Fall 2010 Head TF Orientation
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Head TF website: http://bokcenter.harvard.edu under “Programs...Head TF Network”.

Guide for Head Teaching Fellows in Program in General Education and Core Program: http://generaleducation.fas.harvard.edu under “Teaching in Gen Ed / Info for Teaching Fellows”.

FIRST STAFF MEETING

I. GET TO KNOW YOUR PROFESSOR
   a. Micromanager or delegator or somewhere in between? Establish boundaries of your authority.
   b. Regular one-on-one meetings: privileged access for performing your tasks.
   c. Important deadlines: keep the prof posted and always double-check!
   d. TF and student feedback: keep the prof in the loop.
   e. Course website access: have the prof set it up for all TFs.
   f. Syllabus: go over it together, check dates, and look for special circumstances (rooms/supplies/film showings/performances/etc.).

What should be on the syllabus?
   • For Gen Ed courses: a statement of how the course addresses the general and area goals of the Program in General Education
   • Course Head, Head TF office hours and contact information
   • Course requirements, including film showings, field trips, special events, and all mandatory elements. Regarding due dates for all requirements:
     o remember that no new work should be assigned during reading period and that all final projects should be due before the end of reading period; and
     o make sure that final project assignments (if any) are given early enough for students to complete the work alongside everything else they might be doing.
   • Composition of the final grade
   • Course policies (due dates, penalties for late papers, etc.)
   • Accessible Education Office statement:
     Any student needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to present their letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) and speak with the professor by the end of the second week of the term, [insert specific date]. Failure to do so may result in the Course Head's inability to respond in a timely manner. All discussions will remain confidential, although AEO may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation.

II. LOGISTICS BEFORE THE FIRST TF MEETING
   a. Textbooks and desk copies, sourcebooks, library reserves, lecture room, and section rooms.
   b. On the course website or, if necessary, photocopied: Syllabus, rules/regulations, and a schedule of assignments.
   c. Plan food catering for staff meetings. Review Instructional Lunch Fund guidelines, confirm your budget with your Dept. administrator, and understand the reimbursement process.
   d. Email TFs to collect their preferences for tasks.
   e. Remind staff to complete payroll paperwork (deadline for on-time payment was Aug. 6)
III. COURSE POLICIES: ESTABLISHING CONSISTENCY
   a. Have your prof establish rules for grading (Head TF checks distribution, deadlines for returning papers and exams to students, paper swapping, etc.).
   b. Missing sections: have a substitution policy for TFs and a make-up policy for students.
   c. Set a clear late/sick policy for student homework, and stress that it must be applied consistently for every assignment.
   d. Discuss how best to teach each week’s material. Establish how much prep is a “prep”. Some faculty are very directive, while others expect the TFs to help generate ideas and lesson plans. Draw on the experience of veteran TFs, while also being open to the fresh ideas of new TFs. Have a TF present the week’s material and teaching ideas during staff meeting. Make section materials and notes from past semesters easily accessible to all TFs (on web or on paper).
   e. TFs should keep student grades on a spreadsheet (in a uniform format!) and ask them to send you copies for monitoring/backup at regular intervals (ex. the day after the assignment should be handed back).
   f. Have a regrading policy.
   g. Use the web to make your student policies accessible to all.
   h. Set firm deadlines, especially for midterm and final grades.
   i. Be fair, both with students and TFs, and remember rules of confidentiality.

IV. AT THE FIRST TF MEETING
   a. Introductions
   b. Outline responsibilities/schedule for full semester.
   c. Ask when TFs would prefer to teach, but remind them that it may not be possible to accommodate everyone’s wishes. Sections should be offered on a range of days and times. Note that many students have labs, athletic practices, and other commitments in the late afternoon. Smaller courses may want to poll students before choosing section times.
   d. When & where will TFs hold office hours? Offices available in Gen Ed suite for Gen Ed TFs
   e. Delegate for the full semester in a fair way (grid/email).
   f. Go over all class policies, rules, and assignments.
   g. Put together contact list (how, when, why).
   h. Make sure all TFs—novice and otherwise—are comfortable coming to you with questions or concerns. Inform them of the resources available to them (Bok Center, BSC, Resident Deans, ATG, and Media and Tech Services, Writing Center, etc.).
   i. Set up Bok Center microteaching.
   j. Open up the possibilities for grade checking/section visiting.

