

Positive/Effective Strategies in TA/Faculty Relationship

- Clear communication
- Breakdown of specific duties, sent/agreed beforehand
- The faculty member was knowledgeable and encouraged us to ask questions (approachability)
- Mentorship around teaching
- Modelling good practice (e.g. showing the right way to run the lab by running the pre-lab session)

Addressing Your Challenges

Instructions

Round 1: Explain a challenge you (or someone else) have experienced or anticipate experiencing in working with a faculty. *Please be as specific as you can.*

Round 2: Read other challenges posted. Post a strategy to address the challenge in column 2.

Round 3: Look at the strategy suggested for your challenge
In column three write yes if you think your challenge is addressed

Challenge	Strategies	Addressed? Yes/No
- A lot of work for the TA's. Too much time spent in marking tests and assignments, and they went over their required work hours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bring this to the professor- let them know the hours that are being spent. If that does not work, go to the TA union 	Yes
- Young prof unwilling to take charge with behavioural issues--asked for them to address the situation from a position of greater authority and had it bounced back to me to deal with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talk to the prof directly Go to TA Union without disclosing the profs name 	Yes
- Too many students enrolled in course for TAs to realistically handle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same as above 	Yes
- Prof asking me to do tasks at the last minute (i.e. day of or day before)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can frame it in terms of priorities, "yes I can do a and b, but that will push back x and y." - Count your hours? Was this making you go over? 	Maybe (but x and y are related to my own coursework or thesis, not the course in question)
-The person in charge of the TAs was not very organized. Her instructions were very scattered and hard to follow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask a ton of follow up questions. It's a pain to bug someone, but it has to be done sometimes. 	yes

Addressing Your Challenges

Continued from last page ...

Challenge	Strategies	Addressed? Yes/No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prof saying racist stuff behind people's backs - Profs not knowing about TA hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report to TA union or to the faculty member in charge or coordinating/mentoring TAs. <p>Report to department head, dean (about racist comments). Seems like some sensitivity training is needed!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tell the prof about what the hours are supposed to be. Show them the contract? 	<p>Maybe (how to report? Is there a way to ensure the prof doesn't get in too much trouble? Should I even care?!)</p>
	<p>Good question. This is a hard one. You don't want to throw the prof under the bus or jeopardize your relationship with them, but those kinds of comments are odious and unacceptable. Do you have a mentor figure to ask for advice/assistance?</p> <p>If I'm honest, this was 2-3 years ago. So I'm not sure if I should do anything about it now.</p> <p>Always up to you if/when you choose to address it. I don't think there's an expiry on reporting that kind of behaviour, but you have a right to feel protected as well.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When asked to mark the assignments again with different rubric 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The prof needs to know how this brought you over your hours. Things happen, but still... 	

Developing a Communication Agreement

In your breakout rooms, please brainstorm (bullet points are fine) concrete items you can add to these themes. You will have about 7 minutes.

Each breakout group is responsible for one of the items.

- **Group 1: Logistics and resources (theme #1 on this slide)**
- **Group 2: Roles and responsibilities (theme #2 on this slide)**
- **Group 3: TA/faculty needs & expectations (theme #3 on next slide)**
- **Group 3: TA/student needs & expectations (theme #4 on next slide)**

There is also an “other” category on the next slide you are welcome to add to.

1. **Logistics and resources**

What do TAs need to get set up?

- Example: Get access to canvas site
- Access to edit Canvas, set up independent modules where appropriate
- Grading/Marking--Speed Grader
- Attendance
- Communications protocols
- Departmental TA training, CTLT workshops, Canvas training videos
- Zoom logistics: set recurring meeting and get info to professor or directly to students in tutorials/labs
- Collaborate Ultra
- Having the right software to deliver your online presentations
- Marking time on calendar for classes/marketing/ exams
- Learning the professor's particular teaching and marking style
- Familiarizing themselves with all the software

2. **Prevent and address issues related roles and responsibilities (beginning and during term)**

What will you be doing as a TA and how?

- Example: Co-develop hours allocated to each task (and authority)
 - Detailed conversation - are emails counted towards the hours?
 - What authority does the TA have? Is changing grades allowed?
- Canvas Instructions:
 - Who's going to be monitoring the discussion board
 - Who's going to be answering student emails
- In group project courses, one of the TAs has the responsibility of forming groups and coordinating the session. Knowing this beforehand is helpful.
- Course development:
 - For instance, who is creating lesson plans
 - How will they be shared

Developing a Communication Agreement

3. Clarification of **needs and expectations between Faculty/TA** (i.e.: around communication and support) (beginning and during term)

How much does you need as TA, and how much does faculty need from TA (how specific, extensive, etc.)?

- Meeting once a week and regular communication through slack or microsoft teams
- Meeting before the course starts to discuss expectations and TA hours
- TA's can have regular office hours to address students concerns, and attend lectures
- Meeting other TA's to get to know each other (online coffee meets?)

4. Clarification of **needs and expectations between TA/Student**

When and in what manner/context will the TA interact with the students?

- Example: Who is first/only respondent to student complaints/requests
- Who is responsible for sending an Early Alert if needed?
- Who is responsible for disciplinary issues?
- What is acceptable student conduct for interacting with a TA?
- How to handle grade disputes?
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5. Other: