



Graduate Academic Assistant for Course Development: Vancouver Summer Program

We seek two graduate academic assistants (GAA) to assist with developing teaching materials for the Vancouver Summer program (VSP) for 2026, a 4-week outreach program for international post-secondary students that takes place on the UBC Vancouver campus in July-August 2026 (<https://www.eoas.ubc.ca/outreach/vancouver-summer-program>). This course development work will occur April-June 2026.

We are offering one “package” for the Vancouver Summer Program in 2026: **EOAS Package A: Earth Systems, Environment and Sustainability**. The package consists of two courses taken by the same cohort of students. They are:

- **Earth Systems and Change**

Our dynamic planet is constantly reshaped by powerful forces. Interactions among the atmosphere, oceans, and land create the weather, drive global climate, and produce natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanoes, landslides, tsunamis, storms, and wildfires. From deep within Earth’s crust to impacts from space, these processes remind us that our planet is always changing. As populations grow and cities expand, understanding how Earth works is crucial to protect people, communities, and economies. In this course, you’ll learn the science behind both short-term disasters and long-term climate change. You’ll explore how energy from the Sun and Earth is concentrated and released, driving everything from sudden earthquakes, to ocean productivity. You’ll learn about the global energy balance, meteorite impacts, and which regions are most at risk from natural disasters. Study in Vancouver – a city with stunning landscapes, shaped by its coastal climate and dynamic geology. You’ll experience the local environment through field trips and interactive labs, plus engage in discussions about the future of our planet and the role of science in decision-making.

- **Environment and Sustainability**

We live in a time when human activity is one of the most powerful forces shaping our planet. Environmental science helps us understand these impacts on ecosystems, biodiversity, air and water quality, and human health. It also guides the choices we make to build a more sustainable future, from changing the global energy system away from fossil fuels to address the root causes of climate change, to building sustainable systems and resilient communities. In this course, you’ll learn the science behind today’s major environmental challenges and critically evaluate proposed solutions. You’ll engage with the United Nations’ Sustainability Development Goals and explore how local and regional initiatives connect to global sustainability efforts. Study in Vancouver – a city striving to become the “greenest city” in the world – surrounded by mountains, forests, and ocean. You’ll experience the local environment through field trips and collaborative projects, engaging in creative problem solving to explore how innovative thinking and science can help make our shared future sustainable.

Both courses have existing materials on which we expect to draw. The “Earth Systems and Change” course will be a combination of two courses offered last year during the VSP. The “Environment and



Sustainability” course is new and will be based around materials from ENVR_V 100, a regular course in the Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences department.

The two GAAs will work together to prepare course materials for these two courses, collaborating to align schedules and activities. GAA contributions to course development will be through the following tasks:

- Design and build course structure and activities for two 4-week courses, based on:
 - Draft syllabi
 - Existing course materials from prior VSP offerings and current EOAS offerings
 - Existing resources from other sources
 - New ideas
 - Record and document development work for easy implementation by others in the future.

The GAAs will receive training and be directly supervised by Dr. Sara Harris. The GAAs will communicate approximately weekly with the supervisor and meet as needed with others. Some work is independent (e.g. drafting ideas, creating teaching documents, organizational tasks) and some is collaborative (e.g. discussions of activities and alignment). Most hours of work are flexible and intended to average about 4-5 hrs/week between April and June, for a total of 50 hours per GAA position.

Qualifications:

- Graduate student at UBC (Masters or PhD level)
- Interest in education, particularly in earth, ocean, atmospheric, or environmental sciences
- Strong organizational, time management, and communication skills
- Any of the following qualifications are beneficial, but not required:
 - Experience designing learning activities and evaluation;
 - Experience as a TA/instructor in 100-level ATSC, EOSC or ENVR courses;

Learning and Professional Growth:

The graduate academic assistants will have the opportunity to:

- Build/expand/deepen their knowledge about teaching materials development.
- Advance their communication skills, orally and in writing, including what, when and how to best communicate
- Advance their organizational skills, both self-management for more independent work, and for working in a team

For a graduate student who is considering teaching/facilitating as part of their career, this job experience will provide an opportunity to engage with thinking about activity design and evaluation, which may be highly relevant to their future work.

There is a separate advertisement seeking instructors for these courses during the Vancouver Summer Program. Successful applicants for the GAA positions advertised here may be ideally suited to also teach the courses, and we encourage interested candidates to also apply for the teaching positions.



Wage:

The hourly wage is \$38.65 per hour for up to 50 hours total, per GAA position.

To Apply:

Please email (1) a cover letter (2) an unofficial transcript, and (3) a resume/CV to **Dr. Sara Harris at sharris@eoas.ubc.ca**. Please use subject line: "Application for GAA for Vancouver Summer Program". Review of applications will begin **March 30th**.

Equity and diversity are essential to academic excellence. An open and diverse community fosters the inclusion of voices that have been underrepresented or discouraged. We encourage applications from members of groups that have been marginalized on any grounds enumerated under the B.C. Human Rights Code, including sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, racialization, disability, political belief, religion, marital or family status, age, and/or status as a First Nation, Metis, Inuit, or Indigenous person

All qualified candidates are encouraged to apply; however, Canadians and permanent residents of Canada will be given priority.