PREPARING FOR THE FIRST CLASS

I. LECTURE AND SECTION ROOM ASSIGNMENTS
   a. Classroom assignments available on course website and on Registrar’s website in mid-August
   b. Section rooms should be requested in mid-August. Send days and times to Classrooms office at classrms@fas.

II. MEDIA
   a. Contact Media Services at mtsequip@fas in mid-August to arrange for AV set-up. Most AV equipment is now on a self-service basis.
   b. Can arrange to meet with technician prior to class to get familiar with using equipment.

III. COURSE WEBSITE
   a. Either the course head can give you administrator rights to the course website or you can write to atg@fas to request access. Be sure to copy the course head on the e-mail.
THE FIRST FEW WEEKS

I. ENROLLMENT/SHOPPING
   a. “Shopping Period”: Actual enrollment will be lower, possibly much lower, but if first-day numbers are well above projection, contact your department administrator or the Program in General Education ASAP to discuss space and your course head to discuss staffing. If you need to lottery, do it before students submit Study Cards.
   b. Study Card Day for all students is Thursday, Sept. 9, enrollment will be on the course site on Sept. 10.
   c. Additional TFs can only be hired after your administrator reviews the enrollment.
   d. The classrooms office generally will not move courses until enrollments are in.

II. SECTIONING
   a. Electronic sectioning is preferable for most courses, but in order to accommodate as many as possible, smaller courses may need to poll students before picking section times. Note that FERPA regulations prohibit posting section lists on paper or on the course site.
   b. Avoiding burnout – the myth of the perfect section assignment.
   c. Section balance: section changes, add/drop: you are in charge!
   d. Maintenance – compare section rolls with registrar lists.
   e. Take attendance at first section meeting
   f. Only Head TF can change sections
   g. Establish policy for missing sections

   When students present Accessible Education Office letters detailing approved accommodations:
   - Accommodations may apply to lecture, section, or both, as well as to exams.
   - Follow the letter: do not over- or under-accommodate; call the AEO with questions.
   - Respect confidentiality.
   - Further information and contact information: http://aeo.fas.harvard.edu/

III. COURSE WEBSITE
   a. The web: students’ #1 go-to place. Make sure all policies are posted.
   b. Be green: don’t make copies unless you absolutely have to.
   c. For help: ATG.
   d. Delegating and the web site: pros and cons.

   Copyright issues. In general, you may not post copyrighted materials to the website. “Fair use” is complicated!
   - It is an urban myth that you can post if you’re using 10% or less of a source. You may post links to resources already available through HCL.
   - A first line of defense is to password protect materials to enrolled students only. When in doubt, don’t post it. See the Office of General Counsel http://ogc.harvard.edu/copyright_docs/ for more.

IV. MIDTERM:
   i. MIDTERM EXAM / FIRST HOUR EXAM
      a. Once sectioning is done, this comes up quickly on the horizon—be prepared!
      b. Figure out what you need (AEO, exam writing, reviews), and delegate.
      c. Blue books are available from the Science Center Director’s Office.
      d. Be ready to submit midterm grade reports on time.
      e. Midterm student feedback: Course iSites online system is available, but paper is more robust.
ii. EVALUATIONS
   a. Muddy cards
   b. Getting feedback from students
   c. Writing Project consultation

SUPPORTING TFs, KEEPING GRADING CONSISTENT
   a. Grading exercises help all TFs grade similarly, and can be helpful if the staff have different disciplinary backgrounds and/or experience.
   b. Collate grades and circulate the spread.
   c. **Know how your TFs are doing:** Use the beginning of staff meetings to find out everyone’s status and learn about any exercises that may not have gone as planned. What are students enjoying and finding useful? What are they struggling with?
   d. Set clear expectations for TFs and ensure that they understand the time commitment
   e. Dealing with issues including:
      - **The problem/slacking TF.** Stay professional, offer assistance, listen well, and consult with your prof. and the Bok Center. Do **not** make unsupported accusations. For moderate TF problems consider solutions that do not single out the TF — i.e., have all TFs hand out section evaluations and then have each TF meet with someone from the Bok Center. Consider having a check-in time at the start of each TF meeting so that people can hand things off if need be to try to avoid this problem.
      - **Inconsistency across TFs in application of course policies.** The best offense is a good defense. Discuss standards at staff meetings, devise procedures for cross-checking grading, establish procedure for student appeals. Make it very clear (send email, say it, post it on the website, write it on the board!) which course policies cannot be bent for special circumstances without your consent. Take both student complaints and TF responses with a grain of salt.
      - **TF overwhelmed by problem student.** Consult prof. Meet with both the student and TF separately, **then** try to mediate. Ceteris paribus, back up the TF. If the TF is in the wrong, try to correct the problem without undermining his/her authority.

