

Department of Sociology Teaching Assistant (TA) Expectations

This document is a general guide for faculty and graduate students outlining broad duties and expectations associated with the Teaching Assistantship. Each TA is strongly encouraged to contact the instructor of record for the course they are assigned at least one week in advance of the start of the semester to talk through specific expectations for the instructor and the course.

I. Workload

- As specified on page 8 of the Sociology Graduate Handbook (Spring 2020 revision) TAs provide 20 hours of work per week related to the course they are assigned. TAs should strive for the highest quality, professional, interactions with the undergraduate students enrolled in the course and the instructor of record. Remember that you are a representative of the Department of Sociology at Washington State University. In return for your service as a TA to the department you receive a stipend and a tuition waiver.
- Note the appointment dates of the TA position as specified in your offer letter. Be sure to communicate with the instructor before planning any leave that precludes you from completing your duties.

II. Expectations and Behavior

- Be punctual – this is your job. As such, you are expected to be on time to class and other meetings as specified by the instructor. Often, an instructor will also specify a timeframe for completing graded assignments. If, for any reason, you are unable to meet deadlines or come to class or other meetings you should let your instructor know as soon as possible.
- Communication – email has become a primary mode of communication in academic settings. As such, you are expected to acknowledge email correspondence from the instructor of the course and respond accordingly within a reasonable time frame. For many instructors, this request is specified as within 24 hours. You are also expected to maintain lines of communication with students enrolled in the course as specified by the instructor.
- Model the behavior expected of students enrolled in the course per the course syllabus. Treat the course content and students with respect. Use proper grammar, punctuation, spelling, etc. in all communication with students.
- Familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, including course policies and exam dates.
- Course duties – these will vary by course and it is important for you to understand all the requirements of the particular course you are serving as TA for. Many general duties include complete the reading for the course as specified in the syllabus; attend course meetings; grade assignments/exams as needed by the instructor; manage the Learning Management System website and/or gradebook for the course; hold office hours; create assignments; facilitate discussion; create and present a guest lecture.

III. Questions and Concerns

- If you have questions or concerns, start by communicating with the instructor of the course. If a resolution cannot be reached discuss any further issues with the Director of Graduate Studies.
- Also refer to the WSU Graduate School's TA Rights and Responsibilities documentation (<https://gradschool.wsu.edu/assistantships/>).