**Engineering One-Stop**

**GA Onboarding Manual**

Welcome to academic coaching here in Engineering One-Stop! This is designed specifically for you, our invaluable graduate assistants. Your role as an academic coach is crucial in fostering academic growth and success of our students in the engineering department. This manual is a comprehensive resource guide to assist you in understanding your role and responsibilities as an academic coach. It can also be used to as a checklist to ensure that you have completed all onboarding tasks. In this manual, you will find information regarding each of the areas that graduate assistants will engage in. Our goal is to equip you with the necessary resources and knowledge to create a supportive and empowering environment for our students. As you work closely with them, you will develop meaningful connections and help them navigate their path to academic success. We believe that with your dedication and commitment, you’ll make a significant impact on our students’ lives.

We are grateful for your contributions and wish you a fulfilling and success experience as an academic coaching graduate assistant.

**Engineering One-Stop Important Contacts**

Engineering One-Stop Employee Email

* LA [la@email.edu](mailto:la@email.edu)
* EA [ea@ email.edu](mailto:ea@uark.edu)
* MB [ms@ email.edu](mailto:mwbarnes@uark.edu)
* LBM [lma@ email.edu](mailto:lma@uark.edu)
* SB [bey@ email.edu](mailto:bey@uark.edu)
* CC [cc@ email.edu](mailto:cc@uark.edu)
* RD [rd@ email.edu](mailto:rd035@uark.edu)
* TE [te@ email.edu](mailto:tevitt@uark.edu)
* ALG [alg@ email.edu](mailto:alg@uark.edu)
* RG [rg@ email.edu](mailto:rg005@uark.edu)
* BH [bh@ email.edu](mailto:bh@uark.edu)
* DJ [dj@ email.edu](mailto:dj@uark.edu)
* CH [ch@ email.edu](mailto:ch@uark.edu)
* KP [kp@ email.edu](mailto:kp@uark.edu)
* LP [lp@email.edu](mailto:lp@email.edu)
* GS [gs@ email.edu](mailto:gs@uark.edu)
* PS [ps@ email.edu](mailto:patrices@uark.edu)
* GT [cgt@ email.edu](mailto:cgt@uark.edu)

**Introductory GA Tasks**  
\*Can we create checkboxes to cross them off as they complete them below?

1. Introduce yourself to the academic coaching team and the third floor of John White Engineering Hall. These individuals will be familiar faces when collaborating with different events we all work on including orientation and OSAP.
2. Get the keys needed for the office (and possibly any other keys you may need). You will need to fill out the form, get signatures, and send it to the HR office on the 3rd floor of Bell Engineering (room XXX). Check in with them within that office after a couple of days to see if the signatures have been taken care of. From there, head to the XXX building for keys with the signatures and your photo ID.
3. Get your ID badge from Rafael. You will wear this mostly during events and when you are meeting with students.
4. Review when and where the academic coaching team meetings will be biweekly. These meetings typically review student appointments, trainings, and upcoming events.
5. Engage in any team building activity to get to know the academic coaching team! This may include a “Get to Know Me” paper to fill out or an arts and craft activity! This will be completed at a scheduled time with the team. Look for a calendar invite!
6. Review on campus resources with the document on Box/BB along with taking a walk around campus with Gayle and possibly the other GA. There are many resources students may not know about, so it is important for you to familiarize yourself. This is a great way to network with on-campus staff, learn about study spots on campus, and gain resources along the way. *Helpful tip*: Bring an empty bag/folder with you to grab resources as you walk around campus.

**Administrative Tasks**

1. Review documentation in your Box account with another academic coach. This includes your personal (private) folder for notes post-student sessions, documentation you can find for different projects, and outreach.
2. Create your schedule on Outlook and review it with Rafael. Feel free to add in things such as classes or other obligations as needed and appropriately. Be sure to be in the office **at least** 4 days a week. After it is approved, share it with the Academic Coaching team (Rafael, Gayle, and the other GA).
3. Create an email signature specifically for your role. This will be utilized when you send out work emails. There is an example below:

Thank you and take care,

**Kayla Newkirk (She/Her/Hers)**

Calculus Academic Coach

John White Eng. Hall 309A

Pronouns: She/Her/Hers  
[Schedule an appointment here](https://uark.starfishsolutions.com/starfish-ops/dl/instructor/serviceCatalog.html?bookmark=service/4972095)