STUDENTS WITH PROBLEMS
   a. Contact the student’s Resident Dean when a student seems to be having problems
   b. Know the resources in the Bureau of Study Counsel.
   c. Keep the course head informed.
   d. Make sure students know the resources that are offered in the class itself!

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**Academic Integrity**

- Review the case with the professor and TF. **Do not confront the student.**
- Any instance of suspected misconduct should be reported to the Ad Board, which will investigate and take appropriate action.
- The course head is responsible for all correspondence and interaction with Ad Board. You may be asked to provide supporting materials, but you should not be asked to represent the course.
- Students may not be given punitive grades. If you have referred a case to the Ad Board, consult the Secretary of the Ad Board before submitting a final grade for the student.
- Don’t take it personally!

THE FINAL WEEKS OF THE TERM
1. Extensions: only the Ad Board can approve extensions beyond the end of Exam Period; undergrads cannot receive Incompletes.
   - No new work should be assigned during reading period!
   - All non-exam work should be due by the last day of reading period.
2. Q Evaluation
3. Exam design (if relevant: will the prof. write the exam, or will the staff contribute questions? For many courses, previous exams are available online from Lamont.)
4. Review sessions: Discuss content at a staff meeting. Jointly led review sessions are often best, because they help ensure consistency, particularly if the TFs have seen the exam

**FINAL EXAM**

1. The course head and teaching staff are now responsible for proctoring final exams, including all out of sequence exams. If you anticipate any problems staffing multiple exam rooms, contact the Exams Office immediately and also discuss the problem with the appropriate Gen Ed or departmental administrator. TFs assigned to large course overstaffed for exams will be expected to assist in understaffed courses.
2. Pick up Exam packet (course roster, etc.) from Gen Ed Office or Registrar’s Office at least 24 hours in advance of the exam.
3. Make copies of the exam well in advance. The course staff must bring copies of the exam to the exam room(s).

**FINAL GRADES**

1. Grades are submitted electronically.
2. Know the grade submission deadline for your course. It is especially important for grades for graduating seniors to be in on time. Students cannot graduate if their grades are not in.
3. TFs can be authorized to record grades, but only the course head can submit grades.

   *Do not let your course head leave town without finalizing and submitting final grades!*
# Head TF Network Annotated Calendar (revised as of August 6, 2010)

