

FRIEDMAN SCHOOL OF NUTRITION SCIENCE AND POLICY POLICY ON TEACHING ASSISTANTS (TAs)

Teaching assistants (TAs) are graduate students who are employed by the Friedman School to assist instructors in the preparation and delivery of course material and in the assessment of student performance.

A. Duties of TAs

Duties of TAs vary with courses and instructors. *Instructors should consider whether or not the duties of the TA require them to be in the classroom; depending on course and instructor needs, TA effort may be better spent on duties outside of the classroom.*

Duties assigned to TAs commonly include, but are not limited to:

- Contributing to development of course material, such as lectures, in-class activities, assignments, and exams.
- Academic support to students, such as providing office hours, ad hoc meetings in response to student requests, or tutoring.
- Providing lectures or review sessions. Please note that the Friedman School Curriculum and Degree Committee prohibits TAs from providing more than six hours of lectures per semester. This policy does not apply to students who are participating in the Tufts Graduate Institute for Teaching (GIFT).
- Assisting the instructor with activities during class hours, such as management of Zoom, supervising small group discussions or group projects, team-based learning, laboratory sessions, and proctoring exams.
- Assisting the instructor with grading assignments. Please note that only course instructors may enter course grades in SIS.

B. Who may serve as a TA?

Current Friedman School students should be prioritized for selection as TAs, though other Tufts University students may be employed if needed.

In exceptional circumstances, a non-student may be requested. The request should be accompanied by a strong justification for the selection. TA requests for non-students may take up to four weeks to be processed.

Any student, regardless of citizenship, who is not residing in the US is prohibited from serving as a TA per Friedman School/University policy.

Current Friedman School students may serve as a TA in one or more courses *for no more than a total of 20 hours per week*. It is the responsibility of the TA and the course instructor requesting a student to serve as a TA to ensure that the request will not lead the student to exceed 20 TA hours per week.

C. TA Effort

TA effort allocated to a course represents the average number of hours per week that can be provided over the duration of the course.

TAs should monitor hours worked, and course instructors should periodically check with TAs regarding the average hours worked. In the event that the duties assigned by a course instructor exceed the allocated TA effort, the TA and course instructor should discuss how duties can be adjusted to fit within allocated effort. In the event that a mutually satisfactory arrangement cannot be reached, the academic dean should be consulted.

D. Course Eligibility for TA

The below criteria will determine allocation of TA effort to a course. No other criteria of special circumstances will be considered.

- For credit-bearing courses (i.e. > 0 semester hour units [SHU]), course enrollment will be the primary criterion for allocation of TA effort. Enrollment for the prior two years and/or current enrollment will be considered.
- Non-credit-bearing (0 SHU) seminars and journal clubs will be allocated TA effort on the basis of enrollment and the number of hours the activity meets.
- Courses that the instructor is teaching for the first time.
- Weekly in-class laboratory sessions requiring the course instructor and TA to closely supervise students in class every week.

D.1 TA Effort for Credit-bearing Courses

The below table details TA effort that may be requested based on the course enrollment. Course instructors may request less than the effort allocated to their course.

Enrollment	TA Effort (average hours per week)			
	3 SHU	1.5 SHU (½ semester)	1.5 SHU (full semester)	4.5 SHU
<10 and weekly lab session	4	4	2	6
<10 and new course/instructor	7	7	3.5	10.5
10-19	7	7	3.5	10.5
20-29	10	10	5	15
30-39	15	15	7.5	22.5
40-49	20	20	10	30
50-59	25	25	12.5	37.5
60-69	30	30	15	45
≥ 70	35	35	17.5	52.5

D.2 TA Effort of 0 SHU Seminars and Journal Clubs

TA effort for 0 SHU seminars and journal clubs is awarded on the basis of the number of contact hours per week (in lieu of SHUs) and enrollment. Current seminars and journal clubs range from 1 hour per month (0.25 hours per week) to 1.5 hours per week.

	TA Effort (average hours per week)			
Enrollment	Activity 0.25 hr/wk	Activity 0.5 hr/wk	Activity 1 hr/wk	Activity 1.5 hr/wk
10-19	1	2	3	4
20-29	2	3	4	5
30-39	3	4	5	6

E. Process for Requesting TAs

Course instructors should complete the online Request for Teaching Assistants form available at <https://nutrition.tufts.edu/form/request-teaching-assistant>. A new TA Request must be submitted for each semester that the course is offered.

Course instructors should submit TA requests at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the course. From the date of request, approval by the Academic Dean and processing by the Friedman School Business Office may take 3-4 weeks. TAs will not receive compensation prior to completion of processing. Instructors will be notified by email with approval or rejection of the TA request.

F. Courses Taught at Other Tufts Schools

The policies and procedures described above pertain to Friedman School courses. TA support for courses hosted by other Tufts schools will not be provided by the Friedman School. Each Tufts school has its own TA policy, and Friedman School faculty who agree to teach courses outside the Friedman School should be aware of, and be prepared to accept, the policy of the host school.