**Student Interaction and Confidentiality**

1. Learn about how introductory appointments with students differs from follow ups according to the script and flow of appointments that you will be trained on.
2. Review paperwork and documentation for student appointments. Each role uses similar resources, however calculus coaching and skills coaching may be more specific for students since they already know what they are coming in for as compared to regular academic coaching. Resources utilized in student appointments can be found in Box. *Helpful hint*: Some resources are hard-copy only, so you may need to make copies at the printer occasionally. Examples of these may include resources gained from CAPS at the Pat Walker Health Center such as the wellness information.
3. Review when it is appropriate to break confidentiality. This only occurs if a student has thoughts of harming themselves or someone else. If this is disclosed in a student appointment, you need to assess the severity of these thoughts. If it is an urgent matter, you will walk them over to CAPS at the Pat Walker Health Center on campus if it is an urgent matter. If you have any questions about this during a session as it comes up, please contact Rafael immediately for further guidance.
4. Observe and participate in mock coaching sessions with other members of the team. This can help you learn more about what to expect in coaching appointments, what language to use, and the overall flow of these 45-minute appointments you will hold.
5. Student outreach is a critical aspect of calculus coaching. After exam grades come out, you will receive a list of students to reach out to. You will separate them into 3 categories; those who did below average, average, and above average. You will share this list with Sari and will send her the list of students who did below average to also reach out to for academic coaching. For more information about this process and what it looks like, search for “Calculus Outreach” in Kayla’s Box folder and speak to Rafael for details.

**Resource Familiarization**

1. If you are in need of supplies such as paper, notebooks, pencils, scissors, etc., you can find those in the big gray supply closets in John White Hall room 301. If you cannot find what you are looking for, ask another member of the team or Sari for assistance.
2. Review Box and Canva and what resources are available there to view and edit. There are multiple folders in each of your Box and Canva accounts, so be sure to explore what resources there are and what purpose they serve.

**FERPA and UA Success**

1. Review what FERPA is, how that effects your job, and how it protects students by speaking with Gayle and Rafael.
2. Add in your office hours in both your Outlook and UA Success calendars. Ask Gayle or Rafael or the other GA to assist you with syncing your calendars as well.

**Documentation and Examples Review**

1. Review the resources utilized in academic coaching for your role. For calculus coaching, there is a specific introduction resource that will help you begin in your first student appointments. It has important prompts and reminders for your first appointments with students to help you stay on track and gain important information. You can use this to help you with your notes as well.

**Summer Semester GA Tasks**

**Student Orientation**

Student orientation is an “all hands-on deck” task because the engineering staff as a whole participates. Everyone will participate within their roles. For example, advisors will assist students with creating schedules. As academic coaches, we will greet the parents and students and usher them into the auditorium in Bell. This helps keep them organized and helps them know where to go. We also present briefly in the big group with both parents and students to introduce them to academic coaching. Then, we get to have lunch (which is usually catered or provided at the 1021 dining hall). After lunch, the students will meet with their advisors to review their schedules as mentioned above. We will meet with parents and supporters to discuss what academic coaching is, more of what resources are available not only in the engineering department, but on the campus as a whole, and to answer any questions they may have. We present with Rachel Dennis and Chris Cagle, as they will present their own information about financial aid and peer mentoring.

**Group Coaching**

Group coaching appointments occur in the summer during “A Week” and the very first couple of weeks within the fall semester. The new freshman engineering students will sign up for a slot during their summer orientation when they meet with their advisors. You will lead groups of 12 students and will introduce them to coaching, one another, and to you, one of their academic coaches. You will do icebreakers, introduce them to a “systems check”, and will give them opportunities to think pair share. There is a script you will receive that is in Box to assist you along with the handouts that are needed. This counts toward the student’s grade in their GNEG class as well.

**Fall Semester GA Tasks**

**Power Study Sessions**  
These sessions are typically around midterms and finals in the fall and spring semester. We reserve a room in John White Engineering Hall or Bell (typically in John White Hall 219) and will host power study sessions for students to drop by. We will all split up the day by taking shifts and will record students who come in. Rafael and Gayle will review this protocol with you. You will assist them with following a power study session flow if they would like. Some students will sign in and just use it at their own pace/way, which is completely fine as well!

**Drill Presentations**

Drill presentations are in the Bell Engineering Auditorium. We participate in 4 of them during the fall and usually 4 in the spring as well. We come in as guest speakers to the freshman engineering class (GNEG) and will review important materials such as a systems check, test prep, and conquering test anxiety. The presentations we have completed in the past are available in Box for review. Rafael will typically look them over to see if any edits are to be mad before presenting as well. As a GA, it is not mandatory that you participate in Drills, but this is a great resume builder and presentation experience to gain. You can observe the first one to see what it is like to present in front of many students and to feel what it is like within that room. It can also be helpful to go over topics you may be more comfortable with or are enthusiastic about as well. You can discuss what you would like to present with the team as well to prepare.

**Spring Semester GA Tasks**

**Eggstravaganza**

This is our non-religious Easter celebration on the 3rd floor of the Engineering Department. The goal is to put eggs in the hallway that are stuffed with study habits and candy while they are in classes. Students will then pick them up after classes and we will replenish our assigned hallway when they are all gone. We take shifts stuffing and placing eggs in the hallway. This is a great way to meet more people on the third floor and make this time of year fun for everyone! The study tips that we put inside of the eggs can be found in Box. The eggs themselves are (typically) in Patrice’s office.

