

## **RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR THE COLLABORATION OF WORLD HISTORY FACULTY AND GTAs**

Auburn University provides teaching assistantships to support graduate students towards the completion of their degrees: this support is not only financial, but also intended as practical training and preparation for effective teaching of history. Listed below are those rules that the department feels must be observed for the effective and harmonious collaboration of faculty and GTAs in core courses. Underlying these rules is the assumption that GTAs are apprentices of the faculty with whom they study and work and the recognition that authority in matters of classroom management ultimately resides with professors.

### **I. RULES CONCERNING INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY**

The GTA will

- Acquire proficiency in operating audio/visual equipment in the classroom.
- Acquire proficiency in appropriate computer programs such as Excel for entering, maintaining, and calculating grades.
- Attend the Canvas crash course offered at the beginning of the semester and acquire familiarity with Canvas for posting grades and messages and for monitoring online discussions.

The professor will

- Acquire familiarity with the operation of audio/visual equipment in the classroom.
- Acquire knowledge of Canvas by attending the crash course offered at the beginning of the semester.
- Acquire proficiency in using Canvas and placing essential course materials on the chosen Course Management System.

### **II. RULES CONCERNING DAILY ROUTINE**

The GTA will

- Check in with the professor in advance of each class meeting.
- Prepare seating charts.
- Take attendance and collect and maintain excuses for absences. Regularly update attendance information in a manner so that students and instructors have accurate information about attendance.
- Operate audio/visual equipment.
- Listen to the lecture and maintain appropriate classroom demeanor.
- Take notes at the professor's request and make notes available to qualified students two or three times a week, depending on the number of days a class meets.

- Assist in maintaining discipline in the classroom.
- Copy and distribute materials to the class.
- Maintain at least three office hours per week or four office hours during the semester in which a GTA has a double assignment.
- Check emails at least once a day and respond to job-related messages within 24 hours.
- Post grades, messages, and course-related information on Canvas and monitor online discussions.
- Provide contact information and information concerning office hours to the professor a few days before the new semester begins.

The professor will

- Provide sufficient notification (typically, the previous day) when asking for materials (maps, images, equipment, etc.).
- Confine requests for assistance to tasks directly related to the course in which the GTA is assisting (not personal errands).
- Not distribute the GTA's personal contact information to a third party without the consent of the GTA concerned.
- Be personally responsible for the security of exams.

### **III. RULES CONCERNING EXAMS**

The GTA will

- Proofread exams.
- Copy exams.
- Assemble and staple exams.
- Write students' names and seat numbers on exams or prepare and affix labels.
- Collate versions of exams to distribute them to the class.
- Proctor exams.
- Administer make-up exams within two weeks after an exam for students whose absence from a regularly scheduled exam has been excused, which should be done during the GTA's office hours.
- Grade both objective and essay exams accurately.
- Review and possibly revise the grade of an exam that he/she has graded as requested by the instructor.
- Record grades accurately on the computer, prepare grade distribution summaries, and provide security for computerized grade records.
- Assist with assigning and entry for the early alert grades if needed.
- Assist with assigning final grades by using Excel to generate final grade average and complete attendance record at the end of the semester.
- Make up some exam questions, especially for material covered during the GTA's lecture(s).
- Copy, assemble, and staple exams, but with at least 24 hours in which to perform these tasks.

- Proctor exams.
- Post grades within two working days if the professor is using computers to grade exams.

The professor will

- Provide a detailed key of correct answers for the exam. In the case of objective questions, the professor should provide a key that includes correct answers and possible alternatives (as best he/she can foresee alternative responses). In the case of essay or subjective questions, the professor should provide a detailed outline of what he/she expects in an answer, including clear instructions for point distribution.
- Allow the GTA five days in which to grade exams with essay questions, and three days in which to grade objective exams unless the professor is using computer graded exams, in which case a two-day turnaround is expected.
- If the professor chooses to include an essay component on the exam or assigns papers, the professor should be willing to grade at least one-third of the essays or papers.
- Notify the GTA of any grade change with an explanation for the revision. This is to insure accurate record keeping as well as to inform the GTA of modifications that should be made in his/her grading practices.
- Provide the GTA with the hard copy of exams at least two working days before the exam date.
- Whenever possible, be present during the exams to answer questions and deal with issues of academic honesty.

#### **IV. GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTIVE COLLABORATION**

To insure clear understanding of respective responsibilities, the professor should

- Give serious attention to the pre-semester meeting with his/her GTAs, thoroughly discussing classroom policy and the professor's expectations of the GTAs.
- Solicit GTA input on the division of labor relative to audio/visual operations, record-keeping, grading, etc.
- Remember that GTAs are apprentice instructors and service as a GTA is a building block in his/her preparation to teach independently.

To reinforce the authority of the GTA, the professor should

- Introduce and subsequently refer to the GTA as Mr. or Ms. It is the prerogative of the GTA to request the use of his or her first name.
- Be mindful of the way in which he/she interacts with the GTA before undergraduates. Disagreement over policy and criticism of the GTA should take place privately and not in the presence of undergraduates.
- Be sensitive to the minor things that serve to reinforce the GTA's sense of professional accomplishment. Among these is the authority to change grades (see

above), to accept attendance excuses, and to make suggestions to the professor on more efficient or effective ways of doing things.

To promote the academic success of the GTA, the professor should

- Be mindful of the fact that the GTA is simultaneously carrying 9 semester hours of graduate coursework, or preparing for and taking prelims, or writing a thesis or dissertation.
- Be willing occasionally to make minor concessions to the GTA's academic schedule, especially during final exams.

To assist the professor in a successful classroom experience, the GTA should:

- Plan in advance, anticipating deadlines in his/her own classes and exams in the class in which he/she is assisting.
- Avoid criticizing the professor, either his/her lectures or policies, in the presence of undergraduates.
- Assume the responsibility of finding a replacement if he/she is to be absent and to inform the professor of such changes in a timely manner.

To address conflicts or problems between the professor and the GTA, both should

- Act early by discussing the problem. It is also recommended that both parties should make some kind of written record to which each has access.
- If difficulties persist, the problem should be referred to the World History Coordinator. At the request of either party, the GTA captains may be involved in the discussion of issues referred to the World History Coordinator. Ultimately, the problem may be referred to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair.

To address conflicts or problems between or among GTAs, the professor should

- Be sensitive to relations between or among GTAs. This includes addressing disparities in work load as a result of the failure of one GTA to take care of his/her assigned responsibilities.
- Intervene when a problem arises. If it persists, refer it to the World History Coordinator. Ultimately, the problem may be referred to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair.

To promote a more harmonious relationship, the professor and GTA should

- Each be sensitive to and respectful of differences in race, gender, age, geographical origins, cultural background, and historical interests.
- Strictly adhere to AU policies, including policies on various types of discrimination and sexual harassment.

## **V. EVALUATION OF GTAs**

To insure that expectations are clear to both parties, the instructor and GTAs should

- Meet prior to the start of the semester to discuss expectations and responsibilities
- Complete the GTA agreement, each saving a copy.

At the end of the term, the instructor should

- Complete the GTA Performance Evaluation Document.
- Share and discuss his/her evaluation with the GTA.
- Provide a copy of the GTA Performance Evaluation Document to the World History Coordinator.