Department of Classical Studies
University of Waterloo
Graduate Student / T.A. Handbook

USEFUL DEPARTMENT CONTACTS FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

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For contact information concerning adjunct faculty at this and allied institutes, please consult your supervisor.

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Material was collected from various sources, both within the University and external to the campus, and adapted to our own special circumstances. In particular, source material was collected from handbooks already prepared by other UW Faculties, in particular the Department of Psychology and the Department of Anthropology.

I INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

The Department has compiled this Handbook as an aid to Teaching Assistants (TAs) and to provide basic information and advice for our newly arrived Graduate students. For TAs, it serves as a reference manual to help develop advising, teaching, and evaluation skills. This Handbook attempts to answer some common concerns about the mechanics, duties and expectations of TAs. Although we cannot expect to anticipate every situation a TA might encounter, we hope that the guidelines will prove useful, particularly to new TAs. Any questions related to TA assignments or questions about responsibilities and policies may be directed to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

2. THE UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM

TAs are normally involved in undergraduate courses offered on campus. Although it is not necessary to be thoroughly familiar will all the complexities of the program and the rules concerning course prerequisites or requirements for Majors, it is useful to find out what a TA may be expected to do and to be able to answer general questions about our program that students routinely ask. **If** students require more information, they are encouraged to speak to their Undergraduate Advisor.

Students normally take CLAS 100, CLAS 103, CLAS 104, LAT 101/102, GRK 101/102 as their first Classical Studies courses. These courses are part of the standard curriculum for students in Honours Classical Studies, and that tutors are systematically needed for these courses. First- and second-year courses are large lecture introductions. Third-year courses are generally smaller in size. Fourth-year courses are seminars with relatively small enrolment which are taught at an advanced level.

II ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

1. DESCRIPTION OF DUTIES

TAs in the Department of Classical Studies are required to carry out duties specified by the Instructor to whom they are assigned at the beginning of a given term. Graduate TAs are students who do not have full responsibility for teaching courses, but who are appointed to carry out teaching-related duties such as proctoring, marking, tutoring, laboratory supervision, attending TA meetings, occasional lecturing, and other duties as assigned.

Graduate students will receive an offer of a TA-ship, on a term-by-term basis, as early as possible. A TA position requires an average of 10 hours/week over the term. The nominal hours of work are an estimate of the time, including preparation that would normally be required by a graduate student to carry out the assigned duties. TA duties officially start the first day of lectures, but occasionally, duties may start after that date depending on the structure of the duties. TA duties continue until the marks for the course are handed in and **TAs are expected to remain in the department throughout the final exam period to assist as exam proctors. The TA contract provides salary until the end of the full 4-month term.**

Additional TA Duties:

You will be required to be available for up to 5 hours per term to assist with other assignments, such as proctoring a midterm or final exam in a course other than your regular TA, or assisting at Orientation, Campus Day, Graduate Fair or other such activities. The Department Administrative Assistant (Brigitte Schneebeli) is responsible for notifying TAs of these extra assignments. Typically, TAs are called upon during the term to proctor a midterm or final exam which may be during the evening or on a Saturday. Occasionally TAs are asked to proctor one or more midterms during a term.

2. RESEARCH ASSISTANTS (RAs)

Not all graduate students receive RAs; you should refer to your Graduate Supervisor or the Graduate Associate Chair for clarification. RA duties are specified by the faculty member(s) who pays for the assistantship from funds set aside for research.

3. ELIGIBILITY FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Prospective graduate students are provided with a written offer of acceptance and financial support. Financial support will normally continue as promised if the student maintains full-time registration in the degree program, is within program time limits, is satisfactorily performing the duties required for the support, and is in good academic standing. Students receiving major external awards such as NSERC (Natural Sciences & Engineering Research Council), SSHRC (Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada), OGS (Ontario Graduate Scholarships) are normally eligible for one Full TA over a period of three terms.

