

TIPS FOR COMPLETING THE NEW DDAH FORM (September 2014)

Initial section

The fields for Department, Course Code, Course Title, and Supervising Professor are straightforward.

Tutorial Category. If your course has formal tutorials, enter “Discussion-based” and click on mandatory. If your course does not have tutorials, enter “No tutorials”.

Est. Enrolment/TA. For this field, enter $.9E/T$, where E=the initial enrollment of your course and T=the number of TAs. The .9 factor takes account of normal attrition. The resulting number should approximate the number of students whose work the given TA will grade.

Expected Enrolment. If your course does **not** have tutorials, leave this field blank. If your course has tutorials, divide the number listed in Est. Enrolment/TA by the number of tutorials the TA will lead. You should assume that a TA have 3 tutorials, unless the TA Coordinator tells you otherwise. The resulting number should be 30 or lower. Do **NOT** check the box indicating that Training for Scaling is required.

Allocation of Hours Worksheet section

Your TAs perform duties that fall under the general headings of Preparation, Contact, Marking, and Other Duties. But you should describe their duties more specifically: the third page of the form provides some useful specific labels. If, in a given row, you enter the # of Units and Time/Task, the form will calculate the number for the Total Time column in that row. You can, however, enter hours in the Total Time column without making entries in the # of Units and Time/Task columns.

Do **NOT** allocate hours to training unless instructed by the TA Coordinator.

The form will calculate the sum of hours in the Total Time column at the bottom of the worksheet.

Training section

Do **NOT** check any boxes in this section, unless the TA Coordinator informs you that the TA in question is being trained within the department. If you are

informed that your TA is receiving training, check **ONLY** the Discussion-based Tutorial box (unless otherwise instructed).

Allocation of Hours Summary section

Sum up the hours listed on the Allocation of Hours Worksheet according to the general heading the duty falls under. (The list on page three of the form may help in this regard.) Do NOT make an entry for the Training or Additional Training headings unless instructed to do so by the TA Coordinator. The form will calculate the total.

Signature section

After reviewing the form with your TA, sign the form, have the TA sign the form, and submit the form to the TA Coordinator for approval. It's recommended that you keep a copy of the submitted form.

Two points to note:

1. The electronic form can be saved after you've filled it in.
2. The button to Submit by Email will generate a message containing only the data for the fields; it is NOT a tool for sending information to the TA Coordinator. Please submit a print copy or submit electronic copy by attaching the document to an email.

The Declaration of Duties and Allocation of Hours (DDAH) Form

Teaching Assistants are members of the labor union, CUPE 3902. TAs cannot be required to work more than the number of hours specified in their contract. The Declaration of Duties and Allocation of Hours form (DDAH.) is the official description of the work that TAs are to accomplish in their contracted hours. TAs should be expected to do the work described in the DDAH form effectively and efficiently provided that expectations are reasonable and clearly communicated.

Normally, if you teach a very large course (100+ students) you will have enough TA hours to do almost all of the marking if the assignment load is average. If you have under 100 students or a large assignment load, expect to do some of the marking yourself. Your TA is not contracted to do all the grading work for you – whether the number of hours is sufficient depends how much grading work there is to be done. A TA with 120 hours could have as few as 80 hrs for grading when all the other duties have been assigned.

- **Do** expect your TAs to work effectively for all of the hours allotted.
- **Do NOT** expect/hope/suggest/even dream that they work more than those hours.
- **Do** include a detailed breakdown of the hours on the D.D.A.H. form. (It can be revised part-way through the term.)
- **Do** include 15 hrs of lecture attendance per term if you teach at St. George. (exception SG Logic PHL 245) **THIS IS REQUIRED FOR SG TEACHING ASSISTANTS.**
- **Do** remember that this document must be reviewed mid-term and can be revised.
- **Do** give TAs explicit marking instructions. It is best to hold benchmarking sessions for writing assignments; that's an opportunity to get clear about what counts as an A, B, C, D and F. A Feedback meeting to review comments on a few papers is also a best practice. But at least tell your TAs how many comments of what type you expect; what grade distribution you expect; whether they should record grades; etc.
- **Do** discuss how fast you expect to have marked assignments returned to you (in general, try to return marked work to undergrads within two weeks.) You probably want them a day or two before you plan to return them.
- **Do** remind your TAs that they should contact you immediately if marking or other duties are taking longer than expected or if they encounter problems.
- **Do** remember that what TAs don't do you are responsible for.
- **Do** contact the TA Coordinator (ta.phil@utoronto.ca) if (and as soon as) there is a serious problem.

