

(Updated August 4, 2025)

Statement of Mutual Expectations for Graduate Teaching Assistants and Supervisors

(This is a sample for AOSC 200/201 but can be edited accordingly)

By providing professional experience and mentorship, graduate assistantships are an integral part of the education of graduate students. A Statement of Mutual Expectations (SME) outlines in writing the nature of an assistantship and its supervision. It is not a formal contract, but rather a structured conversation to ensure that a graduate student and their supervisor share a clear understanding of what to expect from each other. The Graduate School requires supervisors to meet with the student at the start of their assistantship and at least once a year going forward and are encouraged to use this template to structure this meeting and to record the understanding. Given the wide variety of research, administrative, and teaching assistantships, this template is meant to be customized as needed.

Student Name	
Student ID Number	
Assistantship Title	
Avg. hours/week	20
Preferred work days/hours	
Start Date	
End Date	

Supervisor Name	
Supervisor Title	
Supervisor Email	
Supervisor Phone	
Student Email	
Student Phone	
Preferred Contact	Email

Responsibilities of Assistant: Include the most important duties of the assistantship. Potential topics include specific responsibilities, goals, deliverables (if any) and how they are to be submitted. For teaching assistantships (whether serving as the instructor of record or in a support role), include the course(s) and section(s).

Your TA responsibilities include leading sections XXXX and XXXX of the AOSC200 discussion and being the instructor of record for sections XXXX and XXXX of AOSC201 (Lab). TAs will have at least one (1) regularly scheduled office hour each week.

1. TA's must be prepared to teach lab and discussion sections. This includes reviewing any necessary content prior to discussion/lab and preparing appropriate presentation material.
2. All labs, discussions, and office hours will be in person. The semester schedule is known in advance and TAs should plan accordingly.
3. TAs are responsible for the timely grading of all materials including labs, projects, and other assessments. For AOSC201, TA are also responsible for assigning a final grade for each student and recording this grade in UMEG before the UMD course grade deadline.
4. TAs must attend lectures in person or watch lecture recordings to ensure they are knowledgeable about course content and how the instructors are presenting in- class material
5. Failure or inability to fulfill the TA responsibilities may be grounds for dismissal.
6. We recognize that, occasionally, TAs may have to focus on their own exams, conferences, etc. but TAs are

contracted for 20hr/wk.

7. Exceptions to these expectations may be made under certain circumstances (e.g., illness) with prior permission from the instructors.

Responsibilities of Supervisor: Specify the responsibilities of the supervisor. Potential topics include how the graduate assistant will receive continuing guidance and support, times when the supervisor will be available to meet, any training schedule, and supplies to be made available.

The supervisor will hold weekly meetings with the TAs to review upcoming course content and scheduled assessments. TAs will be provided with a copy of the course textbook and the weekly lab documents including grading rubrics. For exams, TAs will be given a grading rubric for the problems they're assigned to grade. Exam grading will occur at an agreed upon date/time. The supervisor will participate in the exam grading and will be available to answer any questions from the TAs during the grading.

Scheduling: When the assistantship is to be performed, including work hours, regularly scheduled meetings, degree of flexibility in work schedule, and personal and sick leave procedures. What times the graduate assistant does not have to be responsive and plan for classes when the graduate assistant observes a holiday that is on the same day as class (i.e Yom Kippur falls on a class day and the TA is observant). Expected peak times in workload.

TAs will teach two (2) discussion sections and two (2) lab sections (AOSC201) each week. Discussion sections last 50 minutes and lab sections last 110 minutes. The exact days/times will be assigned prior to the beginning of the semester such that they do not interfere with the TAs class schedule. The days and times of all lab and discussion sections are listed in Testudo. TAs will have at least one (1) regularly scheduled office hour each week. TAs will attend one (1) weekly preparation meeting with all TAs and instructors. There will be three (3) exam grading meetings during the semester. The TAs will attend weekly AOSC200 lectures in person or watch the recorded lectures to stay current with course content. If a class day falls on a religious holiday, that they observe, the TA will work with the other TAs to ensure coverage for their classes.

TAs will work on average 20hrs per week. The instructors understand that there may be a few times during the semester when TAs will need to focus more time on their courses or research (e.g., mid-terms, conferences) and their non-instructional time will be limited.

Worksites: Locations where the assistantship is to be performed. If a significant portion of the responsibilities will be satisfied remotely, supervisors should provide guidance on expectations and limitations.

AOSC201 lab sections will be held in ATL3426. Discussion section will take place in the scheduled classroom. Labs and discussions will be held in person.

Health and Emergency Protocols: In the event of a serious health issue or other emergency, what protocols should be followed? This can include emergency contact information, policies on covering for an assistant or supervisor during an unexpected absence, position-relevant considerations, etc.

If a serious health issue or other emergency should occur, the TA is responsible for emailing and texting both Tim Canty and Jeff Henrikson to ensure coverage of their classes. The TA should also attempt to arrange coverage with

the other TAs.

