

HISTORY DEPARTMENT TA HANDBOOK, 2015-16

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I. INTRODUCTION

This manual has several goals. One is to outline the responsibilities of teaching assistants and of the faculty members who supervise them. Another is to provide general guidelines and practical suggestions to help TAs become more effective teachers.

These goals cannot be achieved without mutual cooperation and respect between faculty members and TAs. The faculty member provides guidance and support, drawing upon his or her experience and expertise. The TA, in more direct and daily contact with the students, keeps the faculty member informed of developments in the sections. A feeling of common effort and an environment free of intimidation, gossip, and destructive competition are essential conditions for effective teaching.

II. GENERAL PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION SECTIONS

The principal aim of discussion section is to provide a forum for students to discuss the ideas and themes of the course, to draw out arguments and evidence from assigned readings, and to follow up on material presented in lecture. Discussion sections allow students to gain knowledge and understanding of course material through conversing with their peers and verbally exchanging ideas and opinions. TAs are essential to this process. While the course instructor determines course content, assigned readings, and the organization of topics to be addressed in lectures and weekly sections, the TA organizes and guides the general course of the discussion in section, makes sure the most important issues are brought forth, and keeps the discussion from wandering off track. The guidance of the discussion needs to be done with firmness as well as tact. It is the TA's duty to see that the students talk to each other and respond to each other's points with respect.

The section may be used for other purposes such as quizzes, exam preparation, and student questions about lectures or other course material. Students should feel free to call upon the greater knowledge and experience of the TA to clarify matters of fact or interpretation. The section, however, should not become a lecture session. A good discussion will let the student, and sometimes even the TA, emerge with new insights and understanding. It is not easy to run an effective discussion section, but when it works it makes all the effort worthwhile.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. TA's Responsibilities to Students

1. Come to section meetings on time and prepared. You should come to class with a plan in mind, having worked out a line of questioning that will enable you to cover the main points and themes of the week's readings and lectures, and developed in consultation with the course instructor and other TAs in History 500 meetings.
2. In section, give students an opportunity to ask questions and clear up any confusion, since this can be difficult in lecture. If needed, report to the Professor if there is any material that students are still not understanding.

3. Learn your students' names--a high-priority task for you. Consider using name cards for each student and yourself. This also allows for the students to learn each others' names and can help create a sense of community.
4. Try to identify students who are experiencing difficulty early in the quarter. Keep a watch for signs such as inadequate writing skills, poor study habits, poor preparation, and repeated absences. If appropriate, offer individual assistance during office hours, or recommend campus resources.
5. During your first section, clearly outline expectations, rules, and section grade makeup via a section syllabus. Make sure to approve the section syllabus with the faculty member or Instructor in advance of your first section meeting. The rules and processes for things like late papers, section absences, grade petitions, and the like should be consistent with the policies applied across all course sections, and established by the course instructor.
6. TAs handle the administrative matters of attendance, make-up exams, and add/drop petitions. Clear all permissions for make-up exams with the faculty member first. [See part V.F ([Practical Tips/Make-up Exams](#)) for the departmental policy on make-ups.]
7. Maintain an environment conducive to learning. Encourage students to think for themselves. Actively supervise the discussion, but avoid dominating it and be alert to ways to maximize the students' participation. Be gentle and supportive (and always avoid sarcasm) when making corrections in class and on written assignments.
8. Pursue and maintain academic honesty and integrity. Discourage cheating by explaining what constitutes plagiarism and clearly outlining plagiarism policies at the beginning of the quarter, making it clear that disciplinary action will be taken in the event plagiarism or any other form of cheating does occur, and carefully checking your students' work.
9. Be sensitive to students' feelings, especially concerning issues of race, gender, class, age, national origin, sexual orientation and religion. Use appropriate gender and racial terms and be specific in your use of language. Be sure to read the campus website on sexual harassment at: <https://oeosh.ucsb.edu/sexual.harassment.and.sexual.misconduct/> (See section on [Campus, Department and UC Regulations](#).)
10. Be available to students. TAs must maintain at least two office hours per week and may schedule additional office hours by appointment as necessary. Consider student needs when scheduling office hours (Is 7:00 a.m. reasonable?). Office hours should be conducted without interruption. Be sure to arrange your office hours in coordination with your office mates. Consider holding extended office hours during exam and paper periods. You should also establish a policy for responding to student emails or otherwise communicating with them via Gauchospace. This will help with time management, and with student expectations regarding responses to queries outside of section and office hours.
11. Read and grade exams and papers in a timely fashion and supply ample feedback through written comments. Per UAW contract rules TAs are allowed up to two weeks to grade assignments. If you are a TA in a General Education "Writing Requirement" course devote extra effort to help your students improve their writing skills.
12. Be aware of campus deadlines and policies for dropping, adding, grade option changes, withdrawals from a course, incomplete petitions, etc. This will help you advise students more effectively.

