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)?