

Duke University Nicholas School of the Environment Teaching Assistantship Manual

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Teaching is a valuable part of your doctoral training at Duke University. Whether you continue your career in academia or you are one of the 50% that use your talents in the private sector, the skills you develop as a teaching assistant (TA) will prove an essential element of your career preparation.

Your teaching assistantship can be one of your most enjoyable and satisfying experiences at Duke University. You are given an opportunity to mentor a faculty member and educate intelligent, energized students. Your teaching assistantship should be anything but a burden; it should be considered an opportunity to learn how to effectively share your knowledge and talents with a group of interested individuals.

No one TA experience will prepare you for all situations you will encounter and all types of responsibilities you will have. Those experiences are developed over a lifetime. Your TA experience should, however, give you a flavor for how to develop, present, and evaluate a course. Additionally, you will be able to develop and practice public speaking, writing, evaluating, mentoring, and technology transfer. In summary, your TA experience will provide you with some of the tools necessary to be successful at organizing and presenting information.

Graduation Requirement

Many departments have required their graduate student to fulfill a teaching assistantship to graduate. In the Nicholas School of the Environment, your TA requirement depends on which department you are associated with. It is required that students in the Environment and EOS program serve as a TA for at least one semester. Students in the Ecology program must complete at least two semesters of TA duties.

Logistics

Classroom Reservations

In most cases, the classroom should be reserved prior to the start of your Teaching Assistantship. If you need to reserve a classroom or conference room, you should contact the following people as early as possible:

- Reservations in the LSRC (A-wing)
 - Email Donna Picard (djpicard@duke.edu) in the Dean's Office (LSRC A246)
- Reservations in Old Chemistry
 - Email Debbie Gooch (dcgooch@duke.edu; 919-684-5847)

Blackboard

Blackboard is the web server that is used for many courses. Syllabus, readings, assignments, announcements, and website links can be posted easily to the website. Emails can also be sent to the entire class or groups that are set up. To learn how to use

Blackboard, there are a number of resources available. The Office of Information Technology (OIT) offers courses periodically.

<http://www.oit.duke.edu/ats/ats/training>

Additionally, there is an online tutorial and a manual.

<http://blackboard.duke.edu>

Finally, there is an instructive and interactive CD that informs you how to use technology in the classroom and the basics of Blackboard. Blackboard Basics, developed by www.Blackboard.com, is particularly helpful if you want a self-paced tutorial on how to use Blackboard. If you still have questions on Blackboard or would like individual assistance you can contact email cit@duke.edu.

If you need to add a student from another institution (UNC, NC State, etc) or a student enrolled in the course is unable to have full access to the course, call the Blackboard Help Desk (684-2200). Often times, the student needs to be added to the Blackboard system or a block on the student needs to be removed.

Copies

Each course has funds to cover the copying costs incurred for the course. The lecturing professor should provide you with a copy card or access to the copy card for course-related copies.

The copy card can be used for Xerox machines on campus with a card reader. More specifically, all of the copiers in the LSRC, Old Chemistry, and the libraries should be able to read your copy card. In the LSRC, there are copiers in the basement, the mailroom on the first floor, and in the hallway of the second floor by the stairwell in the A-wing and in the hallway of the B-wing. If there are technical difficulties with a Xerox machine, please alert someone as soon as possible. For problems with the copiers in the A-wing of the LSRC, contact Donna Picard (djpicard@duke.edu).

E-reserves

To reduce paper waste, often readings are listed on e-reserves. E-reserves are maintained by the library system, and they will scan readings that cannot be accessed on the web. E-reserves can be submitted to Perkins library or the Biology and Environmental Sciences library. Paperclip all materials together, do not staple or bind.

If the article is already available on e-reserves, or if it is available from e-journals or a Duke database, then the article cannot be submitted for e-reserves. A link to the article can be provided in the catalog record, or you can create a link on the course website.

To place readings on e-reserves the following procedure must be followed:

Cover page

- Article title and author
- Course number
- Course instructor
- Bibliographic information (if a copy of the copyright page is not provided)

Photocopy

- Clean, easy to read copy
- 8 1/2 x 11 inch sized paper (letter)

- Single sided photocopy
- 1/2 inch margins (at least)

To access e-reserves, the materials are at www.lib.duke.edu/access/reserves/ . The reserves are also available on the course's Blackboard site.

Nicholas School Information Technology Department (IT)

A common duty for TAs is to set up audio-visual equipment (AV). Information about AV resources and other services that are provided by IT can be obtained by going to the IT website: <http://www.env.duke.edu/it> .

Fleet Training

Vehicle safety training is required of all Duke employees that will operate a Duke vehicle. The class is one hour, and it is held every two months at Duke Hospital North in Room 2002. You will be qualified for three years after attending training. If you have any questions, contact Christopher Wardell, Fleet Safety Associate (684-4481).

If you are a TA for a course that requires you to drive a Duke vehicle, you *must* participate in fleet training.

Medical Emergencies

If medical emergencies arise, Duke University has a form to be filled out. It is found at:

http://www.hr.duke.edu/forms/pdf/WRII_formA.pdf

Class Funds

All course related materials (i.e. textbooks, lab manuals, etc.) should be provided by the faculty member teaching the course. Teaching assistants should not have to make any purchases for books and materials that are required to teach the course. If purchases need to be made for a particular course, the lecturing professor should have the proper fund code that they can provide you with to make these purchases.

Each course has a different funding allotment. If course expenses will exceed the amount allocated, you need to contact Kathy Augusta (kvagusta@duke.edu). For reimbursement of course related purchases for professors in the Nicholas School, contact Nancy Morgans (nmm@duke.edu).

