

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

Teaching assistants 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. Duties assigned to TAs commonly include, but are not limited to, the below:

A.1 Development of course material including

- Lectures
- In-class and out-of-class activities, assignments and exams

A.2 Course Delivery

- Attending class
- Providing lectures or review sessions
- Proctoring exams
- Leading discussions or other activities such as team based learning

A.3 Student Support

- Providing office hours or online support
- Scheduling ad hoc meetings in response to student requests

A.4 Assistance with grading of written, oral or online assignments (Please note that TAs may not enter grades in SIS)

**B. Time Commitment**

B.1 The general expected time commitment per semester is based on course credit:

- 1.0 credit: 10 hours per week over a semester lasting 14 weeks
- 0.5 credits: 10 hours per week over 7 weeks or 5 hours per week over 14 weeks
- 1.5 credits: 15 hours per week over 14 weeks

B.2 In general, the maximum recommended amount of TA effort a student should provide per semester is the equivalent TA effort for 1.5 credits. *For TA effort exceeding 1.5 credits per semester, approval must be obtained from the academic or thesis advisor and from the Academic Dean for Education.*

B.3 The time devoted to specific duties vary by course and time of the semester. The below provides an example of how TA duties for a 1.0 credit course might be distributed to achieve 10 hours/week:

- Attendance at all classes (3 hours/week)
- Support of students in office hours and online (2-5 hours/week)

- Assisting the instructor with grading of assignments or exams (2-5 hours/week)
- B.4 TAs should track time devoted to course activities. The instructor should decrease TA duties if time devoted for a 1.0 credit course exceeds an average of 10 hours weekly. If time devoted to TA duties for a 1.0 credit course is substantially less than 10 hours, the instructor should increase TA duties and/or request in future years that less than a full TA be provided.

**C. Eligibility for TAs**

Eligibility for TAs is based on 1) course enrollment or, 2) on intensive demands of a course if enrollment requirements are not met.

**C.1 Course Enrollment Criteria**

The table below contains the enrollment criteria. Anticipated enrollment will be estimated by average enrollment over the previous 2-3 years or by trends in enrollment over the past 2-3 years that suggest that the course will meet enrollment criteria.

The total TA effort for a course will be approved based on the number of enrolled students. 1.0 TA effort is defined as the effort provided by a TA for a 1.0 credit course. Instructors should request the minimum TA effort which, in their judgement is needed, and are not required to request the full effort for which a course qualifies.

TA Effort	Course Enrollment for 1.0 Credit Courses		
	Campus-Based	MNSP	Certificate
1.0	20-29	7-14	15-23
1.5	30-39	15-23	
2.0	40-49	≥ 23	≥ 23
2.5	≥ 50		

The number of TAs approved for courses that are 0.5 or 1.5 credits will be adjusted proportionately.

An instructor may request that TA effort allocated to a course be divided among more than one student. In general, the minimum TA effort to be allocated per student should be equivalent to 0.25 credits.

**C.2 Intensive Course Demands**

Intensive course demands may be created by the frequency, depth or specific nature of course assignment, e.g. by lab sessions requiring close individual attention to students, frequent writing assignments that are graded and returned, or frequent course-related work outside the classroom that requires instructor supervision. Courses that are judged to be highly intensive may be eligible for one TA per 1.0 credit. Faculty must complete the TA request form, submit a copy of the course syllabus, and in addition provide a written explanation for why the course demands are unusually intensive.

**C.3 TA Requests When Enrollment or Intensive Course Demand Criteria Are Not Met**

If a course does not meet enrollment or intensiveness criteria, the instructor may request a TA under the following circumstances:

- The instructor is not directly employed by Tufts University, and
- The instructor agrees that the cost of the TA will be deducted from their compensation provided for teaching the course

**D. Process for Requesting TAs**

D.1 Before accepting a TA position, it is the responsibility of the student to discuss with their academic advisor (masters students) or thesis advisor (doctoral students) if accepting the position is advisable, given the student's academic workload and status. Course instructors should confirm with proposed TAs that this discussion has taken place prior to submitting the TA request form.

D.2 Course instructors must complete the Teaching Assistant Request Form and submit by email to the Academic Dean for Education. If the request is based on intensive course demands, the request form must be accompanied by a detailed justification and the course syllabus.

D.3 Instructors will be notified by email regarding their request.

D.4 A new TA Request form must be submitted for each occurrence of the course.