

Team Meeting Guidelines

First Team Meeting

1. Duties: TA, faculty, lead TA

TA office hours.

- The TAs are expected to hold their office hours in room 140. The reason this is done is so room 140 becomes a 'drop-in center' for the students where they can go for help.
- Previously the front office has given each team the hours available for their TAs. With the front office responsible for the staffing of room 140, there is usually always at least one TA in the room. However, this system does not give the TAs the freedom to find a time that is convenient to meet with their students. Instead, the students deal with any TA in room 140. It has been suggested that the current system undermines the team concept.
- As a team you will need to settle on office hours and the room 140 issue described above.

Setting the agenda and running meetings

- One way to make the TAs feel as if they are part of a team and not just following orders is to decide who will run the team meeting. This duty could be the responsibility of the lead TA or shared amongst all members of the team. Traditionally the lecturer has done this job.

Expectations of TAs

- Are the TAs expected to attend lectures? How often will TAs proctor and grade?
- Most TAs want to know at this meeting what is expected of them beyond their teaching for the term.

Expectations of lecturer

- Where will the lecturer be during the exams? Will the lecturer grade any questions?
- Another way to make TAs feel a part of the team is if the lecturer helps with some of the more tedious, yet vital duties.
- Sometimes issues arise when proctoring or grading (e.g. cheating) that only the lecturer is qualified to deal with. If the lecturer is helping in these duties, then the issues can be handled when they arise.

Writing problems

- Who will create the problems for discussion sections and for exams? Alone or with help?
- Creating and checking problems for the students is a duty that can be shared.

Other issues

- Should a schedule of everyone's duties for the quarter be created?
- Will a problem-solving strategy be used by the lecturer?
- What will be the first lab assignment? What will be done on the first day of discussion?
- Who is in charge of switching students into different sections and adding new students? (Important: Remember for all computer based labs, there is a maximum of 18 possible students per section.)

2. TA Support

Will the professor visit TA classes? What is the role of the mentor TAs?

One of the hot issues at the All-TA meetings has been the issue of autonomy.

- Is the TA free to teach however they please or must they do what the team decides?
- "Does anybody have the right to tell me how to teach in my classes?"
- Do TAs have academic freedom or are they simply following orders?
- "Where am I allowed to improvise when teaching?"
- The team needs to agree on some guidelines to address the issue of TA autonomy.

3. Policies

Cheating

- In the Instructor's Handbook, there is a section on what the TA should do if cheating is suspected. This should be reviewed by the team.
- Any statement that the lecturer makes to the students about cheating should be reviewed for the team.
- This will ensure that the entire team is familiar with the same cheating policy.

Syllabus - Grading scheme

- Pat's Zeroth Law - students value their grade, so if you want the students to do something, grade them for it.
- Special grading policies: What to do:
 - ◆ about regrades?
 - ◆ about late assignments?
 - ◆ when a student misses a discussion section during non-quiz weeks?
 - ◆ about lab computer prep programs?

Lab Grading

- Discuss lab report grading outline based on the one provided in the lab manual.

4. Respecting the party line and the team

- Discuss all class policies and come to a consensus.
- Make sure everyone supports the policies even though there may be disagreement.
- Everybody in the team should present a unified front to the students. Students have been known to try to play the TA off the instructor and vice versa.
- In front of the students, The TA/lecturer is always right. The time to discuss problems with what someone had said or done is not in front of the student. Every member of the team should support one another even if that means annoying the students.
- Listen, pay attention, and contribute during the team meetings.

5. General

- What is the copy code number?
- When will the team meeting be held? Where?

- As a team, you should decide upon contingency lesson plans for lab and recitation. What will you do if you do not have enough equipment? If you can't make it to your teaching sections? You should decide upon a plan as a team before the first lab and recitation.

Each Team Meeting

Lecture

- Where is the class? What topics are covered in lecture?
- How far do you plan to get?
- Any demonstration related to lab or discussion section problem?

Lab

- What problem(s) will be done this week?
- What should TAs expect from student predictions?
- What are some discussion topics related to the problems this week?
- What problem(s) will be assigned for next week?
- What constitutes an acceptable answer for the prediction to receive points?
- Allow some prep time for the team - review instructor's guide
- How was last week's lab: problems, observations, concerns?
- Prep programs - how much time are students spending?

Discussion section

- What is the problem for this week? Proof-read solution too!!!
- How was last week's problem?
- What kind of questions were raised?
- What kind of mistakes were made?
- Who is creating next week's problem?
- What will be on the equation sheet, if anything? or, what equations should TAs write on the board?

General

- How many hours are TAs spending related to class?
- Is this where you expected them to spend their time?
- Have you asked for everyone's opinion or have only a few TAs spoken up?

Last Team Meeting

- Discuss how student evaluations will be conducted.
- Any post class measures?
- Evaluate your team.

Team Meetings Prior To Quizzes

1. For group quiz problem:

- Proof-read problem and solution.
- What level of intervention should be expected (see below for levels of intervention) and when should the intervention take place?
- Who will grade group problems?
- What will be done about students who missed the previous week's practice problem?

Three Types of Intervention During Group Quizzes: One of the concerns about group quizzes is how much help the TA is allowed to give during the group problem. In the past, when one TA gave more help than other TAs, the students found out and began to get rowdy - with good reason. Even with a renormalization of the grades, the students were treated unfairly. This issue needs to be addressed before every group quiz, just so everyone knows.

Another concern about the group quizzes is that it is VERY important that the students are successful in solving problems in groups. The students must value solving problems in groups or they will become antagonistic about cooperative groups. This means that good group problems are needed and TAs must be allowed to intervene to ensure success.

Apart from no intervention (TA sits in front and lets groups work), there are three levels of intervention, in order from lowest to highest:

Level	What it means	What it sounds like
Group Functioning	TA intervenes at the group functioning level to guide the students toward an answer.	"Manager or summarizer, does everyone understand the problem?" "Who is the skeptic in this group?"
Problem Solving	TA uses the problem solving strategy to offer hints to a group of students.	"Did you read the problem twice?" "You might want to spend some more time working on your force diagram."
Physics	The TA gives physics related hints, usually to the entire class to ensure fairness.	"Is there an acceleration in this problem?" "What is the effect of the wind on the airplane?"

2. Who will proctor?

- Any special instructions?

3. Who will Proof-read quiz?

- The proctors need to see the quiz beforehand. Who else sees the quiz before it is given?

4. Grading

Team Meeting Guidelines

- Who will grade?
- Will the grading be done all at once or can TAs take tests home?
- How will the lecturer's expectations and standards of grading be communicated?
- Who will post the average score on the quiz? section grades?
- How will the quizzes be returned to the students?