13. Work with the faculty member and fellow TAs to ensure consistency in grading. Find out early in the quarter what your professor expects for a grade distribution.
14. You are responsible for reporting final course grades for every student on your class list through the eGrades system at the end of the quarter. Make sure that every student in your section appears on your class list, and that you can account for every student on your class list. The eGrades system can be found at <http://egrades.sa.ucsb.edu>.
15. Grades must not be posted in any fashion nor given out over the phone or by email. Students who wish to know their grade before the Registrar officially notifies them must see you in person or make a written request to you. Students will sometimes give you a stamped envelope so you can send their blue books back to them at the end of the quarter.
16. Know where the fire exits are for your classroom.
17. Keep an updated profile with a picture and office hours on the department website.

B. TA's Responsibilities to the Faculty Member

1. Attend all lectures. Pay attention and take notes.
2. Read all assigned readings.
- 3.) Attend and actively participate in all sessions of History 500. Come prepared with thoughts and strategies for organizing your section meetings and otherwise to assist the course instructor with course objectives.
4. Make sure students understand lecture content.
5. Provide feedback to the course instructor by expressing views from your experience and especially by relaying students' reactions and concerns.
6. Attend and proctor exams. You must be available to your students and faculty member during exams and to the faculty member for any grading meetings.
7. Be supportive of the course instructor and respectful of course content and objectives in section. Remember, your role is to explain and clarify the course material as developed and presented by the course instructor. Avoid negative undercutting of assigned texts, lectures, or the instructor. If appropriate and in consultation with the course instructor, acknowledge the existence of debates or conflicting historical interpretations of material covered in the course. Under no circumstances should you use section discussion to present your own interpretation of course materials, or otherwise to veer off in a direction that takes away from the objectives established by the instructor.
8. Be ready to provide samples (or indeed sometimes all) of your graded materials for the course instructor's inspection. This is one of the best methods faculty members have of working to ensure uniformity of grading across sections, and to assist you in upholding standards of accuracy and fairness in your grading.
9. Provide the course instructor with copies of your section syllabus and all handouts you design for your students before handing them out to students.

10. Make sure you have no scheduling conflicts when choosing section times and with your responsibility to attend all lectures and examinations. In the event that you do have a legitimate and unavoidable conflict that cannot be handled by rescheduling (e.g., a presentation at a major scholarly conference) you MUST notify and seek permission for temporary absence from the instructor as soon as you are aware of the situation, and no less than two weeks prior to the event or required absence (see Article 17 of the UAW/ASE negotiated contract for rules and guidelines for requesting temporary leaves, for guidance). Be prepared to discuss options for covering missed sections or otherwise making up for your excused absence with the instructor before making any arrangements. Failure to follow requirements laid out in the ASE contract and by department policy will result in disciplinary action.

C. TA's Responsibilities to Themselves and Fellow TAs

1. TAs and all graduate students must be enrolled in 12 units per quarter. All TAs must enroll in HIST 500 for 4 units with the instructor of record for the course. These units count toward the total of 12 needed per quarter.

2. TAs are required to attend the TA History 500 meetings.

3. Per UAW contract rules, TAs should not spend more than 20 hours per week on TA duties. This includes attending lecture, section, office hours, preparing for section, reading, and grading. Don't permit TAing to eclipse your own graduate studies. If you feel that you are spending too much time on teaching, discuss these priorities with the course instructor.

4. Confer regularly with your fellow TAs. You are highly encouraged to arrange to visit each other's sections, to get ideas and to see how the same material might be handled differently.

D. TA's Responsibilities to the History Department

1. As TAs, part of your success depends on establishing a good working relationship with the office staff. Practice courtesy and consideration in dealing with the office staff. Know your responsibilities as a TA and be informed of office regulations. Be aware of the staff's responsibilities, and try to direct questions and problems to the appropriate person. (For staff duties see [Section IV, part A.](#)) Except in extraordinary circumstances, the office staff will not complete any of your administrative/paperwork obligations, especially in reporting individual grades. (It is imperative that you make sure that every student attending your section is on YOUR grade sheet, not someone else's.) Finally, do not disturb the office staff outside of the normal hours of operation (M-F 9-12, 1-4).

2. Hand out course evaluations in all your sections during the last week and have a trustworthy student return them in a sealed envelope to the drop-box outside the department office on the fourth floor. You are not allowed to submit the forms yourself, be in the room when they are filled out, or touch them after they are distributed to your students. You and your supervising faculty member can review the results of your evaluations after grades are submitted. A computer-generated quantitative summary of these evaluations becomes a permanent part of your file in the department. You can obtain a summary of your ESCI score history at any time by contacting esci@id.ucsb.edu. Blank evaluations and forms are located on the fourth floor in the small room just to the left of the elevators, near HASC. Pick up envelopes, scantrons, and evaluations for each section and make sure to fill out the correct information on each envelope.

