Frequently asked questions:

What makes a good volunteer?

Anyone who is passionate about biology, enjoys interacting with others and has performed well in their introductory coursework at OU would make a great volunteer tutor. We are always looking for dedicated individuals with a desire to serve the OU community. Volunteers must be patient, well spoken and enjoy working with a diverse group of people.

What will I do as a volunteer?

As a volunteer you will work with students from introductory zoology courses at OU. This includes one-on-one tutoring as well as group session in the ZAP lab. Students seek help for a variety of reasons, from requesting help on homework assignments, to catching up with material after an illness, to preparing for an upcoming exam. It is the tutors job to HELP them LEARN, not give them the answers.

Will I be tutoring alone/Will I have help?

New volunteers are encouraged to work with seasoned staff; we keep this in mind when setting the schedule each semester. The program coordinator, Beverly Hall, is generally available if you need help. Her office (Richards Hall 211) is located on the first floor across the hall from the Intro. Zoo. labs (if you’ve found the snake you’re in the right spot!). It is not uncommon for tutors to receive questions they do not know the answers to; this same thing happens to faculty! The important part is helping the student seek out answers and being honest when you do not know.

What topics do I need to be familiar with?

Students seek assistance with a broad range of topics covered in their introductory course. Some of the topics they cover include: general chemistry and organic molecules, cellular respiration, DNA replication and mitosis, protein synthesis, genetic inheritance, evolution, history of life on earth, animal diversity, animal physiology, animal behavior, and animal ecology.

Will I be required to understand and teach natural selection and evolution?

Yes, these concepts form the foundation of ALL biology. All tutors must be confident in their knowledge of these subjects and able to discuss them intelligently with students.

Will I get paid?

No and maybe. ZAP is primarily staffed by unpaid volunteers; however we do have a small paid staff. Paid tutors are selected from the volunteer pool as positions become available. To be selected as paid staff a tutor must have been with the program for at least one semester and have demonstrated exceptional skills in tutoring.

What is the time commitment?

Volunteers are required to serve one hour per week for at least one semester. Failure to attend scheduled shifts may result in termination from the program.

What hours are available?

In general tutors serve between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday. A schedule is made at the start of each semester, and we work with tutors to ensure that their service does not interfere with their courses.

How do I apply to become a ZAP tutor?

Contact the program coordinator Beverly Hall by email at bjhall10@ou.edu and request an interview.