Teaching Associate (TO) Job Description- Spring 2017
RAP General Education Course Instructor

Name of Instructor__________________________________________________________

Course Name______________________________________________________________

Introduction: RAP courses provide the framework for first-year college students to master course content, cultivate academic skills and develop valuable relationships with instructors and peers.

The general mission of RAP is to foster student success and satisfaction academically, personally and socially, while increasing retention and student progress toward graduation.

The primary goals of RAP are to:
- Support first-year students in achieving a smooth transition to college life.
- Ensure first-year students are aware of the multitude of resources and opportunities.
- Promote the General Education curriculum goals, with a focus developing an awareness and appreciation for the specific skills (inquiry and analysis, problem solving, critical and creative thinking, etc.) that are found in all Gen Ed courses.
- Introduce students to the skills embedded in the Integrative Experience (IE) requirement – specifically the practice of reflecting (thinking about, talking and/or writing about) and making connections between courses and life experience in order to deepen engagement, understanding and to increase the value of their college education.
- Provide first-year students with structured guidance in the development/advancement of various skills necessary to be successful in their college experience and be prepared to be engaged members of a global community upon graduation.

Qualifications:
- Member of the UMass Amherst community
- Experience working with first-year college students or willingness to participate in training
- Mastery of content/consent of department

Specific Instructor Responsibilities:
Curriculum PLUS: (refer to syllabus template documents for examples)
- Follow the departmental curriculum for the course.
- Understand and adhere to campus policies and procedures. Links to campus policies and regulations: Dean of Students Office and Office of the Registrar.
- Integrate intentional dialogue about Gen Ed skills into the class.
- Integrate intentional dialogue about RAP goals into the class.

Methods:
- Engage students in conversation and/or activities that require them to articulate their expectations for this small course experience offered through RAP.
- Establish a dynamic classroom environment that supports first-year students in achieving a smooth transition to the college life (encouragement of asking questions, speaking out in class, utilizing technology opportunities such as Moodle discussion, sharing experiences, small group and/or individual activities and/or projects, etc.).
- Provide written feedback to students regarding their academic progress on a regular basis (especially prior to the ‘W’ date of the semester).
- Encourage students to seek academic assistance during your scheduled office hours as well as through other support venues across campus (Learning Resource Center, department, Peer Mentor, etc.).
- Encourage students to develop connections/relationship with their academic advisors or advising office.

Connections & RAP activities:
- Be responsive to all materials disseminated from the RAP office by specified deadlines. (may include academic announcements, surveys, etc.).
- Attend required meetings – see page 2
### RAP meetings/collaboration

| What: | Meet with Kathy (kathyw@umass.edu) before TO contract is processed  
To understand expectations of a RAP instructor and confirm that it’s a good fit  
- Discuss the Student Resource Folder and ways to incorporate the material  
- NEW INSTRUCTORS: learn about RAP mission, goals and structure and specific expectations  
- RETURNING INSTRUCTORS: discuss and reflect on prior experience | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Late fall</td>
<td>Goodell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Meet 2x with Kathy and/or RAP staff and small group of instructors in a Faculty Learning Community – **week #4** and **week #10** of the semester  
- Share information with other instructors regarding course content, classroom environment, successful teaching strategies and/or feedback regarding RAP Student Resource Guides  
- Specific topics TBD | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mid-February and Early April</td>
<td>Goodell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### RAP specific expectations

| What: | Submit course description for distribution.  
Updated course descriptions provide timely information for students and will help ensure that courses fill to capacity with students who are truly interested in the topic. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
<td>To Kathy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Submit syllabus for review and feedback.  
Ensure that RAP and Gen Ed goals are incorporated into the syllabus. See syllabus template documents for suggestions.  
Ensure that information and expectations are easily understandable by first-year students. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By mid-January</td>
<td>In person or online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Pick up Student Resource Folder to be distributed no later than the beginning of the second week of class.  
Ensure that students receive the resource information in a timely manner. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>First week of semester</td>
<td>Goodell</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Reply promptly to all emails from RAP office, Kathy and/or Maureen.  
Ensure that RAP programming needs/ survey completion stays on track. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Provide opportunities throughout the semester for students to engage in course-related group work and/or activities; e.g. prepare for readings, studying for quiz/exam, projects.  
Ensure that students have opportunities to interact with each other to build group identity | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>On going</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Have students complete the Mid-Semester RAP Instructor Feedback survey during class time week #6 of the semester.  
Ensure that the instructor has ample time remaining in the semester to respond to students, consult with Kathy/Maureen and/or make changes if needed. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Week #6</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Have students complete SRTIs on the last day of class.  
Get critical feedback for instructors and program analysis.  
**SRTIs will be shared with RAP.** | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By specified deadline</td>
<td>Classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| What: | Complete end of semester Instructor RAP survey.  
Ensure that the RAP office gets meaningful information that could lead to programmatic changes for subsequent semesters. | When | Where |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>By specified deadline</td>
<td>Online</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>