TA Tip Sheets 2009-2010  
TA Professional Development Program  
Learning and Teaching Centre  
University of Victoria

TA Tip Sheets

Teaching Assistant’s Guide to What to do Before the First Class

The list has been taken from the UVic TA Manual (which can be found at http://www.ltc.uvic.ca/servicesprograms/taprod/documents/UVicTAManual.pdf). Not all suggestions below may be applicable in all departments on campus. Please use the list as a guide only.

Before the First Class

Logistics

When you are appointed as a teaching assistant you become part of a team that includes a course supervisor (usually a faculty or staff member) and often several other teaching assistants. Before your first class, meet with the course supervisor to discuss the following issues.

• What duties will you perform?
• Must you attend the lectures?
• Who generates the marking guides?
• What deadlines exist and which ones are fixed or idealized?
• Do you have access to photocopiers, audio-visual material, or computer facilities?
• Get a copy of the course outline and the assigned reading material.
• Get a list of students’ names of your class (you can get them with email addresses included) and arrange for updates at appropriate times.
• Find out if you will have an office, a desk, a phone or a mailbox – particularly if you are not working elsewhere in the department in another capacity.
• When do you teach? When are the office hours? Who sets them?
• Where is the classroom? Does it have a clock? Do you need chalk or white board pens and erasers? What classroom technology is in the room? Should you set up a tutorial with AV to learn how to use it?
• How/where do you get keys for the room, building or other required facilities?
• Whom should you contact if you have any questions (e.g., department secretaries and administrative assistants)?