General Instructions for filling out the DDAH Form:

Training: List 0 hours unless instructed otherwise by the TA Coordinator.

Preparation:

Lecture attendance: On the St. George campus, this is 15 hours a term for each TA (an hour a week and a few extra) for regular lecture attendance. The exception is logic, PHL 245, where no lecture attendance is required (nor is any time allotted for this.) You should work out with your TA when they are expected to attend lectures (it's nice to have them there during tests, to hand back assignments, etc.). Although TA's schedules were considered, TAs may not be available for all lecture hours. They should be available for at least a third of the hours - if that is not the case, please alert the TA Coordinator, who will decide how to proceed.

At UTSC, there is no general rule requiring instructors to require lecture attendance. But an instructor may, at her or his discretion, include lecture attendance among the requirements of a TA or grading position.

On the Mississauga campus, it is optional. The UTM contract, like the SG contract, includes 15 hrs per term per TA for attendance, liaising with the instructor or other duties. You decide with your TA what is reasonable - often it is not practical to use this for class attendance (this is especially true for graders). But, you may need them there at times to invigilate, hand back assignments or meet with students.

Reading Course Material: How much time should the TA spend reading the course material? You should discuss this with the TA to determine what material he/she is already familiar with. If the TA is marking assignments that are based on only part of the course's reading material, take that into consideration. The number of hours that people allot for this varies dramatically - you might want to consider an hour of reading a week as a starting point and adjust accordingly. Often it is between 5-12 hrs per term.

Additional Preparation: this is especially important for Tutorial Leaders. How much time should the TA spend preparing tutorials, handouts, quizzes, etc.? You might consider one to two preparation hours for each week of tutorials depending on what you are having them do in the tutorials. (Normally, Tutorial Leaders do two to four sections of the same 'tutorial' each week.)

Contact hours:

This is contact between the TA and students - office hours, tutorials, email contact, meeting with students to return or discuss marked work. If you have

tutorials, consider how many weeks of tutorials there will be, and how many hours of tutorials per week each TA will do (usually 3, sometimes 4). General office hours often run about 11 to 13 weeks per term - this is your call. Consider whether there will be a need for further hours at the end of term, before exams or when work is returned. If you have tutorial leaders, it is often good to allow for a regularly scheduled office hour once a week (they can use it to prep if nobody shows up.)

Think carefully before allotting hours to TAs for email contact. Email takes much longer than one anticipates, and can quickly eat up the hours. DEFINITELY read the section about email policy in the [instructor's manual](#) and recognize that it all applies to your TAs as well.

A suggested policy: on the syllabus and website, students are informed that neither you nor the TA will answer email if the information is available on the website, or if the question is best dealt with in class (in the minutes before or after lectures) or during office hours. Students should also use a U of T email address and include the course code in the subject line. This should reduce email to mostly admin concerns ... setting up meetings, missed tests, late assignments, etc. and give you and your TAs the right to ignore other email.

Make it clear to your TA what is expected and that they should not go over allotted email hours but should discuss concerns with you early in the term if it looks like the estimate is too low.

Marking/Grading Estimated Enrolment per TA:

SEE "Marking/Grading Guidelines" below.

Other Duties:

Meetings with you: How many hours do you expect to meet with your TAs to discuss marking, procedures, etc. Usually this is just a couple hours.

Entering grades: If you expect your TAs to alphabetize the papers and record grades, you need to provide time for this.

Invigilation of tests and final exams: In large courses with final exams, you will be expected to attend with a set number of invigilators. Plan on your TAs invigilating the final exam if you have one, and leave time for set up/clean up/etc. You might want to allot 2.5 to 3 hours for a 2 hour exam; 3.5 to 4 hours for a 3 hour exam. Think about whether you want your TAs present during tests, and whether you want that to be part of lecture attendance.

Any other duties that you expect from your TAs: Whatever else you expect that is reasonable

Marking/Grading Guidelines

Est Enrolment / TA:

The Est enrolment/TA figure that you list on the DDAH should be calculated as follows:

.9E / T

where E=the initial enrollment of your course and N=the number of TAs (supposing that all your TAs are assigned the same number of hours).

The .9 factor takes account of normal attrition. The resulting number should approximate the number of students whose work the TA will grade. **USE THIS FIGURE WHEN CALCULATING MARKING HOURS.**

Expected Enrolment:

If your course does NOT have tutorials, leave this field blank. If your course has tutorials, divide the number listed in Est. Enrolment/TA by the number of tutorials the TA will lead – typically TAs lead three tutorials. (The TA Coordinator will tell you if your TA will lead some other number of tutorials.) The resulting number should be 30 or lower.

