

Teaching Assistant - Job Description

(Updated: Summer 2026)

As a Teaching Assistant (TA) in the Department of Political Science, you will receive a course assignment (or assignments) based on the teaching needs of the department curriculum; the demands of the course; as well as your background, experience level, etc. By default, TA appointments will be 50% FTE.

The Associate Chair will be your official supervisor. However, whenever possible, first consult with your supervising instructor regarding any questions or concerns. You may also contact the Director of Academic Services or the Department Chair for assistance.

Course Assignments

Course assignments, including the name of your supervising instructor, will be provided in advance by the Associate Chair or their designee. All other details of your appointment (such as effective dates and compensation) will be provided in your appointment offer letter.

- **Lecture Course with Quiz Sections:**
50% FTE Teaching Assistants, when assigned to a lecture course that has quiz sections will generally be responsible for two (2) quiz sections (approximately 35 students each). Work with your supervising instructor to understand and manage specific needs and expectations for the course.
- **Lecture Course without Quiz Sections:**
50% FTE Teaching Assistants, when assigned to a lecture course that does not have quiz sections will be responsible for supporting the full enrollment of the course if one TA is assigned or sharing support if multiple TAs are assigned. Work with your supervising instructor to understand and manage specific needs and expectations for the course.

Lecture and Quizzes (if applicable) Responsibilities

- From the first day of instruction through the end of the quarter, be seated in the lecture hall at the scheduled class time and for the duration of the class. For classes taught asynchronously, watch/read all materials posted by the instructor.
- Consult with instructor about quiz syllabus. Prepare and distribute quiz syllabus only after instructor approval.

- Prepare for and conduct every quiz at scheduled times through the last day of instruction.
- Facilitate discussions
- Prepare review materials. Hold review sessions as needed.
- Request and/or acquire course equipment
- Hold regular office hours, 2 hours per week
- Tutor students
- Provide feedback on paper drafts as directed by the instructor or when students schedule in advance and submit as agreed

Faculty Supervisor and Department Communication

- For dates between notification of your TA assignment and the start of the quarter, notify faculty supervisor of all dates you will be unavailable by email or in another time zone.
- In cases of absence, late arrival, or early departure from required activities (lecture, quiz, meetings, trainings, etc.), notify your supervising instructor in writing as soon as possible.
- When absence from teaching duties is unavoidable, such as a sudden illness or injury, immediately notify the instructor. Where possible, make arrangements for quiz coverage by other TAs.
- If section(s) must be cancelled, also notify the Director of Academic Services and the Department Main Office (polisci@uw.edu) about posting cancellation notices. Notify students.
- Ensure timely and accurate tracking of time off (holiday and sick time) in Workday according to UW policies. <https://hr.uw.edu/studentemployment/time-off-and-leave-policies/academic-student-employees/time-off-policies/>
- If you will be late for any pre-scheduled duties, such as meeting grading deadlines and attending TA meetings, immediately notify faculty supervisor.
- Report any issues with students or other TAs to the instructor in a timely manner
- Report any issues with instructor to the *Associate Chair and *Director of Academic Services.

Exams and Grading

- Prepare test questions and/or topics for paper assignments
- Proctor exams
- Track student assignment completion and participation
- Score papers/exams/assignments and provide written feedback according to faculty supervisor instructions.
- Maintain grading records according to faculty supervisor instructions

- Meet grading deadlines for each assignment as established by the faculty supervisor and agreed to by the TA team.
- Respond quickly to instructor grading feedback, questions about grading decisions, and grading adjustments.
- Provide instructor with requested grade information (median exam grades, etc.)
- Calculate quarter grades according to faculty supervisor instruction
- Provide instructor with a breakdown of each student's final grades

Submit grades via GradePage as directed by the instructor. Information about GradePage and quarterly deadlines are posted at <https://registrar.washington.edu/staff-faculty/grading-resources/>. **For each deadline, grades must be submitted BEFORE GradePage closes at 5 p.m.**

Course Email and Canvas

- Respond to course-related e-mail and messages in Canvas in a professional and timely manner
- Receive and grade student assignments and exams
- Provide formative assessments and feedback to students
- Accurately track student grades throughout the term as directed by the instructor.

Materials Preparation

- Read assigned course materials in advance of deadlines
- Place course materials on library reserve
- Prepare supplemental materials

Other Duties

- Attend training programs as required/recommended
- Attend and actively participate in all course meetings
- Refer students needing help to appropriate offices
- Act as liaison between students and professor
- Comply with Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)
- Follow UW Records Retention Schedule requirements
- Record holiday and other leave in Workday.
- Promote completing end-of-quarter quiz evaluation form to students.
- Sign Instructor Evaluation of TA form by deadline.
- Other duties as assigned