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**Students in 4th Honours Science or H.Dip.,
3rd Honours Arts and 3rd Arts Mathematical Studies!**

Dear Student,

This letter is to inform you about a final year project or module option that may be available to final year students of Mathematics, Mathematical Physics and Computer Science in Semester 1 of the 2012-13 academic year. If you are seriously interested in aspects of teaching mathematics or related subjects, you might consider taking part in the *Undergraduate Ambassador Scheme (UAS)*. Students in 4th Honours Science or H.Dip. who take this module called MA 435 will do it as their final year project, while 3rd Honours Arts and 3rd Mathematical Studies students would take it as one of their two option modules. Participation in the UAS module will involve students spending approximately three hours per week in a local second-level school for a ten-week period, engaged in activities relating to the teaching and learning of mathematics. The UAS has been running in several universities in the UK and at University College Dublin for a few years now, and will be rolled in 2012/13 for the fourth time in Galway. General information on the history and operation of the UAS is available at <http://www.uas.ac.uk>.

What is involved: For students, participation in the UAS involves the following components:

- **Classroom observation and assistance.** Each student will be matched with an appropriate school and a specific teacher in the local area. This teacher will act as a mentor to the student during the course. Initial contact with the teacher and pupils will be as a classroom assistant, watching how the teacher handles the class, observing the level of mathematics taught and the structure of the lesson, and offering practical support to the teacher in lesson preparation or administrative work.
- **Teaching assistance.** The teacher will assign the student with actual teaching tasks, which will be dependent on specific needs. This could include (for example) offering problem-solving coaching to a smaller group of pupils, or taking a few minutes of the lesson with the whole class.
- **Extra-curricular activities.** The student may be supervised by the teacher in running an out-of-timetable activity (if appropriate), such as an after-school maths club or special sessions for interested students.
- **Special project.** Each student will devise a special project on the basis of his/her interests and assessment of what will interest their own group of pupils. The student will have to show that he/she can analyse a specific teaching challenge and devise and prepare appropriately targeted teaching and learning materials. The scope of what may be involved in the special project is quite broad.

- **Reflective Journal.** The student will keep a journal to document his/her experience and progress as the course proceeds.
- **Final report.** The student will submit a final written report on his/her work in the UAS module including a detailed report on his/her special project.
- **Presentation.** Each student will be required to give a presentation of 15-20 minutes on a subject relating to the school placement and the student's experiences there.
- **Participation in training and tutorial sessions.** Each student in the UAS module will complete a training session before the commencement of the school placements, and attend a one-hour tutorial every two weeks as the module proceeds.

We expect that the UAS possibility will appeal most to students who may be interested in pursuing a career in second level teaching. It is important to bear in mind that if you take this module it means that your final year project will be concerned with education rather than with research in your subject. This is neither an advantage nor a disadvantage, just something to keep in mind if you are a 4th Science or H.Dip. student who is looking at your future career plans. If you think that you may be interested in taking the UAS module as your final year project, please send an email message to me at kirsten.pfeiffer@nuigalway.ie to Dr Claas Roever at claas.roever@nuigalway.ie at your earliest convenience, but no later than Tuesday, September 11th. Please bear in mind that there is only a very limited number of places available. An official application process including a formal interview will follow in the second and third weeks of September. Students who express an interest will be contacted about the details of this process.

Best wishes,

Kirsten Pfeiffer