4. RESTRICTIONS

4.1 Maximum Allowable Hours

The Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities stipulates that full-time graduate students may not engage in work for more than 10 hours per week, taken as an average over the term, for the period they are registered as a full-time graduate student. Please note that this 10 hours per week should be regarded as a total amount and as such no student should hold both a TAship and an RAship, as this would supersede the maximum allowable hours. As such, we also “advise” full-time graduate students to not hold outside jobs. Please direct any questions concerning this issue to both your thesis supervisor and the Graduate Chair.

5. COMPLICATIONS

5.1 Foreign Students

Student Authorization: A Student Authorization is a document giving permission to an international student to study at a Canadian educational institution. The Student Authorization must be applied for and obtained from a Canadian government representative outside Canada, with the exception of students from the USA, Greenland or St. Pierre and Miquelon (who may apply for a Student Authorization at a Canadian port of entry).

Requirements for a Student Authorization

To obtain a Student Authorization you need:

- A valid passport
- Evidence of acceptance at UW
- Evidence of adequate funds
- A letter from your sponsor
- A letter of reference
- Medical Clearance

Where to get a Student Authorization
Once you have your documents you can apply for STUDENT AUTHORIZATION from the nearest Canadian embassy or consulate. If your country does not have a Canadian representative, you can obtain one at the British embassy.

Visa and Student Authorization
A visa is not the same as a Student Authorization. A visa is sticker placed in a passport by the Canadian Immigration officials at a Canadian consulate or embassy abroad. A Student Authorization is issued or endorsed at the Canadian port of entry.

Terms and Conditions
At the port of entry, Canadian Immigration officials will enter the TERMS AND CONDITIONS on the Student Authorization.
Generally these will specify that the student:

- Must not accept employment without authorization from Employment Canada
- Must be in attendance at a Canadian university while in Canada, pursuant to immigration regulations
- Must enrol only in a specified course of study.

When you are in Canada, if you wish to change the terms and conditions of your Student Authorization you may do so by obtaining an application mail-in kit available at the International Student Office.

Employment Authorization
Students receiving TA and/or RA must acquire a valid employment authorization prior to commencing work. Canada Immigration issues an Employment Authorization for a fee of $125. Both undergraduate and graduate students may take a job related to their field of study **but only on the University campus**. The application mail-in kits are available at the International Student Office.

5.2 When your Instructor is also your Advisor
This situation has the advantage that you are familiar with your Advisor’s style and with the course material. As well, you are likely accustomed to working together and your Advisor is likely to be flexible regarding work arrangements because (s)he has a vested interest in your performance as a graduate student. On the other hand, there are disadvantages. If your Instructor/Advisor asks you to perform extra duties or gives you short notice about ‘special’ tasks they would ‘appreciate’ you performing, it is very hard to say no. When the Instructor is your Advisor, your job can be inappropriately combined with your academic apprenticeship. **If such problems arise, and you find it difficult to discuss this directly with the Instructor/Advisor, you should consult with the Graduate Associate Chair or Department Chair.**

5.3 Conflicts surrounding TA duties
TAs should identify any known academic obligations that may interfere with their TA Duties and discuss them with their instructor and, if you have any problems carrying out your TA assignment because your duties require substantially more than 10 hours/week, you should first talk with the Instructor. It is also a good idea to discuss any problem you have with your Graduate Associate Chair. If the Graduate Associate Chair cannot resolve the problem then the Department Chair should be consulted. Generally, such problems are satisfactorily resolved in an informal way but if a problem remains unresolved, a formal dispute can be undertaken. Procedures for formal dispute resolution and appeals are available from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

6. GETTING PAID

TAs and RAs are paid in four equal monthly instalments over the term, normally on the last Friday of every month. 4% vacation pay is included in your final paycheque at the end of each term. Employees can view their pay advice on-line at a secure website: http://www.hr.uwaterloo.ca/myhrinfo/myhrinfo.html Follow the instructions to authenticate your password. You can view your pay information, current and past 12 months. If, after you have authenticated your password, there is no payroll information available, contact the Administrative Assistant immediately to ensure that all the necessary paperwork has been processed.