3. TAs must attend the annual TA orientation meeting and TA training sessions throughout the year. This is a department requirement. New TAs must attend two sessions per quarter their first year and returning TAs must attend at least one training per quarter. The TA orientation

meeting does not count toward these requirements.

4. Follow department add/drop policies. (See Section V, part H on add/drop procedures below.)

5. Post office hours outside your office door for each quarter AND update your office hours on your profile on the department website. If you don't know how to log into your online profile email Darcy or ask a fellow TA.

E. Supervising Faculty Member's Responsibilities to TAs

1. Meet weekly with all TAs to provide supervision, support and instruction. (TAs enroll in this lab/seminar as History 500 for 4 pass/no pass units.)

2. Help TAs prepare for their section by communicating lecture goals and themes. Suggest discussion questions and themes to be elicited from the readings. Indicate when certain material needs emphasis in sections because it will not be covered in lecture. Give suggestions for dealing with a difficult section.

3. Provide guidance with grading and help to create a uniform standard of grading among the TAs. Often this involves reviewing (or spot-checking) of TA-graded papers and exams. Faculty members are responsible for setting grading standards for exams and papers, and making sure the TAs understand them.

4. Establish clear and uniform policies for make-ups, incompletes, late papers, section absences, grade appeals, and add/drops before the start of the course.

5. Evaluate each TA's performance at the end of the quarter on the standard departmental form. TAs should be given these evaluations at the end of the term, but you may request a copy as well. Evaluation should be based in part on a prearranged visitation of one entire section meeting for each TA. Provide feedback in the form of concrete suggestions for improvement; this is often best done in a private consultation with the TA right after the visitation. Classroom visits should be undertaken with care to avoid undermining the TA's credibility or jeopardizing rapport with students. A faculty member may also want to review a TA's course evaluations and discuss these with the TA.

6. Establish a policy regarding contested grades. Cooperate and consult with the TA involved when handling a contested grade or a difficult or disruptive student. TAs should inform the lecturer of problems.

7. Recognize that being a TA is a half-time job when developing the course requirements. The TAs primary responsibility is to make progress in their coursework and their research. Be realistic about the number of papers, quizzes, and exams the TAs are expected to handle. Make sure expectations are set to comply with the UAW contract requirements for maximum hours per week and for the entire course.

IV. RESOURCES

This section is designed to give you some introductory information about resources that are available to you. The history department is serviced through the Humanities Administrative Support Center,

located on the fourth floor of HSSB.

A. History Department Staff

The staff will assist graduate students in various ways relevant to their status as students, teaching assistants, and teaching associates. The department as a whole seeks a cordial atmosphere; please respect the staff's primary responsibility to their jobs. The following is a list of the departmental staff and their duties relevant to graduate students.

Darcy Ritzau: (Monday through Friday, 8-12); phone: (805) 893-3056; e-mail: ritzau@hfa.ucsb.edu. Darcy is the Graduate Program Assistant, the main staff person dealing with currently enrolled graduate students. In consultation with the professors teaching lower division courses she makes TA section assignments each quarter and handles the reapplication process for TAs. She also is in charge of student evaluations of TAs, which you will receive after grades are turned in. Darcy assigns TA offices and holds all office keys (including extras if you get locked out). Additionally, she handles TA fee remissions, fee fellowships, and departmental money including fellowships and travel. Please note that she is in her office during the mornings only.

TBD (Monday through Friday 1-5); phone: (805)893-2224; e-mail: @hfa.ucsb.edu. _____ is the Graduate Admissions Advisor for the History department. She deals with graduate admission and with some aspects of administration for TAs, such as employing TAs, verifying TAs' registration, and making changes in employment information.

Sean Garbutt: (Monday through Friday, 8-12 and 1-5); phone: (805) 893-2392; e-mail: sgarbutt@hfa.ucsb.edu. Sean is the History Financial Analyst. He deals with necessary paperwork for graduate student employment other than teaching assistantships (e.g., readers, graduate student assistants, etc.). Sean also handles payroll. Signed monthly timesheets for hourly employees are submitted to him. (NOTE: TA positions are monthly and do not require timesheets.) Sean is also in charge of reimbursements for travel, entertainment, and miscellaneous expenses. Graduate students will also work with him if they have fellowships, grants, or awards that are processed through the Department.

