
Fall 2023 – FYS 101 & TRNS 201

Instructor Position Description

Instructors serve as facilitators of the curriculum designed by First-Year Programs (FYP), while infusing their own style and spin on various topics and activities. These courses serve as an introduction of the Volunteer experience for new first-year and transfer students. Instructors have the unique opportunity to spend time with a cohort of new students, and provide in-depth support as they transition to UT.

Instructors are invaluable to the success of each class section including the experience of our new students, and FYP is dedicated to their development to ensure their success within the classroom.

In addition to the required application, accepted applicants must also complete an instructor contract, which includes the official approval of the applicant's direct supervisor. The application only takes a few minutes to complete, and can be found at <https://fyp.utk.edu/instructors-application/>.

Seminar Outcomes

If you have never taught FYS 101 or TRNS 201 at UT, we encourage you to review the current course outcomes (some may change as a curriculum review is underway):

- Gain an understanding of one's strengths and how to apply them
- Understand the concept of well-being and how to apply it to academic success
- Demonstrate intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cultural competence and empathy towards self and others
- Understand learning science and apply them to academic, career, and personal success goals
- Demonstrate the ability to set goals, how to achieve those goals and show agency/self-advocacy

Course Details

All sections of FYS 101 are assigned by academic major or designated population. By applying, applicants agree to be assigned based on need. If applicants want to be assigned to a specific population, there will be an option to share that within the application. Other logistics include:

- Course meets once per week for one hour
- Many sections take place between 8:00-9:00 AM or 2:00-5:00 PM
- Sections include a capacity range of typically 20-30 students

Instructor Qualifications

All instructors must meet the following qualifications:

- Full-time, Exempt status at UT
- Master's Degree
- Graduate Teaching Assistant (with the approval of the department)
 - GTAs cannot receive additional payment, so their time spent as an instructor would need to fall within their allotted work hours
 - The appointment must be GTA (not GA)

NOTE: If you're unsure of your "Exempt" status, please talk to your supervisor prior to submitting an application. FYP will be verifying all applicants meet these qualifications.

Instructor Responsibilities and Requirements

All instructors, as part of their role and compensation must consistently complete the following responsibilities and requirements:

- Attend all course meetings (14 sessions)
 - See "Class Cancellation Policy" for additional details
- Communicate weekly with assigned Peer Mentor (if applicable)
- Utilize course Syllabus and Instructor Guide for all sessions
 - This includes deciding what content to use during flexible weeks (details to be provided in syllabus)
 - Options to be provided by FYP and accompanying college/departments
- Follow the instructor development policy
 - See "Development Requirements" for additional details
- Consistently utilize Canvas for assignments, grades, and announcements
- Consistently submit grades via Canvas and complete necessary steps to finalize grades at the end of the semester by Registrar deadlines

Instructor Development

To support a consistent and effective experience for instructors, Peer Mentors, and our new students, an instructor development plan will be included as part of the role requirements and compensation.

The goal of these development opportunities is to decrease the amount of time instructors have to spend preparing for each class session. Instructors will leave each session with a hands-on understanding of the various lessons and activities included in the curriculum.

An overview of the development plan consists of:

Phase 1: Both required

- Instructor Kick-Off
 - April 27 (11:00-12:30)
- Session 1 (only required to attend one)
 - July 26 (9:00-4:00)
 - August 10 (9:00-4:00)

Phase 2: Only required to attend one

- September 15 (12:00-2:00)
- September 29 (12:00-2:00)

FYP will provide additional alternative development opportunities throughout the semester. More details to come.

If you are unable to attend any of the required development opportunities, but are still interested in applying to be an instructor, please contact Stephanie Caplan (scaplan1@utk.edu).

Compensation

The breakdown of compensation for instructors is as follows:

Completing all responsibilities and requirements of instructor position = **\$1,700**

Completing all instructor development requirements = **\$300**

TOTAL = \$2,000

****Failure to complete the instructor development requirements may result in receiving \$1,700 instead of full amount**

Instructors have the option to receive payment via direct deposit OR as a department transfer. This is determined on the instructor contract. The goal is for payment to be submitted to instructors for the November paycheck.

Class Cancellation Policy

We understand there may be times throughout the semester where instructors are unable to make it to their class.

If instructors need to cancel a class session, we encourage they:

- Attempt to find an existing instructor who is able/willing to be a substitute
- Communicate with their section and provide alternative work for that week

Instructors should cancel no more than **two class sessions**. If there is a need to cancel more than two throughout the semester, they must contact FYP beforehand to coordinate alternative arrangements.

Canceling more than two class sessions throughout a semester may result in:

- Removal of instructor position
- A decrease in compensation received

NOTE: Asking a Peer Mentor or colleague to lead an entire class session is not acceptable. Peer Mentors may facilitate lessons, with the instructor present.

FAQs

What if I miss a training session during Phase 2?

That is okay! FYP will provide alternative development opportunities to ensure all instructors have the opportunity to learn and feel comfortable facilitating each course session/activity.

What if I cannot attend all of the required trainings?

If you already know in advance that you will not be able to meet the instructor development requirements, but you are still interested in teaching a section, please reach out to FYP before submitting an application. Unfortunately, this may prevent applicants from being accepted as an instructor.

We want, however, to have a conversation first. Please feel free to reach out to FYP.

If I do not meet all of the qualifications, can I co-instruct with a qualified instructor instead?

Unfortunately, those staff members who do not meet the qualifications, are not allowed to participate in these courses as an instructor. This is to ensure consistency across all sections, including the instructor development process.

Am I required to use Peer Mentor?

No. While it's best practice, we understand not all instructors want to use a Peer Mentor for their course. That'll be a question on the application. Note, however, if an instructor chooses not to use a Peer Mentor they will still need to ensure the content facilitated by PMs is being shared with their section. This includes individual meetings with each student throughout the semester.

Can I be assigned to a specific section (Honors, college-specific, etc.) that is in line with my professional role on campus?

Absolutely. While we cannot guarantee it, FYP will do our best to assign instructors to populations based on their professional role. If you are required to lead a course per your role, we of course will ensure you're appropriately matched.

What if I do not currently feel comfortable facilitating some of the topics that are included in the syllabus (Clifton-Strengths, well-being, learning science, etc.)?

That is okay! We don't expect the instructors to be experts, even after they've completed certain development sessions. We can ensure, however, that our development opportunities will be designed to support instructors so they can effectively facilitate each topic regardless of previous experience in certain topics.

Are instructors required to follow the course syllabus?

Yes. The syllabus has been carefully and intentionally designed to ensure both course learning outcomes and goals are being met across all sections. The syllabus does allow for flexible instruction during certain weeks, which gives the instructor the freedom to select other topics to best meet the needs of their section.