Do NOT check the box indicating that Training for Scaling is required. Tutorials are capped so that such training is not required.

Grading guidelines:

Calculate total marking time by considering the number of each type of assignment (5 page essay, 12 page paper, test, exam, etc.), number of student assignments of that type that the TA is responsible for, and the number of minutes they should spend marking each one.

Number of instances of each assignment type \times time to mark one of such an assignment \times Number of Students = total

Examples:

Two 5-7 page essays \times 20 minutes/essay \times 45 students = 30 hrs

One test \times 10 minutes/test \times 90 students = 15 hrs

How long TAs should spend marking tests and essays is hard to judge - it depends on the length, difficulty, and what sorts of comments you expect. Here are some (mere) guidelines:

Marking Quizzes: 5-10 minute range (consider whether the total must be tallied, whether comments are needed, how short the answers are...)

Marking tests: For a test that takes 50 minutes to write, a mixture of short and long answers, with few comments, 10-15 minutes to mark. If a decisive grading key can be given to your TAs, it might take as little as 5-10 minutes. If the students are writing long essay answers that they have had a chance to prepare ahead of time, and short comments expected, it could take a little longer (especially when the handwriting is poor and answers more varied), perhaps 20 minutes. Tallying grades can also take time, especially when there are a lot of questions.

If you expect the TAs to convert number grades to letter grades, or to calculate percentages, consider saving them time by giving a conversion sheet.

If your test is 75 or 100 minutes long, adjust the times accordingly.

Marking Essays: In general, shorter essays take longer (per page) than longer essays. These guidelines assume that the papers are double spaced, 12 pt font and that marking will include a couple marginal comments on most pages and a few sentences at the end addressing the essay as a whole. The first few spelling and grammar mistakes should be indicated but little time should be spent on this. Recognize also that research papers can take longer, especially if the TA will need to be looking up a lot of references. Also, if the students have a free range as to paper topics, the TAs will need more generous marking time.

2-3 page papers, critical summaries/reactions, etc. 5-15 minutes depending on whether you are looking for specific answers, how much feedback is expected, etc.

5-7 page papers: 15-20 minutes

10-12 page papers: 20-30 minutes.

Final Exams: 15-25 minutes depending on the type of questions and length of the exam, and whether you are looking for specific responses. Remember, no comments are necessary on final exams, making them a little faster to mark than tests and essays of the same length. Final exams are often 2 or 3 hours - think about how long yours will be, and whether the format will be essay questions, short answer questions, multiple choice, etc. or a combination. In general, the more explicit your marking instructions are, the more efficiently your TA can work.

Recording grades:

Make certain you and your TAs are clear about who should record grades, alphabetize the papers, etc. Make sure you give them adequate time for that; provide them with a class list, and are clear about whether to use Excel or paper, etc.

More about Marking Instructions and Efficiency:

Your TAs can mark more effectively if they have clear expectations. Tell them what you think an A, B, C, D or F looks like for that assignment. Think about what sorts of comments you want, both in the margins and at the end. Remind them to keep marginal comments to no more than one or two per page. Don't have them correct every grammatical and spelling error. Consider giving them specific instructions for end comments: for instance, a comment each about comprehension of the material, philosophical engagement with the material or defense of a thesis, writing style and mechanics, and overall impression. Discuss with them appropriate and inappropriate types of comments (for instance, comments should be constructive; ad hominem and sarcastic comments are inappropriate, etc.)

If you have more than one TA, you can increase the consistency of the TAs' marks by holding a benchmarking session, where you gather as a group to read and discuss a few papers. You also might want to have each of them hand in a couple marked tests/essays immediately, so that you can consider whether or not they are in the same ballpark on marking standards before they continue with the bulk of the assignments. Another fine practice is a feedback session where you meet with TAs to discuss the comments they've placed on papers. Doing this after a first essay will tend to improve comments for the second essay.

For tests and final exams, consider whether it is practical to have the TAs split the questions rather than the exams, so that marking is more consistent.

In the end, plagiarism and cheating problems are your problems, not the TAs. TAs should alert you to problems of that nature that they notice or suspect. TAs should NEVER discuss such issues with students; although you are welcome to have them present when you do so. Help your TA find the balance between staying alert to plagiarism and avoiding wasting too much time on it.