

# Potential T.A. Roles

## T.A. Planning and Resources

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The Center for Teaching and Learning

**Think we're missing something? Feel free to contact the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) at [ctl@hampshire.edu](mailto:ctl@hampshire.edu)!**

The idea behind articulating these roles is to help faculty and students consider the different responsibilities a T.A. might have, and to support the negotiation of the role any one TA will play in the class. We urge faculty and TA's to meet before the semester starts, or right at the beginning, to make sure you are in agreement.

### CATEGORIES OF TA WORK

TA's typically take on work that falls into four categories, though most TA's do a variety of tasks that cross these categories, as negotiated with the faculty:

- 1) Logistical tasks
- 2) Technical skill support
- 3) Content support
- 4) Co-facilitator/Pedagogical partner

#### LOGISTICAL TASKS

- Schedules class trips to other locations, and helps make sure students know when and how they can get there (especially in classes with first-year students)
- Keeps track of who completes Moodle posts
- Technical skills support for the professor (relating to computer, Moodle, Internet, etc.)
- Takes attendance
- Posts readings and other materials to the Moodle site
- Gathers resources from the library

#### TECHNICAL SKILLS TASKS

- Runs labs outside of class
- Teaches and assists students in the learning of different tools and equipment needed for the course
- Assists students in the handling on equipment
- If applicable, helps students locate where on campus they can borrow that equipment, or where they can purchase or rent equipment

# Potential T.A. Roles, continued

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## TA Supports

Contact the writing center to see if they are running their TA support class - this is especially important for TA's who will be reading and responding to student work.

## CONTENT TASKS

- Has likely taken the course before, if not has completed very similar coursework
- Has intimate knowledge of the course material
- The T.A.'s Divisional work likely has a strong or significant relation to the course material
- Can be called upon to assist students in their work because of their knowledge of the material
- Might be a reader of student work

**DISCUSS WHETHER OR NOT IT MAKES SENSE FOR THE TA TO HOLD OFFICE HOURS - THIS OFTEN DEPENDS ON THE TA'S EXPERTISE, THE GOALS OF THE COURSE, AND THE SPECIFIC TYPES OF ASSIGNMENTS STUDENTS ARE GIVEN**

## THE CO-FACILITATOR/ PEDAGOGICAL PARTNER

- Runs the class with professors
- Their role is likely smaller than the professors' but they assume some of the responsibilities that come with the orchestration of class sessions, including presenting the information to students and facilitating course dialogue
- Observes student dynamics and student reactions to material
- Depending on the arrangement with the professor, may make suggestions for classroom activities
- Meets with professor regularly to debrief course sessions
- Can be another set of eyes about how the class is responding/helps the professor think about adjustments to the course in order to improve engagement or support the professor in other pedagogical goals.

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The idea behind these categories is not to prescribe, but to consider the different responsibilities a T.A. can have, and to negotiate with your particular T.A. (before the semester starts or at the beginning of the semester) the types of roles they can play in your class. It is most likely that your T.A. will mix the roles described in these categories.

### **LOGISTICAL TASKS**

- Schedules class trips to other locations, and helps make sure students know when and how they can get there (especially in classes with first-year students)
- Keeps track of who completes Moodle posts
- Technical skills (relating to computer, Internet, etc.) for the profs who need/want that
- Takes attendance
- Holds office hours
- Posts readings and other materials to the Moodle site
- Gathers resources from the library

### **TECHNICAL SKILLS TASKS**

- Runs labs outside of class
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### **THE CO-FACILITATOR/ PEDAGOGICAL PARTNER**

#### **CONTENT TASKS**

- Has likely taken the course before, if not has completed very similar coursework
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- Can be called upon to assist students in their work because of their knowledge of the material
- Holds office hours
- Might be a reader of student work

- Runs the class with professors
- Their role may be smaller than the professors' but they assume some of the responsibilities that come with the orchestration of many class sessions, including presenting the information to students and facilitating course dialogue
- Watches student dynamics
- Observes student reactions to material
- Depending on the arrangement with the professor, may make suggestions for classroom activities
- Meets with professor more regularly than other roles to debrief course sessions
- Can be another set of eyes about how the class is responding/helps the professor think about adjustments to the course in order to improve engagement or support the professor in other pedagogical goals.