In order to be paid for a TA and/or RA you are required to go to the Human Resources Department in the GSC building (General Services Complex) to "sign up" on the monthly payroll system. You need to take along:

- Your Canadian Social Insurance Number (if you do not yet have one, HR will explain how to apply for one)

- Your health card number or an equivalent identification of your medical insurance policy.
  Foreign Students please note: The University Health Insurance Plan or UHIP provides you and your eligible family members with basic health care protection. The cost for UHIP depends on the number of people covered. Dependents must enrol in UHIP within 30 days of arrival in Canada. The cost of purchasing this coverage will be your responsibility. UHIP is compulsory for all international students attending UW and their dependents. The plan provides for doctor's services, hospital ward accommodation, all maternity claims (even if pregnancy began before you arrived in Ontario), and in combination with supplementary coverage, will cover medical care outside Ontario or Canada. For info: http://www.uhip.mercer.ca

- The name of your current bank, branch and bank account number for salary deposit purposes and a (voided) sample cheque. Salary payments are deposited directly into this account through the University Payroll system.

- Your permanent home mailing address. Your income tax slips will be mailed to this address if you are not a registered student at the time of income tax processing. You will also be required to fill out a TD1 tax form at Human Resources for income tax purposes, and in order to do this, you will need to know the amount of your tuition fees.

PLEASE REMEMBER – YOU WILL NOT BE PAID UNTIL YOU SIGN UP AT HUMAN RESOURCES AND COMPLETE TERM REGISTRATION.

All RAs are expected to be paid in money and not with "in kind" material (ie. books, trips, etc.) of equal value.

III TA SKILLS

1. CONTACT WITH STUDENTS

In our department, TA duties are split between regular tutorial sessions that are led by the TA (generally linked to language courses) and contact with students through office hours organized by TAs in consultation with their Instructors (for both language and lecture-based courses).

Office Hours provide students with the opportunity to receive individual attention. During these sessions students characteristically inquire about, or discuss, assignments and tests for which they are preparing, or seek clarification about work that has already been marked.

Tutorial Sessions usually involve teaching and answering questions about the course readings, lectures, or assignments. For example, a TA might provide further teaching about a topic introduced in class, answer questions about assignments, or go over the answers to exams or assignments. A TA is not normally expected to introduce new material, unless a prior arrangement has been made with the Instructor.

2. RELATING TO STUDENTS

Experience suggests the following guidelines are useful:

- BE PREPARED to ensure that contact with students is enjoyable for you and useful for students. This means that before the course begins, you should familiarize yourself with the course material, including course outline, course requirements, textbooks, readings and lecture notes, assignments and exams. If the course material concerns your own research interests, you should know the sequence in which topics will be taught and the depth to which they will be taught. Knowing the sequence in which topics will be introduced into the course enables you to assist students with material that has already been covered, without confusing them. Try to think back to when you first learned the material and remember the kinds of difficulties you encountered – you may find you have some useful tips and shortcuts to share with students.
  If the course to which you have been assigned is not in your research area, try to read all course material before classes begin. (Make sure the Instructor is aware that you are not thoroughly familiar with the subject material to ensure that (s)he has reasonable expectations of you) At the very least, read the course outline in detail and skim the chapter headings in all texts and readings. This will make it easier for you to know where to look up information to answer students' questions. In addition, read the assignments and exams carefully, ask the Instructor for answer keys, and make sure you prepare yourself for potential questions.

- BE RECEPTIVE AND RESPONSIVE. A professional, friendly manner on your part is more likely to encourage students to come to you to have their concerns addressed. Treat students with respect. This does not mean you need to be overly friendly and constantly available, but it does mean that you should be available at arranged times, listen carefully, and attempt to answer students' questions in a professional way.
  Don't be condescending, arrogant or sarcastic in your interactions with students. If an interaction with a student is uncomfortable, either for you or the student, for any reason, end the meeting promptly and politely and refer the student to the Instructor. Make sure that the Instructor knows that you referred the student to her/him and the reasons for the referral. As well, be careful with humour when dealing with students because humour is often easily misunderstood.

- ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO TAKE INITIATIVE IN LEARNING. It is tempting to answer students' questions when they indicate they do not understand a particular point. However, as a teacher, you should where possible try to get students to articulate the problems and encourage them to come up with answers on their own.

3. SOME TEACHING TIPS

a) Remember the "Golden Rule of Teaching": teach others as you would want yourself to be taught.
b) Try to make your lectures interesting.

c) For the sake of students in the back row, try to make your handwriting clear and large enough. Be as complete as possible. Don't write in half sentences.
d) Be enthusiastic about teaching and the material. If you really enjoy it, chances are good that the students will too.
e) Make sure you have tested equipment ahead of time. It is embarrassing to have the unwanted surprise of not knowing what you are doing in the middle of a presentation.
f) Listen to the students – they will tell you what you are doing well and what you are doing poorly.
g) Appearance is important. Although your appearance can be casual and informal bear in mind that some clothing, for example T-shirts with slogans, may be offensive and should be avoided.
h) Pay particular attention to voice modulation – monotones or indistinct voices are difficult to listen to. Don't talk to the chalkboard.

4. FIELDING QUESTIONS

Although you can never expect to answer every question you are asked, you should be able to answer questions that are fundamental to your course. Again, the most important thing to remember when dealing with students is to treat them with respect. Try to get to know them by asking them their name and then remind them of yours. Don't approach them with remarks such as "what's your problem?" as this can be taken the wrong way.

Chances are the most common questions you will be asked are "What do I do next?" and "What's wrong with this?" Both questions are tricky to answer without giving too much or too little away. It takes a lot of practice to be able to provide useful and enlightening hints.

Some good methods are:
a) If course notes are available for your course, remind students to read the material.
b) Ask the students to explain their reasoning. This enables you to discover what problems they are having so you can point them in a more productive direction. This approach will also indicate how much of the necessary background information they have read.
c) Ask the student to explain what (s)he thinks the problem is. If (s)he doesn't really understand, try to work through some specific examples whenever possible.
d) Some first-year students are not aware of how to use their textbooks as resource materials. If they don't understand something basic, assist them to look it up in the text.

5. HELPING STUDENTS

5.1 Helping with Academic Problems

Sometimes the best way to learn how to become an effective TA is to listen to the students. They will be very honest with you and will give you signs as to what they like and don't like. Although different TAs will have different styles, it is equally true that different students like different things. Try to keep in mind which students like which style and try to modify your behaviour accordingly. Refer students who have problems with note-taking, essay writing or study skills to the Counselling Services Center located in Needles Hall. Although it is not your job as a TA to teach these skills, you may often be able to offer useful suggestions that relate specifically to the course.

5.2 Helping with Personal Problems

If students trust and respect you, they may pour out their feelings about the other TAs, the Instructor, and other students. Treat this as confidential information and deal with it in a professional manner. If you encounter a student who seems depressed, very lonely, or appears to be having personal problems, you might suggest a visit to the Counselling Services Center in Needles Hall to discuss his or her difficulties in confidence. The subject of referral itself can be broached by a comment such as "you know, lots of students I know have that same problem; in fact, there's a group that's been formed at … to deal with this issue which you might find helpful. Here's the telephone number." Don't try to be a counsellor. You may be able to avoid this role to a great extent, if, as a general rule, you keep your door open while advising students because this approach usually discourages students from becoming overly personal. Students may need to consider dropping a course either before or after the formal "drop/add" date due to specific personal circumstances. TAs should be aware of this procedure, in general, but should suggest students contact their Undergraduate Advisor for details.

