Rules and Policies for Duties of TAs

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The purpose of this document is to put down the departmental rules, policies and guidelines regarding the duties of the TAs. This document does not address the question of which category of student can become a TA. This should be answered as per the Institute rule. This document has evolved out of the *Sheshadri docuement* after carefully including few missing points. This document is intended to be a comprehensive document with respect to TA policies and rules. However, we do recognize that there may be some aspects which may have been missed inadvertently. As and when such cases are encoutered they will be added to this document.

This department acknowledges that TAs are also students. Hence, the department will try to allocate TA duties to avoid any conflict with TA's course work. However, there may be situations when this may not be possible.

TAs are expected to be responsible for the work assigned to them, and should carry it out professionally, with the highest level of integrity, ethical standards, and quality.

Note that the position *Teaching Assistant (TA)* is a just a placeholder, i.e., it does not mean that a TA will only be involved in teaching work. A TA will be assigned duty based on the requirement of the department at the time. A TA, for example, may be asked to maintain department webpage.

1. How many hours should a TA work?

   The TA duty of a student should not exceed 8 hours per week.

2. What if the assigned TA duty has a conflict with a course the TA wants to register?

   The PG faculty advisor (who is responsible for TA allocation), should consider shuffling the TA allocation to resolve the conflict in favour of the TA. However, there may be situations when this may not be possible. In such a case, the TA will be asked not to register for the course.

3. What should be the TA's protocol of interaction with the faculty member?

   The faculty member can spell out the interaction protocol to the TA in the first meeting. Otherwise, the following default protocol should be followed.

   (a) After TA allocations have been finalized, the TA must report to her supervisor within the next three working days.

   (b) Emails should generally be answered within ONE working day.

4. What procedure the TA should follow if she wants to take leave?

   The TA must obtain permission for leave from the department and inform the same to the instructor, in advance. The advance notice should be given as early as possible. Of course, the above rule does not apply in case of emergency, although every effort should be made to inform the faculty member about the sudden absence (e.g., phone call to main CSE office, or asking a friend to relay the message of sudden absence or sending an email to the faculty member). TAs must realize that their supervisors may be counting on their presence for some critical course-related work.

5. What happens if a TA does not perform her duty satisfactorily?

If a TA does not perform her duty satisfactorily, then the faculty should report it to the PG faculty advisor and to the Head. We are working towards introducing P/NP grade for TA duty. If that is approved, the instructor may consider awarding NP grade to the TA.

6. What are the set of duties a TA can be asked to perform?

We enumerate different duties that a TA may be asked to perform. While we try that this set of duties is *complete*, the department/faculty reserves the right to ask for any other duties not covered here as and when it deems necessary. However, if the TA feels that the duty being assigned is not appropriate as TA duty, he should appeal to the DPGC.

   (a) Attending Classes: If the TA is asked to attend classes by the instructor, then attending one hour of class accounts for one hour of TA duty.
   (b) Teaching a class: A TA should be asked to teach a class only in exceptional circumstances where the faculty member cannot take the class nor can he find another faculty as replacement.
   (c) Conducting Tutorials: The TA should count the number of hours spent on preparing for the tutorial and the hours spent in the tutorial class towards her TA duty.
   (d) Help students with difficulties: TA's could have regular office hours of at most two hours a week during which doubts about the course can be directed to the TA.
   (e) Grading answer books, assignments and conducting vivas
   (f) Invigilation during tests and quizzes.
   (g) Conducting Lab.
   (h) Maintaining software and hardware and information related to academic activities in the department
   (i) Developing and maintaining the course web page. The TA should keep the web page up-to-date.
   (j) Porting, testing, developing or installing software related to course or lab.
      Note: TA's own research work (for thesis) or research with a faculty in his lab cannot be counted towards her TA-ship hours.

7. What does a TA do if she is overworked?

First, the TA should try to resolve it by dicussing the problem with the instructor. If that fails, the TA should bring the issue to the notice of DPGC.

8. What happens if a TA has less or no work in a week?

If any other course has additional requirement of TA duty then the underworked TA can be assigned to the other course for the week.

9. How does a faculty member keep track of number of hours spent by a TA?

The TA is expected to maintain a journal where she records her activity each week which can be used for tracking the number of hours spent by a TA in a week.

10. When are TA's assigned for a course?

The TAs should be assigned by December 15th for the Spring semester and by July 1st for the Autumn semseter.

11. Who allocates TA's?

The PG faculty advisors will be responsible for TA allocation.

12. Do TA's work in the Summer also?

    The PG faculty advisors should make sure that some parity is maintained between TAs who work during Summer and those who do not. So, the TAs who work during Summer should be given less load during Autumn and Spring semesters and the ones who do not work during Summer should be given more load during the Autumn and Spring semesters.

    Note: Some labs like the software and the research labs may benefit from having TAs throughout the year. Some courses may also benefit if the TAs could prepare early.

13. What are the guidelines for allocating TA's to courses?

    The following guidelines are suggested for TA allocation.

    (a) CS 101 (One per twenty students plus one per sixty students to coordinate)
    (b) UG Labs (One per twenty students for a three credit lab)
    (c) UG Courses (One per thirty students)
    (d) PG Lab (One per twenty students)
    (e) PG Courses (One per thirty students). Note that the TA in a PG course should not have registered as a student in the same course.
    (f) If a course also has an associated lab, then the number of TAs assigned to the course will be larger of the number calculated for the theory part and lab part as per the guideliness above (as opposed to the sum of the two numbers).
    (g) Research Labs (One per lab)
    (h) Other Professional Activities of the department (based on demand and supply)
    (i) If department does not get enough RAs to work as sysads, then TAs may be assigned sysad duties.

    The determination of the person to be allotted to a particular duty will be based on the faculty preferences. Every faculty gives a prioritised list of students for each duty they oversee. If there are students not in the prioritsed list it is assumed that they are of the lowest priority and the faculty has no particular preferences between them.

    In practice, the above lists will be partial. The TA allocation committee based on the following information can extend it to a complete list.

    (a) A student is assigned to a guide if possible
    (b) A student is assigned to a duty he/she is better equipped to be a TA for (equipped is defined by the concerned faculty in terms of what knowledge/skills he/she expects the student to possess)

    These lists can then be used to come up with a assignment that is satisfactory.