Monica Garcia: (Monday through Friday advising hours, 9-12 and 1-4); phone: (805) 893-2992; e-mail: migarcia@hhfa.ucsb.edu. Monica is the Staff Undergraduate Advisor. She deals with scheduling of rooms for History, undergraduate records, and assists faculty with undergraduate advising issues. If you need to make any changes in section schedules, you must work through Monica. If you need a room for a review session or a rescheduled section you must submit your request to Monica at least ten days in advance to book a room through the registrar's office. Make-up exams should be scheduled as far in advance as possible, because space is limited. Monica will not proctor or time your make-up exams; that is the TA's responsibility. She must be informed if your section or office hours have been canceled due to illness or emergency or if you are arranging other times and places to meet. If you have any other administrative questions, Monica will most likely know the answer.

Jasmin Avina: (Monday through Friday, 8-12 and 1-5); phone: (805) 893-5681; e-mail: javina@hfa.ucsb.edu. Jasmin is an Administrative Support Assistant for the Humanities Administrative Support Center. She answers the main telephone line, sorts and delivers the mail, duplicates materials for classes that don't have TA's, deals with copier upkeep, inventories supplies, manages key distribution and supervises the ESCI and Evaluation process.

B. Office Equipment

Use equipment at your own risk between 12 and 1 PM. There is no support at this time, since the office staff is on lunch break. If possible, try to schedule your copying needs before the office closes for lunch at noon or after it opens again at 1pm.

Copy Machine: The copy machine is located in the copier room on the fourth floor and is for your use in duplicating material for sections. The instructions are located on the front of the machine. Please note that only black and white copies can be made. If the door is locked see Jasmin Avina at the front desk on the fourth floor. TAs can also request keys to the copy room during quarters they are TAing.

C. Instructional Development – <http://oic.id.ucsb.edu/>

Instructional Development is located in Kerr Hall on the first floor. This department directs the campus Teaching Assistant Development Program (TADP). Instructional Development maintains an extensive website for TAs at: <http://oic.id.ucsb.edu/ta-development-program> and this GauchoSpace “TA Community” resource site: <https://gauchospace.ucsb.edu/courses/course/view.php?id=4795>

Instructional Development’s campus wide activities and responsibilities include:

TA Orientation Day each Fall Quarter

A plethora of online resources, tips and strategies for teaching: TA Handbook and International TA Handbook

TA Taping and Consultation Program

Pedagogical workshops upon departmental request

Quarterly Teaching Skills workshops

Individual Consultations (upon request)

General support for TAs and faculty on TA issues

UCSB Instructional Consultants, supporting the work of TAs:

Dr Lisa Berry, lisa.berry@id.ucsb.edu, x8395

Dr Kim DeBacco, kim.debacco@id.ucsb.edu, x2828

D. Campus Learning Assistance Services (CLAS) – www.clas.ucsb.edu

It is not always possible to provide students with the help they need, either because of time constraints or your own lack of training in dealing with particularly difficult educational problems. You can refer students with serious skills problems to CLAS. This program offers general study skills workshops, applied workshops tailored to particular class requirements, and individualized writing instruction. The general workshops cover skills such as exam preparation, time management, note-taking, memory and concentration, textbook reading, problem-solving strategies, textbook underlining, effective speaking, rapid reading, and critical reading. The writing lab offers assistance at all stages of composition, from planning to revision. CLAS services are free and available to all registered UCSB students. Each quarter CLAS publishes a schedule for the workshops. Students need to sign up for appointments at the writing

lab and the general workshops in advance.

Students should be reminded that whenever a student talks to someone else (CLAS, another TA, etc.) about a writing assignment, that student should double-check the other person's advice with you. You will grade the assignment, after all. CLAS offers forms to staple to the back of essays that state the student attended CLAS and who they worked with. You can request that your students supply you with these forms if they attend CLAS.

F. Fellow TAs

Perhaps one of the best resources available to any TA, new or continuing, are fellow TAs. Experienced TAs can offer suggestions on planning sections, dealing with problem students, grading, adding and dropping students from sections, and almost any other question that arises when you are TAing. And if they don't know something, they can usually tell you who might. Visiting another TA's section is an excellent way to see your own classes in a new perspective; be sure to secure advance permission to visit. Since there is no "perfect" way to teach, talk to several TAs to see how they would approach the problem you are facing.

G. Lead TAs

Lead TAs will be available for consultation throughout the year. You may go to them for assistance and consultation, but it is important to understand the limitations of their responsibilities and duties.

Lead TA Responsibilities:

Attend UCSB Instructional Development's two-day "Lead TA Institute" in late summer (August).

Organize and lead new TA orientation and training event prior to beginning of fall term (late September).

Communicate departmental policy on TA responsibilities.

Coordinate mentor program between experienced and new TAs.

Organize and lead two TA training workshops each term.

Take attendance at each training event and send attendance record to Darcy Ritzau and departmental financial aid committee at the end of the academic year.

Be available to meet with other TAs as needed.

Although this list is not exhaustive, Lead TA's are not responsible for:

Establishing department policy on TA responsibilities.