**Science Fair Judging/Volunteering**

Around April the Union hosts a science fair consisting of local middle and high school students that participate in our judging. It is our job to get our assignment in the morning, judge the contenders, and give them our scoring sheet. We will be put into teams and will be placed in a section to judge. You can try to sign up for a slot you may interested in (examples include social sciences or animal sciences) beforehand as well so you have an idea of what you are judging. There is typically breakfast and lunch offered as well.

**OSAP**

1. OSAP is a program that typically runs in the spring after students have completed at least one semester at the University of Arkansas. This typically consists of students on academic probation that may need coaching appointments to look a bit differently and focus on what barriers they have within their lives preventing them from academic success. For example, some students have extenuating circumstances that could be impacting their academic success such as being the main breadwinner at home, substance abuse issues, or medical reasons. This is when Rafael and Gayle can assist with academic appeals. These students are typically seen for 3-4 appointments with specific goals that you help them explore to assist them with their academic success by removing possible barriers or creating new healthier habits.

**Pineapple Cafe**

During the spring semester, students in hospitality management on campus participate in Pineapple Cafe to gain internship hours. This gives us an opportunity to participate in fine dining with foods inspired from across the globe with our coworkers. This is located in the Dale Bumpers College of Agricultural, Food, and Life Sciences. Reservations are required ahead of time and tables must be between 4-6 people. It costs $12 per meal, however there are “passports” you can buy for a higher cost to participate in all of the meals offered. Pineapple Cafe is open during the spring semester on Mondays and Wednesdays. Menus are provided for each meal online. There is coffee, tea, water, soda, and desserts offered along with your main course. If you wish to participate, talk to Katie Pope or Gayle for more information.

**FAQ**

1. Q: How do I clock in?  
   A: You do not need to clock in. However, your hours need to be updated on Outlook and discussed with Rafael if any changes occur.
2. Q: Do we work remotely?  
   A: Typically, we work in the office. However, there may times that we work remotely as a team or if you are sick, you could discuss working remotely with Rafael.
3. Q: How many office hours should I have per week?  
   A: You should have enough office hours to have flexibility for students but have enough for team meetings, notes, paperwork, and other work you may have. Typically, GAs should have between 12-14 hours of open office hours per week for students to sign up.
4. Q: What if I need to call in because I am sick?  
   A: You should not come into work sick! Please take care of yourself. Send Rafael and email and/or message him on Teams and let him know. You can make up your hours within other days that you typically do work. If you have student appointments scheduled, apologize for the inconvenience and let them know ASAP that you are not able to work and send them a link to reschedule. If you are able to switch the appointments to remote while you recover, please do so.
5. Q: What if the campus has a snow day?  
   A: Just like a sick day, contact students about rescheduling. However, please enjoy your snow day! No need to come in as a fellow student!
6. Q: What else is important to know?  
   A: We help students with the transitioning to the University of Arkansas’ Engineering Department. We are here to help students get connected to resources that may be beneficial or useful to them, teach them important skills such as professionalism, and help them learn about their own strengths and growth edges. It is important to be supportive and help them learn how to navigate networking as well when referring them to other resources via warm handoff.
7. Q: What other opportunities do I have for professional development?

A. There is a lot of room for professional development and creativity on this team! You can discuss ideas and collaborations with Rafael and Gayle if you see room for growth within your role or within the department.

1. Q: What if my office hours directly conflict with the other GA? How can we keep confidentiality if we are both in the office with students at the same time?

A: Before finalizing your work schedule, review it with the other GA to see if any office hours overlap for student appointments. Since you share an office, you will have to ensure that your office hours are not overlapping too much. If they do overlap, communicate with Sari about possible office space available on the third floor to work in. You cannot have two students in the office for appointments at the same time, so this is something to be worked out together as GAs.

1. Q: When and how do we get paid?   
   A: GAs get paid biweekly; on the 15th and 30th/31st of the month. If the 15th or 30th/31st falls on a weekend or holiday, you will g
2. et paid the closest date to that, which is typically the 14th and 29th /30th. You will set up direct deposit upon hire. You can check the status of your paychecks on Workday.
3. Q: How far ahead should students be able to book an appointment with me?

A: Students should be able to book an appointment with you up until the day (24 hours) before the appointment. This can help you have a consistent schedule and allow drop-in hours as well. They should also be able to make appointments throughout the semester in case they want to make an appointment for their upcoming exams.

1. Q: Do the events like the science fair, Eggstravaganza, or Pineapple Cafe count toward my GA hours?

A: Yes! Any event or affiliation with your GA will count toward your hours. Adjust your hours as needed for the week if these hours are outside of your typical work hours.