

2023 TEACHING REQUIREMENT for BBS:

Effective teaching is a highly transferrable skill set that BBS believes to be central to the role of a scientist in society. Pedagogy (the strategies and techniques or “art” of teaching) allows the communication of scientific concepts, principles, methods and details for the training of others. Teaching is also a powerful vehicle to offer mentorship and encouragement to others. Like laboratory research, effective teaching requires experiential training and refinement of applied pedagogy.

The BBS program requires students to fulfill one full semester as a non-paid teaching fellow (TF).

NOTE: TFs are registered graduate students who teach part-time under the supervision of course heads (who hold formal teaching appointments) as an integral part of their training for the PhD. To help ensure some consistency in the training value of this experience, BBS periodically reviews the training objectives for TFs in each BBS Core Course. BBS also requires pedagogy training to prepare each TF to function effectively in this role. Finally, BBS periodically reviews TF options with an eye to approximate parity of required time and effort. Using these criteria, BBS assembles a list of approved teaching options for BBS students to satisfy the requirement through service learning.

In the majority of cases, students will serve as TFs in one of the BBS Core Courses because they have personal experience of the course material and format; however, there are other courses and opportunities from which to choose [advance permission (2 months) from deirdre_duckett@hms.harvard.edu is required for the course to count as the non-paid teaching fellow requirement]. Some options will require program review and approval on a case-by-case basis. BBS Core Courses include BBS 230A/B; Genetics 201; BCMP 200; and CB 201. G2 students who wish to be a TF in the spring will require Program Director approval to ensure that they have planned sufficient time to prepare for their Preliminary Qualifying Exam. NOTE: If students TF in a quarter course, students will need to TF in a second quarter course (such as BBS 230B) or combine the first quarter course with a CEI: Community Education Initiative in order for it to count as the full teaching requirement.

General Process

In the late winter/early spring of each year, BBS will host a zoom session to give BBS students an overview of the TF roles and options available in the “TF survey” along with some documentation on roles and estimated workload. Following the zoom meeting, a survey will be sent to all G1s as well as any other BBS students who have not completed their TF requirement. This survey will collect information on which BBS courses students are most interested in teaching (in rank order) during the G2 year (or after). Once the student preference is collected, the assembled information will be sent to the BBS Curriculum Committee (composed of the course Directors, co-Directors and Curriculum Fellows for Genetics 201, BCMP 200, BBS 230 A/B, CB 201, and BBS 330). The Curriculum Committee will work together to best match prospective Teaching Fellows to the courses in the following year; BBS will notify everyone in the late spring with proposed assignments before informing DMS of the required appointment letters. If a student wishes to discuss the outcome of the TF matching, they can request a meeting with BBS program staff to provide feedback to the Curriculum Committee. Some students occasionally express an interest in teaching opportunities outside of the BBS Core Course list such as courses offered within close proximity to a thesis lab; for this reason, students can petition the BBS staff for approval of other options by the BBS Program Directors.

Students can also sign up for the non-paid teaching experience on their Crimson Cart, please add MED-SCI 350T, DMS TIME: Teaching Fellow Related. If you have any questions, please contact Deirdre Duckett deirdre_duckett@hms.harvard.edu in the BBS Program Office.

Training and Preparation

We believe that all student TFs need basic pedagogy training prior to their first teaching experience. Training will be offered in late August by the Bok Center via Zoom for a total of 4.5 hours over 3 days. BBS TFs are expected to complete the TF training workshop series prior to being a TF. Students who end up being allowed to teach in another course should also plan on taking the TF training workshop series offered by the Bok Center prior to the fall semester. Confirmation of Bok Center TF training attendance will be collected. Note: for students who are participating in the CEI as their teaching requirement, training hours have been built into each opportunity.

Also of note: the PQE completion deadline has been moved to August 31 of G2 year to allow students to be a TF in the G2 spring semester without compromising time spent on preparing for the PQE.

Administrative items to note:

- Students need to complete the non-paid teaching requirement prior to serving in any subsequent semesters as a paid Teaching Fellow. Paid teaching also requires the signed approval of the student's Dissertation Advisor.
- Students need advanced permission from Deirdre Duckett (deirdre_duckett@hms.harvard.edu) to be a Teaching Fellow in a non-BBS Core Course.
- All BBS students need to submit the BBS teaching form promptly to satisfy the requirement so that we can record this credit in the student's file.

Community Education Initiative

Some BBS students wish to develop their pedagogy and mentorship skills via community service and outreach. As an alternative to being a Teaching Fellow in our academic program, we have established the Community Education Initiative (CEI), which provides service learning and teaching opportunities for BBS students in a series of programs that serve K-12 and/or collegiate student populations. Each program is carefully vetted to ensure training preparation and effort requirements comparable to our TF options; some CEI programs involve fewer contact hours and thus may require two years/semesters/summers of service to satisfy our teaching requirement (see list for details). These existing programs are enthusiastic about having help from the HMS community. In order to participate in one of the approved CEI options for BBS, students should reach out to the approved organization(s) directly (contact information can be found on our [website](#)) in advance and secure a spot in that program. Additionally, students must complete the CEI registration form and submit it to the BBS Office for approval **prior to starting any work**. Please submit the completed form to Deirdre Duckett at deirdre_duckett@hms.harvard.edu.