*Information taken from the FAS and College academic calendars, the Head TF Diary, and other sources.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Term</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Freshman and Upperclass Registration</td>
<td>Aug. 31 (Tu)</td>
<td>Sept. 2 (F)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Day Fall Classes</td>
<td>Sept. 1 (W)</td>
<td>Sept. 6 (Tu)</td>
<td>Sept. 4 (Tu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday - Labor Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Sept. 6 (M)</td>
<td>Sept. 5 (M)</td>
<td>Sept. 3 (M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Card Day - All Students</td>
<td>Sept. 9 (Th)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Study Card Day</td>
<td>Sept. 9 (Th)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Monday – Add/Drop Deadline</td>
<td>Oct. 4 (M)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday - Columbus Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Oct. 11 (M)</td>
<td>Oct. 10 (M)</td>
<td>Oct. 8 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Grade Reports Due</td>
<td>Oct. 12 (T)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Monday – Withdrawal Deadline</td>
<td>Oct 18 (M)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday - Veterans’ Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Nov. 11 (Th)</td>
<td>Nov. 11 (F)</td>
<td>Nov. 12 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Recess Begins</td>
<td>Nov. 25 (Th)</td>
<td>Nov. 24 (Th)</td>
<td>Nov. 22 (Th)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thanksgiving Recess Ends</td>
<td>Nov. 28 (Su)</td>
<td>Nov. 27 (Su)</td>
<td>Nov. 25 (Su)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Last Day of Fall Term Classes</td>
<td>Dec. 2 (Th)</td>
<td>Dec. 6 (Tu)</td>
<td>Dec. 4 (Tu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Reading Period Begins</td>
<td>Dec. 4 (Sa)</td>
<td>Dec. 7 (W)</td>
<td>Dec. 5 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Reading Period Ends</td>
<td>Dec. 12 (Su)</td>
<td>Dec. 13 (Tu)</td>
<td>Dec. 12 (W)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Term Final Examinations Begin</td>
<td>Dec. 13 (M)</td>
<td>Dec. 14 (W)</td>
<td>Dec. 13 (Th)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Term Final Examinations End</td>
<td>Dec. 21 (Tu)</td>
<td>Dec. 21 (W)</td>
<td>Dec. 21 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall Term Final Grades Due</td>
<td>Dec. 28 (Tu)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring Term</th>
<th>2010-2011</th>
<th>2011-2012</th>
<th>2012-2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Day Spring Classes / Registration</td>
<td>Jan. 24 (M)</td>
<td>Jan. 23 (M)</td>
<td>Jan. 28 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study Card Day</td>
<td>Jan. 28 (F)</td>
<td>Jan. 27 (F)</td>
<td>Feb. 1 (F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holiday – Presidents’ Day (no classes)</td>
<td>Feb. 21 (M)</td>
<td>Feb. 20 (M)</td>
<td>Feb. 18 (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifth Monday – Add/Drop Deadline</td>
<td>Feb. 22 (Tu)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Grade Reports Due</td>
<td>Feb. 28 (M)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Parents Weekend – attend classes Fri</td>
<td>Mar. 4 (F)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seventh Monday – Withdrawal Deadline</td>
<td>Mar. 7 (M)</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freshman Lottery Results announced</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Recess Begins</td>
<td>Mar. 12 (Sa)</td>
<td>Mar. 10 (Sa)</td>
<td>Mar. 16 (Sa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring Recess Ends</td>
<td>Mar. 20 (Su)</td>
<td>Mar. 18 (Su)</td>
<td>Mar. 24 (Su)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here are some other items for Head TFs’ and courseheads,’ consideration which do not match up with a specific date.

**Pre-semester:**
- Syllabus planning for courseheads
- Hiring, training, setting expectations for and just getting to know your TFs
- Logistics: AV/website, classrooms, coursepacks/copyrights

**Early-semester:**
- Lesson planning for courseheads and TFs: Head TF could check in with entire course staff on how it’s going.
- TF meetings: how will they be organized? (Led by coursehead, HTF, or both? Discuss content, pedagogy or both?)
- Make sure you and your TFs get to know your & their students
- Could you make good use of Bok Center services? (microteaching, early student feedback, class tapings etc)

**Mid-semester:**
- Struggling students (communicating with Resident Deans, BSC referrals, arranging for peer tutors)
- Students with theses, athletes traveling etc

**Late-semester:**
- Drafts of students’ final papers/projects
- How to ensure consistent grading standards for TFs
- How to organize review sessions
- Keeping student and TF motivation up as you approach the end

The Bok Center’s online calendar, at [sisites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page29679](sisites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page29679), has several more items which could also be of interest.

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1 On Wednesday, September 1, classes will follow a Monday schedule.

2 Reconcile the Registrar's class list with your own section/grade list. Hopefully by add/drop the two lists will match exactly and the students will have gotten back at least one largish piece of graded work so they can make informed add/drop decisions. Make sure your section-switching policy is clear to both students and TFs, and that you inform TFs when you do allow students to switch.

3 Make sure students get at least one substantive piece of graded work back before Add/Drop day, so they can make an informed decision. Also, exams come surprisingly soon: start compiling good questions now. Plan...
how to ensure grading is fair, both in terms of grades students receive and TF workload. Students with disabilities often get time-and-a-half on exams. The Accessible Education Office (aeo@fas, 6-8707) recommends you find a separate room for them; you’ll also need an extra TF to proctor.

4 Even though Midterm Grade Reports aren’t always due before the Seventh Monday withdrawal deadline, for advising purposes it’s useful to submit Unsatisfactory Reports for individual students before the earlier of the two dates — and also to contact each at-risk student’s Resident Dean directly. It’s also good time to confirm your class roster matches the Registrar’s.

5 Have you and your coursehead figured out how to handle classes, labs, and sections this week?

6 Do you still need classrooms during Reading Period? Make sure they’re still reserved for after the end of regular classes.

7 Remind your students about the Q — you likely would prefer them to fill it out before they take the final instead of just after it.

8 Absolute Deadline to submit final grades. Check “Chapter 5: Grades” in Information for Faculty on the Registrar’s website for specific deadline.