Enforcing TA policy and responsibilities.

Disciplining graduate student colleagues who fail to adhere to TA policies.

Acting as liaisons between department administration and TA union representatives.

H. Gaucho Space

Gauchospace is an online learning system that can be found at <http://gauchospace.ucsb.edu>. Some professors in the department may choose to use GauchoSpace to post lecture slides, study guides, and other course information. GauchoSpace's peachmail system can be used to email enrolled students *en masse*. TAs can create separate GauchoSpace pages for their sections, but must go through the faculty member to get site permission.

The Lead TAs maintain a GauchoSpace page to assist TAs in their teaching. This page may include sample documents, pedagogy information and guides, departmental policies, and training session-specific documents.

V. PRACTICAL TIPS

The following suggestions have been culled from experienced TAs, and previous departmental TA manuals. These tips are not hard-and-fast rules, but they can help you deal with issues that all TAs face. They may alert you to potential problems, as well as provide you with possible solutions.

A. First Sections

1. Encourage everyone to say something in the first section. If students get used to talking from the very beginning, they will usually continue to do so. You might ask them to tell what historical figure they'd like to meet and why, or ask them to analyze a brief document.
2. Since most people are uncomfortable speaking in front of strangers, try to create a common bond among the students in the first section. One method is have several small groups work out the answers to questions (a non-threatening quiz, or a textual analysis of a short passage from a primary source), and then discuss their findings with the rest of the class.
3. Establish your policies and grading in the first class. Clarify how participation will influence grades, and do this early and clearly. Explain how you define participation, and consider offering alternative assignments to students who are uncomfortable speaking up in class, such as having them talk to you privately in your office. Also remind students that they must get a C, not a C-, if they are taking the class pass/no pass. It is against University policy for them to tell you what their grading option is.
4. Grade rosters are available from your eGrades account, which you can log into using your UCSB log in. There is a link to eGrades on the history department website.

B. Promoting Discussion

1. Before initiating discussion of a topic, stimulate student recall of the material. Ask for someone to summarize the topics covered in lecture that week. Or provide a brief summary of material that was covered last week. Or simply ask, "Did you like the reading?"
2. If you want students to talk, consider the environment. Students may engage in a discussion, as opposed to a question-and-answer session, if they can make eye contact with each other.

Arranging the desks in a semi-circle is one method of furthering discussion. (Some TAs prefer to sit in this circle, but if you use the blackboard a lot, you may prefer to stand.)

3. Start with questions that are basic (factual rather than analytical) and easy, ones that everyone can answer, to maximize participation at the outset. Gradually increase the difficulty level of the questions to ones which ask the student to analyze and synthesize information from the readings and lectures.

4. Think of classroom silence as productive. After all, students deserve a chance to think before they answer. Try not to get impatient if nobody comes up with an answer instantly.

5. When a class appears reticent to discuss a topic, consider breaking it into small groups briefly and reconvening it for reports, or consider allowing a student to lead the discussion.

6. Small groups or debates can be particularly effective if arranged the previous week: divide the class, and tell each group what material it's responsible for. You can also set up debates a week ahead, where students have to both defend their side's position and defend it from the other side's "attack."

7. Try assigning students to write a paragraph each week in preparation for class about some selected portion of the assigned reading. Have them turn the paragraphs in at the beginning of class. Groups of students can be assigned different portions, thus ensuring that each student will be knowledgeable about at least some part of the assignment.

8. Try to get students to speak to the entire class, not just to you.

9. Ask students to support their opinions and to give examples. This helps make complex material easier to understand, and it reminds students that they need to be able to support their ideas with evidence. Try to get your students in the habit of citing their sources.

10. Vary the types of questions you use. Use fill-in-the-blank questions for warm-up exercises, or whenever you sense a sudden pocket of common ignorance in the class. Open-ended questions permit students to elaborate and think through their answer rather than just give a brief response. If students cannot respond to your first question, rephrase it. Your follow-up question can help the students to focus on previous material that might be relevant, or to draw their attention to some limitation or inconsistency in a previous response.

11. Develop a game plan for silent students. Some can be emboldened to participate if you stress that you understand that everyone worries about appearing foolish or ignorant, and it is okay to say things that are not 100% accurate. (Sometimes wrong ideas can promote a very lively discussion.) Assure them that you want them to speak up when they don't understand something, for it is very likely that quite a few people don't understand it also.

12. Encourage and recognize students' contributions. Be alert to nonverbal cues signaled by students who do not participate often, and give them the floor. Be sure to recognize and praise particularly insightful or provocative remarks.

