

## WORKING WITH YOUR TAs

Below are some tips adapted from an information sheet produced by the Centre for Teaching Innovation.

### Roles & Responsibilities (questions to ask yourself)

1. Big Picture: what are the goals of the course? (communicate this with your TA).
2. How do TAs fit into the course as a whole? How does their work help build towards course objectives?
3. For which portion(s) of the course are TAs directly responsible?
4. For what elements of student support or student skills development are TAs responsible? (i.e. writing skills? research skills? should they refer students who are in difficulty or crisis, and if so, how and where?)
5. What are *your* obligations towards the TAs?

### Expectations

Be **VERY** clear about:

1. **Deadlines. In particular, the ability to meet important deadlines such as marks submission**
2. Your expectations regarding TAs' preparedness, content competence, overall professionalism (punctuality, etc.), overall conduct, quality of feedback given to students, availability/responsiveness.
3. What TAs should expect from students: let the TAs know what kinds of students they'll be working with in this course.
4. What the TAs can expect from you: let them know.

### Communication

1. Determine how you will stay in touch with your TAs.
2. Determine how often you should check in with them and they with you.
3. Discuss with your TA how they should communicate with students (and what constitutes acceptable or unacceptable discourse).
4. TAs should acknowledge all course information and official documents received—if possible, in writing.

#### *Email Etiquette*

Recommend TAs adopt office email etiquette-assume that messages are public and could be read by anyone; all messages should have a professional tone; messages should be brief.

TAs should acknowledge ALL emails from you and from their students-they don't need to answer every message, but a brief acknowledgement should be sent/

Recommend to TAs that they:

- Be concise, polite
- Avoid teaching via email
- Never argue via email
- Never give out grades via email! (or discuss grades at all)

**NOTE: If you wish to discuss anything, or have any concerns, about working with your TA, please contact Nora Sellers, room 4026 Sidney Smith Hall, 416-978-7304, [sellers@psych.utoronto.ca](mailto:sellers@psych.utoronto.ca).**