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- *Before proceeding, please **read all criteria, instructions, and cost guidelines**, which have recently been updated, at http://vpacademic.ubc.ca/ta-training-programs/.*
- *The application consists of this form. Please expand or contract the question boxes to suit your responses while keeping the overall application to 5 pages or less, or 6 pages if applying for continued funding (in which case the 1-page progress report must be included as the last page of the application). Use Arial font, minimum 10pt size, and single spacing.*
- *Please contact Dr. Shaya Golparian, shaya.golparian@ubc.ca, Educational Developer and TA Development Program Coordinator in the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology, if you have any questions about completing this form.*
- *Please submit applications to Dr. Eric Eich, Vice-Provost and Associate Vice-President Academic Affairs, via email to selina.fast@ubc.ca by 4:30pm on Thursday, March 10th, 2016.*

Date: March 10, 2016

Principal Applicant's Name: Charlyn Black   **Email Address:** charlyn.black@ubc.ca
For administrative purposes, the Principal Applicant should be a member of UBC's faculty or staff. However, students may apply if at least one of the co-applicants listed below is a full-time faculty member.

Name of Faculty and Department: Faculty of Medicine and School of Population and Public Health

Names of Other Applicants (and their affiliations):

This project is: x   A request for continued funding (*Please include the 1-page Progress Report as last page.*)
☐ **New**
☐ **Previously submitted but not funded**

Budget Requested from TA Training Fund 2016/2017: $4226.96
Budget Requested from TA Training Fund 2017/2018: $4226.96

Funding Expected from Other Sources / In Kind 2016-17: $
Funding Expected from Other Sources / In Kind 2017-18: $

	2016/17	2017/18
Total number of graduate students in department/program:	350	350
Anticipated total number of Teaching Assistants	64 positions	65 positions
Anticipated number of new Teaching Assistants	15	15
Anticipated number of Teaching Assistants to be trained	30	30

Questions 1, 2, 3 and/or 4 may be combined if preferred, by a single response that addresses all four questions.

1. **TA Training Program Objective: Please state the competencies that graduate students will be expected to develop through your TA Training Program.** (Replace the example text with your own.)

TA training in the School of Population and Public Health supports TAs in developing some or all of the following competencies, as relevant to their role:
   a) Understand general expectations and responsibilities of the TA role
   b) Be aware of UBC policy on issues such as academic honesty, student conduct, respectful environment, etc.
   c) Effectively use Connect system to host course materials and communicate with students
   d) Function as an effective member of a teaching team, in collaboration with faculty lead
   e) As member of teaching team, provide perspective on learner-centred needs and approaches
   f) Contribute to a positive learning environment
   g) Understand and respond to diverse academic needs of students
   h) Understand how students' cultural backgrounds may influence their views on learning
   i) Facilitate effective collaboration among students
   j) Mark fairly and efficiently, while offering constructive feedback
   k) Increase confidence in performing TA and future teaching roles
   l) Begin to develop a reflective practice related to their role as a TA and in teaching
   m) Develop competencies in areas identified as important by TAs themselves (using needs assessment process)

2. What will the participants in your TA Training program do to help them develop the competencies listed above? (Replace the example text with your own.)

The School of Population and Public Health (SPPH) aims to provide a vibrant and interdisciplinary academic environment through which we can train our students to be leaders in both their professional and academic lives. The school has a wide diversity of programs and students. It currently offers three thesis-based graduate degrees: Master of Science (MSc); Master of Science in Occupational and Environmental Health (MSc OEH) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD). It also offers three non-thesis-based graduate level degrees: Master of Health Administration (MHA), Master of Health Sciences (MHSc), and Master of Public Health (MPH). In addition, we offer a Residency Program in Public Health and Preventive Medicine to train post-graduate medical trainees, and in the past year, have begun to offer a number of undergraduate courses. All of these programs rely on the support of Teaching Assistants (TAs).

In addition to a diversity of programs, SPPH features a number of educational environments in terms of content and format. For example, the MPH program is one of the few graduate programs offered through distributed learning (DL), and the MHA program for full-time professionals is condensed into full-day weekend sessions at the downtown campus, with a strong out-of-class component. This range of teaching formats provides unique opportunities and challenges for our TAs beyond those of traditional classroom-based teaching environments.

Our TA training program is overseen by the Associate Director Education of SPPH; it is led by a senior TA with extensive previous experience in the TA role who has excellent connections with our complement of TAs and with CTLT partners. We have run TA training sessions for many years and try to build on previous successes (please see attached Progress Report) while developing new approaches that meet the needs of both those who are new, as well as those who are continuing in their TA roles.