13. One way to increase student participation and encourage good class preparation is to have the students prepare questions as if they were the TA for the next section. Remind them that their questions should be ones that bring out the important themes and ideas in the readings, as well as questions which help tie the readings and lectures together. The following week break them into small groups (for perhaps five minutes) so that each group can choose three or four questions to ask the rest of the section. Then have each group in turn ask a question, until they

have run out of questions.

14. You may want to give weekly homework assignments where the students write a brief essay (from one paragraph to one page in length), discussion questions, or a thesis statement answering a particular question. Weekly homework can provide a starting point for discussions in section. Such assignments also allow students to see what you're looking for, and where their writing needs work.

15. Provide a summary or conclusion at the end of each class. By summarizing the main points which have been discussed, you provide the students with a sense of closure and help them remember. This can also be accomplished by having students contribute their conclusions.

C. Administrative Concerns

1. It is important to keep weekly records of student participation, since your recollection of student activity in the earlier part of the quarter tends to be hazy if you haven't provided yourself with notes. There are several ways of keeping these records. One is to write up your observations on the students right after class, and then use these notes when you determine the section grade. Another is to use a scale of 0 to 3, [where 0= no show, 1=C, 2=B, 3=A] to rate student performance every week. The important thing is to be consistent in your method and have a record of how you are grading students. Make sure to keep an online version of your grades as well as print versions, in case your hard copies get lost.

2. Under normal circumstances you cannot release a student's grades or even discuss a student's grades with their parents, other students, tutors, and other outside individuals without prior written consent given from the student. See FERPA guidelines and training at <https://registrar.sa.ucsb.edu/FERPAfac.aspx>.

D. Grading

Exams and papers:

1. It is imperative that you grade exams and papers anonymously. Fold back the covers of the blue books and don't check names. Insist that students include a title page on their papers, which is the only place their name should appear. Fold back these title pages before you begin reading the paper. This helps you guard against the influence of your personal feelings about individual students.

2. Quickly read about ten or so blue books or papers to get an overall sense of the range of student response. It is useful to make initial comments in pencil, and then go over them in ink. What we expect and what we get are often radically different. Definitely write your initial grades in pencil.

3. Before grading exams, go through your lecture notes and section plans and create a sheet which lists information and examples that the students could reasonably be expected to have at their disposal to answer the questions.

4. When the students have a choice of questions on which to write for either exams or papers, read all of one question at the same time. Then read the next set.

5. On first reading exams, stack broad categories first (A, B, C, D, F). Then return to the piles for more refined judgments, making sure all of the same grade are on a par, and adding plus

and minus signs. Expect to move individual exams from pile to pile on re-reading them. Put the final grade on in ink only at the end of the process.

6. Make marginal comments pointing out factual errors, vagueness, awkwardness, or the need for evidence. Always avoid sarcasm, put downs, or insulting remarks. At the end of the essay, summarize the strengths and weaknesses of the exam, so the student will know how to improve.

a) Use ink, not pencil, when marking final grade.

b) Try to provide students with substantial written comments on midterms and papers. Compose a paragraph of commentary, which balances positive and negative comments. Don't be concerned with merely justifying your grade by pointing out what was wrong, but don't overdo praise either. This allows students to learn from their mistakes, as well as to get a better sense of what they were graded on.

c) For papers, be especially vigilant in marking grammatical errors, vague language, or awkward phrasing. Writing requirement courses are supposed to teach students how to write; this will not happen if their mistakes are not pointed out to them.

d) Many TAs write fewer comments on final exams because most students do not return the next quarter to pick up their exams. But you should jot down abbreviated comments to remind yourself of how you evaluated the exam. You can volunteer to write more extensive comments for those who do come by to ask for their exam.

e) Inform your students of the importance of picking up exams and papers, both so students will learn from reading the comments and so that they will accumulate a file of exams and papers that will be useful in the event that the student needs a letter of reference from the instructor in later years.

7. Consider composing your comments on a computer. Comments then may be edited, refined, and reconsidered. Print out these comments and clip them to the exams or papers. You then also have a permanent record of comments you have made for each student.

8. Hand back midterms and papers at the end of section so that students don't spend the class hour brooding about their grade. Encourage students who have questions about the exam to see you in office hours. Ask students to wait at least 24 hours to discuss grades. You might ask them to write an explanation of why they think their work should be reevaluated. Express your willingness to explain what was required in the exam or paper and to help them improve their work. Encourage or require all students who receive a C- or lower on any assignment to meet with you to discuss their grade.

9. All final grades are recorded online in eGrades. Do not input any grade information on eGrades prior to the final grades.

Complaints:

1. When a student is not satisfied with a grade, recheck your own evaluation. It is best to not reread the exam while the student is waiting for you because it is too easy to feel pressured in that situation. After you have discussed the work and its shortcomings together, if the student is still unhappy, ask if you can show it to another TA for his or her opinion; the next stage is for the student to see the faculty member. Students should understand that reevaluation can lead to the lowering of a grade as well as raising it (unless the faculty member has announced

otherwise).