Textbooks

Any textbook that will be used in the course you are serving as a TA for should be ordered prior to when you begin your duties. If this task has not been completed, or an additional text needs to be ordered during the semester, the bookstore has a form that can be completed to request the desired book or books.

Any textbook and course related materials that are required for a TA to perform their duties should be provided by the lecturing professor. Occasionally, the publisher will provide the textbook to the lecturing professor and their TAs.

Management of Teaching Assistantship

Deadlines

It is important to note that the beginning, midterm, and end of each semester are typically times where you can expect to spend more time than usual grading, meeting with students, and performing administrative tasks. As a result of the university deadlines, particularly for undergraduate courses, a quick turn around for examinations may be necessary. Additionally, there are times, such as Family Weekend, where many students will not be as focused on their school work because of other commitments. Consult the Duke University Academic Calendar to note these deadlines and university-wide events.

<http://registrar.duke.edu/registrar/acad2004.htm>

Final examinations are given at the end of each term. The examination schedule is set based on the time and date that the course meets. Unless the course is specially blocked or the exam is self-scheduled, the exam will be on the scheduled exam date. If a student has three examinations scheduled within 24 hours, or if they have an exam scheduled at the same time, they need to contact their dean by the date indicated in text on the final exam schedule. The schedule is posted on the Duke University calendar site.

<http://registrar.duke.edu/registrar/fall2003examschedule.htm>

Reasonable expectations of TAs

Teaching assistants should not be expected to perform duties that would take more than 19.5 hours per week when averaged over the semester. If you find you are spending more than this amount of time to perform your duties, you should contact the Director of Graduate Studies (Environment, Ken Knoer dknoer@duke.edu; EOS, *Lincoln Pratson*: lincoln.pratson@duke.edu; Ecology, Jim Clark jimclark@duke.edu). Most students find that their teaching assistantships require 10-15 hours per week.

Teaching is an essential component of a graduate student's professional development, whether or not they continue to serve as a faculty member at a university.

Professional and Teaching Development

The Graduate School provides a number of resources and pedagogical workshops to assist you.

Pathways to the Professoriate: Developing the Teaching Skills of Graduate Students

Pathways to the Professoriate is a workshop series designed to teach you the basic elements essential for effective course development and evaluation. The topics covered include: (1) planning and designing an effective course, (2) beliefs about students and learning, (3) writing the syllabus and learning objectives, (4) selecting teaching methods and learning, (5) evaluating teaching and learning, and (6) integrative seminar on

teaching and learning. For more information and to enroll in the workshops, go to the website.

<http://www.gradschool.duke.edu/academicsupport>

Preparing Future Faculty (PFF)

Preparing Future Faculty is a national program to prepare graduate students to become faculty members at different types of academic institutions. Graduate students find a mentor at one of Duke University's partner institutions where they could participate in courses, faculty meetings, and advising. This opportunity gives graduate students first-hand experience with many of the events, responsibilities, and tasks faculty members perform. Additionally, there are site visits to other institutions, teaching discussions, and networking possibilities. Participation is granted through an application process. For more information, go to:

<http://www.ctlw.duke.edu>

GS301: Instructional Uses of Technology

Technology is increasingly becoming an essential element in classroom instruction. The Center for Instructional Technology offers a number of workshops designed to provide you with the skills to use technology in the classroom. To get credit for the course, you need to attend four workshops. Upon completion of the workshop series, you will receive a Certification of Instructional Technology on your transcript. The workshops are available throughout the year. The schedule and course information is available at:

<http://cit.duke.edu/events/graduate>

Academic Integrity

Duke University is committed to honesty and fairness in all endeavors, academic and otherwise. As a result, all matriculating students sign the Duke Community Standard pledge which states: (1) I will not lie cheat or steal, nor will I permit others to do so, and (2) I will conduct myself in an honorable and responsible manner in all activities where I represent myself as a Duke student.

It is important that violations of academic integrity be dealt with seriously. By allowing cheating and plagiarism, you are encouraging laziness: allowing dishonest students to rob honest students' work and students to claim research that is not their original idea. As a TA, if you witness or suspect actions that do not support the Duke Community Standard, you have a responsibility to take appropriate action. Call Kacie Wallace, Associate Dean for Judicial Affairs (668-3853) to discuss any potential violations of academic integrity.

For more information about academic integrity or what you can do to promote academic integrity in the classroom, consult Academic Integrity at Duke: A Guide for Teachers of Undergraduates. The Duke Honor Council, Perkins, Library, and the Center for Academic Integrity offer useful information:

<http://www.duke.edu/web/HonorCouncil/resource.htm>

<http://www.lib.duke.edu/libguide/citing.htm>

<http://www.academicintegrity.org>

Field Trips

Duke Forest

If you will be using Duke Forest in the course you TA, whether it be to tour, conduct a laboratory, or to conduct research, you must report use of your activities to the Office of the Duke Forest (LSRC Room A116; 613-8013). Forms can be obtained at the Office of the Duke Forest. This information is essential to document the variety of activities that occur in Duke Forest and to assure that there are no activities that would conflict with each other. Additionally, you will want to review the Guidelines for Academic Use of Duke Forest. To learn more about Duke Forest, go to:

<http://www.env.duke.edu/forest>

Duke Marine Laboratory

The Duke Marine Laboratory is located in Beaufort, North Carolina. The Duke Marine Laboratory offers unique educational opportunities that are only available at the coast. Contact the Duke Marine Laboratory to make arrangements to tour or use the resources (252-504-7502) To learn more about Duke Forest, go to:

<http://www.env.duke.edu/marinelab>

Duke Teaching Resources

Center for Teaching, Learning, and Writing

One of the goals of the Center for Teaching, Learning, and Writing is to help prepare graduate students to become college teachers. They offer several opportunities for graduate students to improve their teaching through seminars and competitive grants.

<http://wwwctl.duke.edu>