



**Working Effectively with Your Teaching Assistant:
*Developing and maintaining a strong instructor-teaching assistant relationship***
([view online here](#))

First Meeting

- Have an agenda (see page 17 of resource #4 below).
- Spend time getting to know one another.
- Clearly define the specific roles and responsibilities of each TA. This could include a group discussion about social norms / ground rules that they will be expected to observe as a TA in your department.
- Share your expectations of them, and invite them to share theirs with you. Keep a note of these.
- Share and talk through the syllabus with them (including the course learning objectives, and assessments throughout the semester). This provides context for the work that they will be doing for you.

Throughout the Semester

- Meet regularly throughout the semester to gauge how they feel the class is going and to see what issues they may have experienced in their work. These need not be formal, and can be a great space to reflect and relax.
- Check in with them as students (not as your TA) -- how are they doing in their own courses?

End of Semester

- Debrief the course with your TAs. What worked for the students? What didn't work?
- Review what you (and/or they) could have done to improve the course and their experience.

Always Remember To:

- Provide your TAs with a list of campus resources for academic and non-academic purposes: Health & Counseling, Financial Aid, the VISA Office, Writing Center, Food Bank, and so on. (TAs are student-facing and may be asked by students for non-academic support.)
- Respect your TAs' perspectives and experiences - they are often at the front line, and may have more insight about what's going on than you do.
- Remember that your TAs are still learning -- about the course content and their levels of interpersonal skills. Give them space and grace to learn.

Resources

1. Mowreader, A. [Academic Success Tip: Investing in Effective TA Work](#). Inside Higher Education, December 19, 2023.
2. University of Massachusetts Amherst, [How Do I Work Effectively with Teaching Assistants?](#) Accessed January 30, 2025.
3. Columbia University CTL, [FAQs for Teaching Assistants](#), accessed January 30, 2025.
4. University of Pittsburgh University Center for Teaching and Learning, [Working With Your TA](#), 2018.
5. Carnegie Mellon University Eberly Center for Teaching Excellence, [Collected Wisdom: Strategies and Resources from TAs for TAs](#), 2007.

Content and curation by Jennifer Hadingham, PhD, Instructor and Associate Director of UCITE

This information can also be found at

<https://case.edu/ucite/teaching-resources/working-effectively-your-teaching-assistant>.

© University Center for Innovation in Teaching and Education, Case Western Reserve University, 2025

TA Duties Checklist (annotate as needed)

Adapted from: *Working with Your TA*, University Center for Teaching & Learning, University of Pittsburgh

- Course planning
 - Assist in the planning/revision of a course _____
 - Create a syllabus _____
 - Review materials developed by the supervisor _____
- Teaching
 - Labs _____
 - Recitations _____
 - Clinical skills _____
 - Pre-labs _____
 - Remediation sessions _____
 - In-class small group facilitation _____
- Creating materials
 - Quizzes _____
 - Rubrics _____
 - Exam questions _____
 - Entire exams _____
 - Problem sets _____
 - Assignments _____
 - Handouts _____
 - Online information _____
 - Lab activities _____
- Administrative duties
 - Mentor undergraduate students _____
 - Mentor new graduate students _____
 - Hold office/student hours _____

- Administrative duties (cont.)
 - Proctor exams _____
 - Take attendance _____
 - Manage student grades _____
 - Update course on Canvas _____
 - Update social media _____
- Grading and feedback
 - Quizzes _____
 - Exams _____
 - Problem sets _____
 - Papers and essays _____
 - Lab reports _____
 - Class participation _____
 - Clinical skills _____
- Other duties
 - Organize/supervise students or drive vehicles for field trips

 - Collect, manage, and or set up audiovisual equipment

 - Attend the class for which they are a TA _____
 - Other: _____
 - Other: _____
 - Other: _____

Each of these tasks need to be a) detailed in full, and in writing, and b) discussed with students before they take up their TA duties. This should prevent any misunderstandings during the semester.