

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF RELIGION

Department of Religion: Teaching Roles and Responsibilities

This document should be reviewed in a joint meeting between each course's faculty and teaching assistants before the first class meeting each semester.

Objective: The following list clarifies the respective roles and responsibilities of teaching assistants and lead instructors in their teaching partnerships. This list should be referred to by teaching assistants and lead instructors to determine what commitments are fair and reasonable to expect from one another. The list is based on deliberation between the Department of Religion's graduate students and faculty members and is in accordance with relevant GSAS policies.

Teaching Assistants can expect:

- To receive an explanation of the process through which teaching assistant assignments are determined by the department
- To teach in their subfield at least twice during their time at Columbia (when reasonable, in light of course offerings) and, when feasible, to teach with their advisor at least once during their time at Columbia
- To devote between 7-15 hours a week to teaching duties, including but not limited to attendance of class sessions, discussion sections, and office hours (not to exceed 20 hours per week).
- That the total number of students in their discussion sections will not exceed 30 each semester
- Lead instructors to clearly communicate all teaching roles and responsibilities prior to the beginning of the semester
- Lead instructors to prepare the Canvas page for each course prior to the beginning of the semester, including uploading and making any necessary changes or additions to the syllabus and files
- Lead instructors to make all room reservations for all class and section meetings prior to the beginning of the semester
- Lead instructors to assist with grading to an extent considered fair, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- Lead instructors to assist with designing assignments, exams, and papers to an extent considered fair, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- To be offered the opportunity to meet regularly with the lead instructor to discuss course-related issues or questions
- To be offered the opportunity to receive additional support from the lead instructor when teaching outside of their subfield
- To be offered the opportunity to give a lecture in their assigned course and to receive written observations on that lecture from the lead instructor
- To be offered the opportunity to receive a letter from the lead instructor detailing their teaching work that can be used for teaching portfolios and pedagogical development
- Lead instructors to submit all students' final grades to SSOL
- Lead instructors to treat them as fellow university employees in accordance with Title IX and relevant university policies

- Lead instructors to have knowledge of and act in accordance with this list of expectations
- The DGS to assist in redressing the situation in the event that teaching duties extend beyond those outlined in this document

Lead Instructors can expect:

- Teaching assistants to be in regular communication with faculty and easily reachable through their Columbia email accounts
- Teaching assistants to provide information pertinent to missing class meetings and scheduling discussion sections prior to the beginning of the semester (or as soon as such information becomes available)
- Teaching assistants to attend and be on time to all class meetings except when prior notice is given
- Teaching assistants to take and keep class and discussion section attendance
- Teaching assistants to complete all required reading for the course in a timely manner
- Teaching assistants to lead weekly or bi-weekly one-hour discussion sections based on the requirements of the course
- Teaching assistants to assist with the design of assignments, exams, or papers, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- Teaching assistants to assist with and complete grading in a timely manner, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- Teaching assistants to assist with managing and updating the Canvas page once it has been prepared, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- Teaching assistants to be available to meet in person and communicate through email with students on a regular basis, as defined and communicated prior to the beginning of the semester
- Teaching assistants to lead class in the event that the instructor is unable to attend. This assumes that:
 - the teaching assistant is provided with advanced notice
 - the teaching assistant is given the option to receive assistance with lesson planning,
 - substitute teaching is not a regular occurrence
- Teaching assistants to identify and report to their lead instructors regarding students who might need academic intervention
- Teaching assistants to reach out when in need of assistance with their teaching responsibilities
- Teaching assistants to have knowledge of and act in accordance with this list of expectations
- The DGS to assist in redressing the situation in the event of a teaching assistant failing to conform to the duties outlined in this document