We have resisted making TA Training Sessions at SPPH mandatory, feeling that doing so creates less of a participatory and communally aligned environment. Given a mix of both new and continuing TAs, together with the diversity of teaching formats, our intent is to develop programming that meets a variety of needs and allows TAs to attend sessions that will most benefit them in meeting their individual and situational needs. To encourage participation, we provide food, and book times using online calendars to allow attendees to pick dates and times that work best to accommodate diverse schedules. Additionally, as noted above, we devote time at the end of each session to check in with attendees to see if there are topics or issues they wish to cover at later sessions, thus increasing their agency within the program. When inviting the TAs to attend sessions, we let them know that they are a form of professional development and intended to support them in their role as TAs. This past year, we made plans to add an additional topic 'Facilitating Discussions in the Classroom', which had been identified by the TAs as an important topic for their development. The discussion was facilitated by CTLT staff and was well attended. In response to TA suggestions that surfaced during the year, we also added one additional session that had not been planned for in our original budget, 'Dealing with difficult student interactions'. The discussion was co-facilitated by our TA Coordinator and CTLT staff and was also well attended. By building options to TA-identified needs, we seek to engage TAs as active participants in contributing to their own professional development.

Our programming includes one *core* workshop at the outset of the academic year that all TAs, both new and continuing, are expected to attend, followed by a series of sessions that address competencies that are required by all or have been identified as important for continuing development. Each session features either presentations by individuals or panels with expertise in the area, followed by small-group discussions and an open question-and-answer period. In response to requests to make programming available to TAs who are unable to be present at sessions, we have also developed other options for attendance.

The first session is aimed at providing an orientation to the role of a TA, and involves small group discussions to identify areas where our TAs would like to have further training. The remaining session topics have not been formalized, and will be modified in response to TA-identified needs, but several topics have provided useful programming in the past and will be used as a basis for our proposed programming over the next two years.

3. TA Training Program Assessment: How will you know that your participants are developing the competencies listed above?

Evaluation of our TA training sessions occurs on a repeated and iterative basis. At the conclusion of each session, participants are asked to complete a short questionnaire that includes a review of the session itself, changes they feel would make it better, and an assessment of whether they learned the expected core competencies set forth in the session outline. Further, we use our peer-learning sessions to engage in an ongoing dialogue with our TAs to see whether they feel the training sessions adequately prepare them for their role within SPPH and where adjustments can be made. This allows us to adjust our curriculum in real time to ensure our TAs have the skills they recognize will help them succeed.

We will also conduct a final survey to ask our TAs to assess how well our programming has helped them develop the core competencies we have developed as program objectives.

4. TA Training Program Timeline.

Event & Description *Please list competencies (from #1 above) to be covered at each event.	Length (hours)	Anticipated Date(s)	Number of Participants
Pre-session: Learning to use *Connect* effectively. *Competencies:* • Effectively use Connect system to host course materials and communicate with students	2 hours per session	Sep 2016 Sep 2017	5 per session
Session 1: Defining roles and responsibilities (mandatory attendance). *Competencies:* • Understand general expectations and responsibilities of the TA role • Be aware of UBC policy on issues such as academic honesty, student conduct, respectful environment, etc.	2 hours per session	Sep 2016 Sep 2017	30 per session
Session 2: Learning the ropes: TA and faculty perspectives on succeeding in your role. *Competencies:* • Function as an effective member of a teaching team, in collaboration with faculty lead • As member of teaching team, provide perspective on learner-centred needs and approaches • Contribute to a positive learning environment • Increase confidence in performing TA and future teaching roles	2 hours per session	Sep 2016 Sep 2017	15 per session
Session 3: Teaching in an online environment. *Competencies:* • Effectively use Connect system to host course materials and communicate with students • Contribute to a positive learning environment • Understand and respond to diverse academic needs of students	2 hours per session	Oct 2016 Oct 2017	10 per session
Session 4: Supporting a diverse student body. *Competencies:* • Understand and respond to diverse academic needs of students • Understand how students' cultural backgrounds may influence their views on learning	2 hours per session	Oct/Nov 2016 Oct/Nov 2017	10 per session
Session 5: Working with peers: Presenting, providing feedback and marking. *Competencies:* • Facilitate effective collaboration with and among students • Mark fairly and efficiently, while offering constructive feedback	2 hours per session	Nov/Dec 2016 Nov/Dec 2017	15 per session
Session 6: Aboriginal perspectives and indigenous cultural safety. *Competencies:* • Understand and respond to diverse academic needs of students • Understand how students' cultural backgrounds may influence their views on learning	2 hours per session	Jan 2017 Jan 2018	10 per session
Optional Session(s): e.g. Facilitating discussions, Dealing with difficult student interactions. *Competencies:* • Increase confidence in performing TA and future teaching roles • Begin to develop a reflective practice related to their role as a TA and in teaching • Develop competencies in areas identified as important by TAs themselves (using needs assessment process)	2 hours per session	Feb/Mar 2017 Feb/Mar 2018	10 per session
Reflection and Wrap-up Session. Share experience and celebrate TA contributions. Reflect on, and evaluate aspects of TA program. Identify options for program improvement.	2 hours per session	April 2017 April 2018	15 per session

