

Weill Cornell Graduate School Teaching Assistantship (TA) Policy

Derived from Cornell University Policy 1.3 and Guidelines for Graduate Teaching Assistantships (CALs)

This policy will be distributed to course directors and module leaders and included with the TA permission forms and requires signed acknowledgment. It is required that a course director/module leader/faculty member will be present at every session. Faculty are expected to evaluate all components of a course they are directly involved in that are part of the grading rubric, including exams, presentations and participation and submit their own evaluations of the students' grade and performance to the course director.

This policy is designed to promote effective communication of expectations between TAs and the course directors/module leaders. Course Directors are responsible for oversight and should provide clear guidance and appropriate training for assistantship duties, observe the TA when conducting assistantship duties, provide regular feedback to assistants as part of the general mentoring experience, and explain the grading rubric to the TA.

Requirements of a TA:

- Have an appropriate background in the subject of the course.
- Be expected to attend all lectures or other class meetings.

Functions of a TA:

- Prepare for lectures (e.g., preparing the classroom, AV equipment, handouts, etc.).
- Attend all lecture sessions.
- Take attendance and cross reference with the list from the registrar.
- Attend staff/preparation meetings.
- Provide technical assistance.
- Lead discussion sections.
- Provide tutoring and/or review sessions.
- Be aware of resources that support student achievement and refer students to them.
- Assist with preparation of assessments (exams, quizzes, etc.).
- Proctor exams.
- Grade papers, quizzes, and exams if the instructor provides clear guidance and rubrics for grading.
- Monitor student performance.
- Be alert to students who have been absent, not submitted assignments, or not engaged with the course. This should be reported to the course director.
- Provide feedback to course director about the students and the course.

Functions that TAs should not perform:

- Assign final grades for individual students.

The Course Director should:

- Clearly communicate the expectations and responsibilities of the TA at the start of the course.
- Discuss professionalism, ethical behavior, academic integrity, and other issues.

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- Discuss the TA's role in helping students with assignments.
- Meet and communicate with the TA regularly throughout the course.
- If attendance is required, review how to record and document.
- If the TA will be grading exams and assignments, provide the grading rubrics and grading scale.
- Encourage TAs to respond to student questions and to grade assignments in a timely manner.
- Assure that the TA understands that (s)he should be excused from grading a student's assignment/exam if (s)he currently or has had a relationship with that student.
- Inform the TA that the ultimate responsibility for assigning grades belongs to the course director.
- Inform the TA that confidentiality must be maintained regarding students with whom they work.
- Ask the TA for feedback throughout the semester so that adjustments can be made in the course.
- Regularly provide feedback to the TA regarding his/her performance.
- Attend all lectures or assign a faculty member who can provide feedback on the lecture(s) missed.

TA Signature:

Course Director Signature:

