

Mutual Expectations Agreement

This guide was created to facilitate discussion around the expectations of TA responsibilities in order to help your TA experience run as smoothly as possible. Note that some items may not apply to your particular class. This document was developed by the graduate committee based on feedback from graduate students, staff, and faculty.

Logistics

- Exchange contact information and preferred means of communication with professor and fellow TAs

- Professor phone number: _____

- TA phone number(s): _____

- _____

- _____

- Professor email: _____

- TA email(s): _____

- _____

- _____

- How often will we meet?
- How much notice is necessary when I have schedule conflicts with TA duties?
 - Who can sub for a discussion session or lab section?
- In case of emergency (sickness, family, flat tire, etc.), what is the protocol for finding a last minute replacement or cancelling a discussion session or lab section?
- What online systems/resources will I need access to (e.g. Mastering Physics, Lecture Notes)?

TA Duties and Workload

- Describe what a TA led session will look like
- Will we have quizzes during discussion sections/lab sections?
 - When a student misses a quiz, can a student make up the quiz?
 - How many quizzes are they allowed to make up?
- What is the attendance policy for students (in labs and/or discussions)?

- Is the legitimacy of an excuse at the TAs discretion or does the professor have a policy?
- What is the class policy on late work?
 - Can a TA grant extensions?
- Who will grade the tests, homeworks, quizzes, and lab reports?
- What is the timescale for turnaround on grading:
 - Homeworks
 - Quizzes
 - Lab reports
 - Tests
- Who will write up solutions to homework, quizzes, and/or tests?
- How rigorously should I grade? What should the average score typically be?
- What should I do if I suspect copying/cheating?
- Who will handle student complaints about grading?
- Am I expected to hold office hours? Review sessions?
 - If I hold review sessions, who will provide the material?
- What should TAs do in the event of University closures, especially when it only affects one or two of the sections that week?
- How much time should I expect to spend on a weekly basis:
 - Grading:
 - Discussion session prep:
 - Lab prep:
 - Class time (discussion, labs, attending lecture, proctoring exams):
 - Office hours (if any):

Total:

- How much time can I be expected to spend grading tests during midterms and finals?
- Although it will fluctuate throughout the semester, I will never expect to spend more than ____ hours in any given week, regardless of workload.
- Which day(s) at the end of the semester will I need to be available to grade the final exam?
- What is my absolute deadline at the end of the semester for having all homework/lab/quiz grades given to the instructor or recorded online?

Syllabus/Course Content

- Take a few minutes to review the course syllabus together. Does the TA understand what will be covered each week?
- Are there chapters/sections/topics in the book which will not be covered (other than what is clear from the syllabus)?
- Will any material be taught which is not in the book, or which will be taught in a significantly different way from what is in the book?
- If changes to discussion session topics occur, how and when will they be communicated?
- How will any changes to the syllabus/schedule be communicated?