2. Recognize that you can make mistakes and be willing to reconsider a grade, but be sure that you stick to the standards you have established for the exam. Ask yourself, when you change a person's grade, if you are being fair to the other students.

E. Review Sessions

1. Review sessions are more successful if you require student participation, rather than lecturing on "what is important." Orient the session to a discussion of prospective exam questions. Have the students brainstorm possible essay questions and IDs, and then choose a few and have them come up with the "answers." If the answer is incomplete or off-base, step in and steer students toward the correct answer. TAs have a responsibility to their colleagues and students not to disclose the contents of exams unless the faculty member and all TAs have agreed to do so.

2. Review sessions are not required by the department, but some TAs or professors give them. If you decide to hold an extra session, remember that you need to request a room from Monica at least ten days beforehand.

F. Make-up Exams

Make-up exams should only be allowed for students who were ill during the regularly scheduled exam or clear it with the TA prior to the day of the exam (it is suggested you ask for a doctor's note). You or the faculty member needs to schedule a room with Monica. (For students who are registered with the Disabled Students Program as having a learning disability and have submitted the request for an out-of-classroom testing site, TAs do not proctor these exams, but will be notified to pick them up with Jasmin in HSSB once they are completed.)

G. Office Hours & Alternative Classroom Arrangements

1. If you need to schedule appointments outside of your regularly scheduled office hours, be aware that if your appointment conflicts with an office mate's regularly scheduled hours, your office mate has first call on the office.

2. If you are giving an exam or quiz in your office, you should post a sign on the door so that your office mates don't interrupt.

3. Keep all meetings with students academic and professional. Use care when choosing the time and place for student appointments.

4. Be aware that some students do not feel comfortable meeting TAs outside of their offices.

H. Miscellaneous

1. Most TAs find it very useful to hand out weekly study questions to help the students identify important ideas in their reading assignments. This requires reading a week ahead in the textbook or course reader.

2. Read student evaluations at the end of the quarter closely and apply what you learn; most

students are honest and observant.

3. If you have one or two students who dominate the section, solicit responses from "non-talkers." Be alert to nonverbal cues indicating that they have something to say and call on them: "Did you want to say something...?" or "Let's hear from some of you who haven't said anything yet." Do not call on the "talkers" first. Wait to see if someone else raises a hand or volunteers a comment.
4. Check yourself for annoying mannerisms or habits that might distract students: constant fiddling with pencils, chalk, your glasses, your hair; gum chewing; teetering in your chair precariously, etc. Students do mention these things on course evaluations as major distractions.
5. Do dress appropriately for attending lecture, section, and office hours. Your wardrobe may influence how students respond to you in section. When in doubt, dress business casual.

I. Add/Drop Procedures

1. *Be sure* to have students officially add your section if they are switching sections **between** TAs. This will ensure that they will receive their grade at the end of the quarter and not get lost in the shuffle. You should assign F grades to *all phantom students* who appear on your final grade list. Please note that some students who don't appear on your list may be Extension students. Their grades go through the Extension Office (not the Registrar) and have an earlier date.
2. To switch a student between sections, TAs should email Monica Garcia with the PERM number of the student and the enrollment codes of the section the student is currently in and the enrollment code of the section the student is switching into. This should only be done if both TAs are aware of and have approved the switch.
3. In accordance with departmental policy, each supervising faculty member administers the add/drop process, which includes if priority is given based on seniority or major. Consult closely with the faculty member to maintain accurate section lists and to aim for uniformity in section sizes.
4. GOLD has a waitlist option. It is up to the faculty member to decide whether to activate the online waitlist or whether to have TAs manually add students. Make sure to consult the faculty member to find out which option they are using.

VI. CAMPUS, DEPARTMENT, AND UC REGULATIONS

A. Sexual Harassment

Be aware of the campus policy on sexual harassment. Recognize that as a TA you are in a powerful position over your students and that behavior which might be acceptable in another context can be coercive given this unequal power relationship. The preamble to this policy is:

“The University of California is committed to creating and maintaining a community where all

individuals who participate in University programs and activities can work and learn together in an atmosphere free of harassment, exploitation, or intimidation. Every member of the community should be aware that the University prohibits sexual harassment and sexual violence, and that such behavior violates both law and University policy. The University will respond promptly and effectively to reports of sexual harassment and sexual violence, and will take appropriate action to prevent, to correct, and when necessary, to discipline behavior that violates this policy on Sexual Harassment and Sexual Violence.”

Dating students is highly discouraged and may lead to disciplinary action. Even a voluntary and welcome relationship with a student in your class may constitute sexual harassment. Be aware that students who are not currently in your class may be in the future. A romantic relationship with a student over whom you have direct grading authority may have negative consequences that you cannot foresee. Other students may file a claim if they believe they are put at a disadvantage when they hear that a fellow student is dating their teaching assistant.

