
Teaching with Teaching Assistants

While we wait, let's recall a positive, constructive
TA-Faculty experience

Judy Chan & Shaya Golparian

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Access Check:

Please let me know **in the chat** or send a **private message**:

- Is there anything about the setup that we should address now?
 - Are there any other barriers that might affect your participation in this session that we could also address?
-

Land acknowledgement



What is your key role in teaching at UBC?

1. I don't teach
 2. I teach and had TAs before
 3. I teach and have **never** had TAs before
 4. I teach and have **never** had TAs before, but I have been a TA myself
 5. I teaching and have **never** had TAs before, and I have **never** been a TA myself
 6. None of the above
-

Your Questions

We'd like to know what questions you bring today!

Please contribute to page 2 of the slide deck.

Learning Objectives:

By the end of the workshop, you will be able to:

- Explain some of the TA Rights
 - Develop some strategies to prevent and address some of the Faculty-TA challenges
 - Develop a communication “contract” for effective and positive TA/Faculty relationship
-

Agenda

1. Polls: What is your role in teaching at UBC?
 2. Review of TA Rights
 3. Addressing Challenges in Working with TAs
 4. Developing Communication Agreement
-

Our positive experience:

- Think about a positive/effective Faculty-TA relationship that you or someone that you know has experienced.
 - Jot down **concrete** things you or others did to make that an effective/positive experience.
-

Our positive experience:

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- Contribute to Slide #2

Please keep this slide deck open (link in chat). We will keep using it during the workshop.

An Effective Working Relationship Model:

Build Trust

Communicate Efficiently

Align Expectations

Define Success

Model Time Management

Get the Support They Need

Help Them See Blindspots

TA Rights - Policy

TAs at UBC have a Union that protects their rights and clarifies some boundaries around their roles and responsibilities

Your full-time TA comes to you and asks to take their **vacation**. How many hours are they entitled to?

1. 8 hours vacation
2. 12 hours vacation
3. 6 hours vacation
4. 24 hours vacation
5. None of the above, as TAs do not get vacation

Your full-time TA comes to you and says, “I have deducted my unused sick leave from my TAship.” How many hours is a **full TA appointment**? And how many hours of **sick leave** are they entitled to?

1. 640 hours per term; 40 hours sick leave
 2. 560 hours per term; 35 hours sick leave
 3. 256 hours per term; 16 hours sick leave
 4. 192 hours per term; 12 hours sick leave
 5. 128 hours per term; 0 hours sick leave
-

Once TAs have been hired, they are guaranteed TA appointment for:

1. Masters students: 1 year total, PhD: 4 years total
 2. Masters students: 2 years total, PhD: 5 years total
 3. Masters students: 1 year total, PhD: as long as they want
 4. Masters students: reappointment not guaranteed, PhD: 5 years total.
 5. TA reappointment is not guaranteed.
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The final exam is scheduled on April 22 at noon, but your TA will have their comprehensive exam on April 23 at 9:30 am. What should you do?

- A. Allow the TA to study their notes while invigilating
 - B. Pretend you know nothing about this
 - C. Make arrangements to have another invigilator or reschedule the final exam.
 - D. Talk to the TA's research supervisor & change the comp date
-

The term starts in 2 weeks, and there is some work you're hoping to have your TA do on course material.

Can you pay your TA for work they do before the beginning of the term?

1. Yes
2. No

Your TA has 4 hours of labs, and another 4 hours of marking to complete in the same day. **A TA may not perform teaching or TA duties, without consent, for more than how many hours per day?**

1. 8.5 hours
2. 8 hours
3. 7.5 hours
4. 7 hours
5. 6.5 hours

ARTICLE 12 - JOB DESCRIPTIONS AND ASSIGNMENT OF DUTIES 12.01

Each department shall prepare detailed job descriptions which outline the general nature of duties for all positions for which the Union is the bargaining agent in that department. The Department will send copies of these job descriptions to the Union. In the event of a substantive change in the duties outlined in the description, such change shall be posted in accordance with Article 13.02 and a copy of the change sent to the Union office. The Union will have the right to present written objection to any new or revised job descriptions within thirty (30) working days after receipt. If such objection is received the Employer agrees to review the job description. The Union will have the right to attend such a special meeting of review. Detailed job descriptions shall mean: course number and title, required qualifications, general nature of duties and estimated hours of work. Departments may combine these job descriptions with the job postings outlined in Article 13.01.

Any questions about TA rights?

For more questions you can contact TA Union president at president@cupe2278.ca

Your communication will be confidential.

Addressing Your Challenges: Group Activities

Introduce yourselves :)

Round 1, 7 minutes, as a group:

1. Read the challenge
2. In column 1, post a strategy to address the challenge after it has happened.
3. Don't write anything in the column on the right

Round 2, 7 minutes, as a group:

1. Rotate to the next challenge on the next slide (#6)
 2. Write down strategies to prevent this challenge before it happens
-

Break

An Effective Working Relationship Model:

Build Trust

Communicate Efficiently

Align Expectations

- Students - TAs - Faculty
- Clarify **needs and expectations**
- Be transparent about your needs
- Share **priorities & goals**
- Discuss **boundaries**
- Identify **preferred mode & timing for communication**

Define Success

- Identify the success criteria for the teaching team

Model Time Management

- Set guidelines
- Invite updates

Get the Support They Need

- TA Union
- Departmental TA Support
- Experienced TA

Help Them See Blindspots

- Ask if you can share feedback they may not be aware of
-

Building your own model!

- On your own, begin to build your communication plan
 - 5 minutes
 - Use slide, or not
 - Copy and paste in your 'teaching' or 'course' folder
 - Draft your initial email to TA
 - Check departmental support
-

Sharing your thoughts

What is important for you and your TAs?

Additional communication templates

Additional Resources: Sample Agreement documents:

This is a working document that you can modify for your own use.

For a sample of communication please see:

1. **LFS TA Orientation Guide for Instructors & TAs:**

<http://blogs.ubc.ca/lfsta/files/2021/05/LFS-TA-Orientation-Guide-2014-FINAL-UPDATE.doc>

2. **UVIC Overview of Primary TA responsibilities:**

<https://www.uvic.ca/socialsciences/economics/assets/docs/graduate/Overview%20of%20Primary%20TA%20Responsibilities.pdf>

3. **Guide for developing Communication document for teaching team for online:**

https://wiki.ubc.ca/images/0/00/Sample_Communication_Contract_%28Teaching_with_TAs_Online%29_%282%29.docx

4. **Our draft Agreement Document:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1kCmV660NRphYVDsx_zYrZy5nwzKpqaxj/view?usp=share_link

Teaching as a Team!

- What are the **benefits** of discussing teaching related challenges **as a faculty-TA team**?
 - What **suggestions** do you have for someone who didn't take this workshop about how to set up and have this discussion?
-

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Thank you!

Thank you, from Shaya and me!

We wish you a smooth term 1!

Creating a Communication Agreement

In your group: (7 min)

- Go through the other group's themes and add to them/build on them.

Debrief from Breakout Rooms

You now have a document that you can draw on to create or co-create a communication agreement with your TA.

Here is another sample of what you can use to frame your communication contract for your reference:

[Sample Communication Document for Teaching Team](#)

It will be circulated after the workshop as well!

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Feedback:



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