5. **Do the courses in which your TAs will be working engage directly with Aboriginal history, cultures, or systems of knowledge as part of the curriculum?** Some **YES** _____ **NO**

SPPH is committed to becoming a leader in education related to Aboriginal health and healthcare, and is the home of UBC's Center for Excellence in Aboriginal Health. We believe that TAs need to know how to approach teaching public health from an Aboriginal perspective in a culturally safe way.

As part of a school-wide approach, current TAs working in courses that deal directly with Aboriginal issues actively engage with Aboriginal Elders both inside and outside the classroom settings. Courses recognize, explain and adhere to OCAP guidelines pertaining to Aboriginal health and health research. Given our focus on Aboriginal health and our increasing numbers of Aboriginal students, we also will continue to run a specific TA training session pertaining specifically to Aboriginal perspectives (see above).

6. **What kinds of social and cultural diversity will your TAs encounter in the classroom and curriculum?**

One of SPPH's strengths is its extremely diverse student body in terms of age (mature students), nationality, first language, and academic and professional trainings (e.g. physicians, researchers, healthcare professionals, etc.). Many of our TAs are from and/or conduct their graduate research within other communities and countries, which we see as key to building a successful learning environment. We prepare our TAs for teaching in this multicultural environment in two key ways. First, through peer-learning sessions we work to create a level of institutional knowledge to prepare our TAs for these encounters before they happen. These sessions also create a network among TAs where they can go to each other for support. Secondly, we run specific training sessions (see above) in which both TAs and UBC professional staff explore the unique perspectives and potential issues faced by culturally diverse students and resources available to help both TAs and their students.

7. **Are you involving senior TAs in your TA Training program? If so, how?**

SPPH hires a very experienced student to serve as the TA coordinator to run the TA training program. This role involves networking with other TAs, and building a community of practice where TAs can share perspective and learn from each other, in addition to learning from faculty members who they wish to involve in their training. We believe that this model supports a TA-focused agenda agenda of professional development.

8. **How were TAs in your department/program consulted in the development of this proposal? How will TAs be involved in the development and delivery of the TA Training program?**

After each training session, our TA attendees are given the opportunity to suggest new topics they wish to explore in future sessions and where current ones can be made more effective. We also discuss the training sessions with our TAs during the peer-learning and yearly wrap-up sessions to allow them a direct hand in the design and implementation of the program. Further, each year we hire one of our experienced TAs to serve as the coordinator for the training program. In concert with the Associate Director of the school and the program managers of each stream, this student sets up and facilitates each training session. We believe that the inclusion of this "Senior TA" position is crucial as it provides a direct link and level of accountability between the network of TAs at SPPH and the teaching faculty and administration.

9. **When was the last time you did a needs assessment of TAs and Faculty members in your department? How have you incorporated the results of that needs assessment in your TA Training?**

We conduct needs assessments at the outset of each academic year, as well as at wrap-up sessions at the end of each academic year. In addition, we ask for ideas about programming content that would benefit TAs at each session and build in opportunities for flexible and responsive programming.

10. **Support units contacted/consulted:**

We have well established contacts with a number of individuals at a wide variety of support units, including CTLT, the TA Union, UBC Writing Centre, the Access and Diversity Centre, Early Alert, the Centre for Excellence in Aboriginal Health, and the First Nations Health Authority.

11. **What has changed in the structure of your program over the past two years? What were the changes based on and what are the results of those changes?**

Our basic structure has not changed dramatically, but our ability to respond to TA-identified needs with specific programming has improved over the past two years.

12. Other information

N/A

13. Total Budget

Include detailed information on salaries and benefits, supplies, equipment. Indicate funds carried forward from 2015/16 and any funding from other sources, including in-kind support (value not required for in-kind support).

Description	Cost Breakdown	Requested from 2016-17 TA Training Fund	Requested from 2017-18 TA Training Fund	Amounts from other sources, and/or carryover from 2015/16
TA TRAINING SESSIONS				
Facilitation	7 sessions x 4 hours @ $40 per hour In-kind: 20 hours	1120.00	1120.00	
Web/videoconferencing to support remote access	9 sessions x 2 hours (120 minutes @ 3.9 cents per minute = 46.80 per session per Med IT estimate)	421.20	421.20	
Gifts for presenters	10 x $20	120.00	120.00	
Catering (food & drink)	Based on attendance in 2015-16, assume catering costs for 100 total attendees (80 TAs and 20 presenters/facilitators) @ $12 each	1200.00	1200.00	
PROGRAM COORDINATION				
Salary	Graduate TA 40 hours @ $31.04 per hour	1241.60	1241.60	
Benefits	(10% as per application guideline)	124.16	124.16	
CARRYOVER FROM 2015-16				53.44
Totals:		$4226.96	$4226.96	$53.44

_____ Mar 10/16   _____

Principal Applicant's Signature and Date   Department Head's Signature and Date

Please limit application to 5 pages or less. (Exception: Proposals for continued funding require an additional 1-page report, for a maximum of 6 pages.). The Committee will not consider any additional material and may decline to review a proposal that is longer than the specified length.

Successful proposals may be posted to the TA Training Programs website for the purpose of transparency and information sharing.

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PROGRESS REPORT on 2015/16 TA Training Program

Principal Applicant's Name: Gary Poole	**Email Address:** gpoole@mail.ubc.ca
Name of Faculty: Medicine	**Department/School/Program:** SPPH

1. **Number of TAs who were expected to be trained in 2015/16:** 30

   Actual number of TAs trained to date in 2015/16: 28

2. **Describe actions, events, activities that have occurred so far.**

A total of 9 events have been held to date, including:
General TA orientation
Connect training sessions (x2)
Succeeding as a TA: Faculty and TA perspectives
Supporting a diverse student body
Working with peers: Feedback and marking
Aboriginal perspectives and indigenous cultural safety
Building institutional knowledge
Dealing with difficult TA interactions (this was a special additional session requested by TAs)

3. **Program Assessment and Areas for Improvement**

Program design was built on assessment activities from previous years and a needs assessment was conducted at the orientation in Sept 21, 2015 to identify times when most TAs could attend, preference for session topics, and choice in relation to presentation or workshop formats. After each session, feedback forms were collected either in paper form or via an electronic survey:

- Ratings of value and usefulness from those completing feedback forms average close to 90%, with the greatest diversity of responses in relation to the Indigenous Cultural Safety workshop.
- We canvassed suggestions for improvement with every feedback request and attempted to balance the (sometimes competing) feedback in relation to content, session length, and presentation format.

The greatest challenge identified this year was motivating busy TAs to attend and finding times where they were able to come. Overall we delivered sessions to 28 unique TAs in the different sessions. Including repeat attendees, there were 81 instances of TA attendance. Faculty and staff also attended some sessions. We experimented with a variety of remote-access technologies including Conference call, Skype, and sending materials and reports by e-mail, which helped to increase attendance.

In relation to areas for improvement, suggestions to: 1) continue to support remote access options for next year; 2) build greater awareness of the program with Faculty, as few TAs reported that they were encouraged to attend as part of their TA duties.

4. **Budget Reconciliation**

   Funding Allocation for 2015/16: $3122.00   **Expenditures to Date* :** $2069.07

Item	Cost Breakdown	$ Granted	$ Spent	$ Anticipated further spending by June 30, 2016	$ Balance
TA training sessions	Facilitation (7 sessions x 4 hours x $36 per hour = $1008)	1,100.00	632.17	300.00	167.83
	Presenter Gifts	200.00	120.00	0	80.00
	Catering	737.32	552.52	164.00	20.80
	Sub-total TA training sessions	**2037.32**	**1304.69**	**464.00**	**268.63**
Program coordination	Salary 36 hours @ $32.73/h (orig budget @ $30.13)	1084.68	687.33 (21 hours)	490.95 (15 hours)	-93.60
	Benefits (not in orig budget)	0.00	77.05	44.54	-121.59
	Sub-total program coordination	**1084.68**	**764.38**	**535.49**	**-215.19**
TOTAL		**3122.00**	**2069.07**	**999.49**	**$53.44**