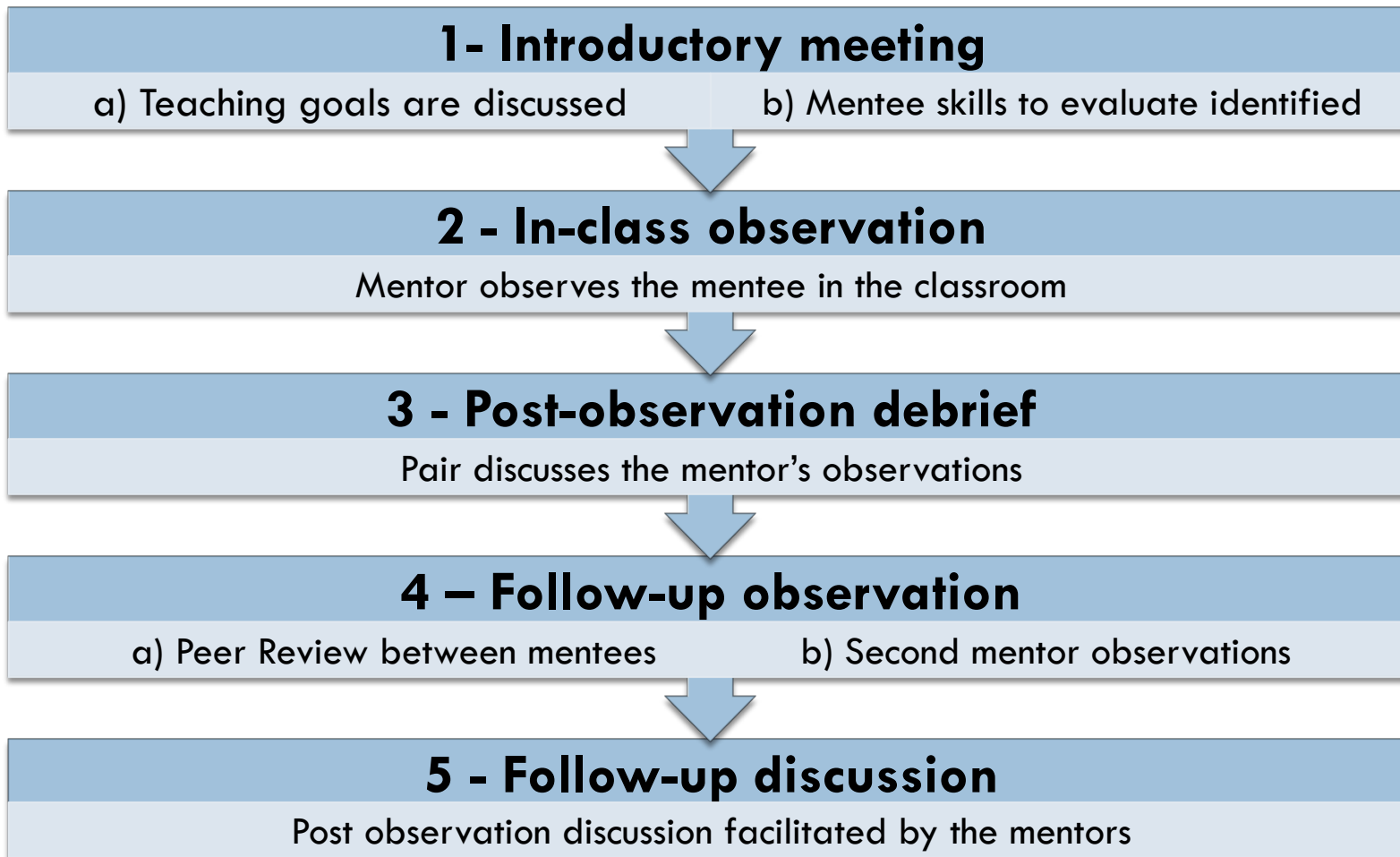
Mentor TA program



Each new TA is paired with a single Mentor TA for the duration of the fall term, and participates in a series of peer-review sessions.

- All mentors participate in a peer review training session offered by the Center for Teaching Learning and Technology (CTLT)
- The program is facilitated by a Mentor Coordinator whose main responsibilities are to:
 - communicate with and support the mentors
 - coordinate the pairing of mentors with mentees
 - act as a liaison with the TA Training Facilitators

Mentor Program Overview



Changes in 2012



- **Course Specific Training:**
 - ▣ New Head TA positions to more extensively cover first-year courses in both semesters
 - ▣ Address issues of buy-in from all TAs (new and returning) to participate in course-specific training
- **Core workshop:**
 - ▣ Develop a “Job Overview” module including a presentation from a CUPE 2278 representative
 - ▣ TA Handbook will be developed to provide TAs with resources, clear job descriptions, teaching techniques and management skills

Changes in 2012 cont'd



- Mentor Program:
 - Require two sets of observations (the second of which is either by a peer or the mentor TA)
- Other:
 - Create new TA teaching award
 - Facilitate rigorous hiring process
 - Develop regular brown-bag lunch sessions for graduate students to discuss teaching issues