Copies of the UCSB policies and procedures regarding sexual harassment are available from the Associate Director & Sexual Harassment Officer, Ariana Alvarez, who can be reached 3217A Phelps Hall or ariana.alvarez@oeosh.ucsb.edu or at 893-2546. See also <https://oeosh.ucsb.edu/>

B. Cheating

The department and the campus are quite serious about enforcement of the policies regarding cheating. The penalties range from failure in the course to suspension from the university to expulsion. TAs should notify the faculty member regarding all incidents of cheating. All cases should be reported by the faculty member to the Office of Judicial Affairs so that the student's name will be on file for future reference.

“All members of the academic community share responsibility for the academic integrity of students at UCSB. Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University’s educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience as well as the value of one’s degree. This is true for offenders as well as the entire community. It is expected that all UCSB students will support the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be responsible for the integrity of their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student’s own efforts unless otherwise permitted by an instructor. It is also the responsibility of each student to know the campus rules regarding academic misconduct—ignorance is not an excuse.” (Office of Judicial Affairs)

The best policy is to prevent cheating from occurring. Warn students about the harsh penalties in your TA syllabus. All TAs MUST be present at all exam sessions. Proctor carefully. If possible, during large lecture-hall exams have students sit in areas corresponding to their sections, so that you can monitor and recognize your own students. Students should hand their exams directly to their TA. Compose exams and paper assignments that make cheating difficult. Don't repeat questions or paper topics from term to term and year to year. Don't exactly repeat assignments given by other TAs. The Office of Judicial Affairs has resources available to assist TAs, faculty, and students to prevent cheating. See “Academic Integrity at UCSB-A Student’s Guide” and “Avoiding Plagiarism: Mastering the Art of Scholarship.” <http://judicialaffairs.sa.ucsb.edu/FacultyResources.aspx>

C. Record-keeping

TAs should keep accurate records of student grades that can be easily given to supervising faculty if requested, such as an Excel spreadsheet. However, all final grades are submitted through egrades

online. There is a link to egrades on the history department website.

Keep all exam bluebooks for one quarter, and then throw them away. You should detach the cover from each bluebook before discarding it.

D. Offices

Keys to offices are obtained from Darcy. Most offices will house two or three TAs. Due to the scarcity of TA office space, offices will be allocated to History Department TAs first and then, if space is available, the department will try to accommodate history graduate students who are TAs in other departments.

Courtesy towards your office mates is a must in the limited space. Be sure to arrange your office hours so that they don't overlap, since there is not enough space to hold two or three office hours at once. Ideally, your office mates should not be in the office during your office hours, and vice versa, but this is something for all TAs in the office to discuss and agree upon. Be aware that your private conversations with office mates can often be overheard by students waiting in the halls to see other instructors.

E. Dress Code

There is no dress code in the department for TAs or faculty members. The expectation is that you will dress decently and appropriately.

F. Discrimination

It is UC policy to prohibit discrimination based on sex, race, age, national origin, or religion. Be aware of your language and your deeds, as well as different cultural norms.

Consider your students' feelings. What is sexist language? What is sexual harassment? What constitutes insensitivity to students' feelings about age, religion, race or gender? Are you unconsciously patronizing or penalizing some students by holding them to a different standard of performance? Make sure that you are not favoring certain students based on any of these categories, and that you call on students evenly.

G. Learning Disabilities/Disabled Students - <http://dsp.sa.ucsb.edu/>

Disabled students may require alternative modes of examination or assignments. Be aware that there is a department on campus that helps students with learning disabilities and those who are either temporarily or permanently disabled. Students may need to take exams orally, or be provided with more time to take the exam, or have another person act as a scribe for them during exams. The people at the Disabled Student Program either evaluate students themselves or require documentation of a long-standing problem, so be sensitive to the students' needs.

Students must alert you to the fact that they have a learning disability, and they will inform you of the strategies that they have developed with the Disabled Students Program to handle the disability. It is the student's responsibility to inform you of his or her needs before a scheduled examination. You are required to honor these requests upon written official notification. You may want to include a brief notice in your syllabus that students with disabilities should contact you during your office hours. Students must have written notification from DSP in order to receive accommodations. It is not your job as a TA to examine and judge these matters, but to work with the DSP office and student.

Students who have accommodations to take exams outside of class will do so with DSP who will collect

copies of the exam from the professor. TAs will be notified via email when the exam is ready to pick up with Kate in HSSB's office.

If the student doesn't bring you an official notification of a learning disability from the Disabled Student Program, encourage him or her to do so. The program, located in SRB 2120, can be reached by phone at (805) 893-2668 (V/TDD).