Teaching Policies and Support: Teaching and grading policies, turn around on graded assignments, procedures for dealing with problems in the classroom or with particular students, teaching support offered by the supervisor, etc.

Grading rubrics will be provided for all graded materials. All assignments should be graded, appropriately commented on, and returned to the students within two weeks after submission. TAs will be provided with guidance and support from the instructors when dealing with problematic students. Any student related issues that escalate beyond the typical responsibilities of the TA will be handled by Tim Canty or Jeff Henrikson, as appropriate. TAs will be provided with instruction material and guidance for discussions and labs.

Procedures and Best Practices: Required training, standard methods, required record-keeping, security protocols, and/or procedures for ordering supplies. Any necessary accommodations due to a disability and procedure for access. For teaching assistantships, see Appendix A.

TAs will use ELMS to record grades. TAs will be provided an ELMS template to develop their own AOSC201 ELMS pages. Each week, the senior TA will provide an overview of the following lab assignment, including the grading rubric. The course instructors will be available to provide advice on how to develop teaching skills and may be available to work one on one with the TAs

Professional Development and Individual Development Plan: Topics include skills to be developed during the appointment, training resources other than those provided directly by the supervisor, whether publications will result from the student's work and, if so, expectations for authorship, and/or expectations for travel. See <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/school-policies/#text> for further guidance on coauthorship for faculty-student interactions and collaborations.

Organizational Culture: Considerations such as office space, workspace, dress codes, appropriate titles and means of address, and/or team norms.

Each TA will be assigned to a graduate student office with a desk and chair. It is the responsibility of the TAs to follow all appropriate Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act guidance and maintain student's privacy at all times. TAs are expected to wear appropriate attire for instruction and avoid workout clothes, clothes with inappropriate sayings, soiled clothing, etc.

Resolving Conflicts & Grievance Processes: If an assistant has a conflict or grievance with their supervisor or a fellow team member, who should they contact? What departmental policies should they be aware of? Please note that this section is intended to guide assistants in resolving their grievance in a manner that the Graduate School describes as "locally, collegially, and informally," but is not intended to supplant the formal grievance processes. See <https://academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships/#text> for additional information on Grievance Procedures.

Any conflicts between TAs may be handled by Tim Canty and/or Jeff Henrikson. Conflicts between the TAs and instructors should be brought to the attention of the AOSC Dept Chair, Sumant Nigam.

Other comments:

Please note that all graduate assistantships are subject to University of Maryland policies and procedures as set forth in the Graduate Catalog: academiccatalog.umd.edu/graduate/policies/policies-graduate-assistantships. Nothing in the SME should contradict them, but if they do, the Graduate Catalog policies and procedures govern.

We have met in person or synchronously online to review and discuss this agreement on the date noted below. The graduate assistant was given an opportunity to ask and receive answers to any questions about the assistantship:

Student Signature	
Date	

Supervisor Signature	
Date	

If meeting online, download this document as a PDF and then add your digital signatures using Adobe. For instructions visit: helpx.adobe.com/reader/using/sign-pdfs.html

Once the meeting has been completed and the expectations agreed to, the student or the GA supervisor may then upload the signed form into Workday as a PDF, completing the Onboarding activity. Detailed instructions will be provided within the Workday system.

Some teaching assistants serve as the instructor of record, while most support a course by leading discussion or lab meetings, grading student work, and assisting with course logistics. This list provides additional topics for the teaching assistant and supervising faculty member to discuss.

- What are expectations about TA presence in class meetings?
- How can the TA and instructor work together to create and contribute to a positive and inclusive climate for the students?
- If the TA will be grading student work...
 - What are the grading deadlines?
 - What standards (e.g., rubrics) and procedures will be used to ensure transparency, accuracy, and consistency?
- Student communication...
 - How should the students contact the TA?
 - What are expectations for TA response times to student emails, phone messages, etc.?
- University policies for undergraduate courses – See go.umd.edu/ug-policy
 - How will students be made aware of these policies?
 - How will academic integrity be ensured?
 - What conduct is prohibited and what conduct is allowed when using UMD computing resources? o How will student information covered by the Federal Educational Rights & Privacy Act (FERPA) be protected?
 - What are the expectations for student conduct?
 - What are the policies related to sexual misconduct, discrimination, civility, and safety?
 - How will we ensure that course materials meet standard accessibility standards?
 - What is the process for identifying and offering academic accommodations for students?
 - What constitutes an excused absence and how will they be accommodated?
 - What other rights are guaranteed for students in the course?
- What are the expectations related to professional conduct?
- What resources might the TA refer students to? See tltc.umd.edu/supporting-whole-student for guidance.
- To whom should the TA report concerns about student conduct or wellbeing?
- How should the TA communicate with their supervisor if an illness or other unavoidable absence conflicts with their duties?
- What training or support is recommended or required? See tltc.umd.edu for upcoming workshops.