5.3 Safety Training and Responsibilities

It is the department's responsibility to ensure that graduate students receive adequate information about safety, regardless of whether or not they are employed as TAs and/or RAs. TAs should be aware that they, as well as the Instructors, can be held liable for problems that arise from failure to enforce safety regulations.

In general, all TAs should know how to handle an emergency. Learn the location of the Health and Safety Office on campus and become familiar with the location and operation of the fire extinguishers and the nearest telephone. In emergencies, when telephones and elevator telephones are not available, use fire alarms. In case of fire, pull the fire alarm and vacate the building immediately. If a fire alarm sounds during a class or tutorial, instruct students to leave the building immediately in an orderly fashion and to remain outside the building until instructed to return by the Building Evacuation Coordinator who is responsible for relaying information between the Fire Department and UW Police and occupants of the building. (Fire Wardens can be recognized by their **red hats**; the Building Evacuation Coordinator can be recognized by his/her **white hat**.)

Please be aware that it is the responsibility of Fire Wardens to record the names of persons who refuse to leave the building; refusal to leave the building during evacuation is an offence under the Fire Marshall's Act of the Province of Ontario and charges can be laid.

6. OFFICE HOURS

6.1 Effective Office Hours

Some TA positions involve spending an average of one to two hours a week in a consulting capacity for students in the courses for which they TA. This is especially true of tutors involved with language courses. It is a good idea to plan your office hours and post them. You may find it useful to begin and end on the hour. That way, you are accessible to students who may have classes on the half-hour. In other instances, it may better suit the students to have extended hours at specific times such as when an assignment is due or just prior to exams. It is beneficial for all TAs, both for DE and on-campus courses, to inform the Administrative Assistant of their posted Office Hours, as well as any subsequent changes to Office Hours during the term, so that faculty can assist with student inquiries.

1. The first rule of office hours is BE THERE! Because the times of your Office Hours will not be convenient for all students, often they will want to see you outside these times. It is wise to get into the habit of making appointments with students to cover these "special" circumstances rather than answering questions any time students come past your office. This also serves as a gentle reminder that TAs are not "on call" at all times.

2. Your function as a TA during office hours is not to be a quick source of answers; rather, you should be prepared to provide direction in completing assignments, to provide tutorial/instructional support for exam preparation, and to provide feedback on marking.

3. It is not your responsibility to re-teach the course or teach topics that the student has missed in class, nor is it your responsibility to provide lecture notes for students who miss classes. However, this does not mean you should refuse to answer general questions that are related to the lecture or tutorial component of the course.

6.2 How to Determine the Problem

1. Encourage the student to ask clear, specific questions. “I don’t understand anything” or “I don’t know where to start” do not qualify. Establish the reason for the visit. Encourage students to write down their questions. Often students come with poorly formulated questions and trying to understand the nature of their questions can be time-consuming. Apart from reducing the time spent, students may answer their own questions in the process of formulating the question. If time is short, you can write the answer to their questions (or the reference for finding the answer) and post it on your door.

2. Find out what the student has done on the assignment. If the student is on the right track, a key question from you can be enlightening and point out the right direction. If the approach is headed down a dead-end trail, again a few key questions can be quite useful. Some student may ask you to check over lecture notes or study notes. This is time-consuming, so encourage them to team up with another class member who can just as easily perform this function. Often students who approach you for reassurance do not know other people in the course so it may be worth your time to ask students at the end of a lecture or tutorial to volunteer as possible “study partners”. This approach can be especially useful to Mature Students who may be hesitant to approach other (younger) students in the class.

3. If you do not know the answer to a question, be prepared to say you don’t know and use the opportunity to outline to the students the plan of attack you would use. Your method and style of thinking can be as useful as an answer. If you remain stumped, you may be able to suggest useful references to look up. Another approach is to suggest that the student come back after you have had time to obtain more background information.

4. Often students quite genuinely do not understand the marking scheme used in a test or assignment or essay. Be prepared to explain clearly the marking scheme.

7. TUTORIALS (if assigned)

On the first day, your most important duty is to make yourself known to the students. In the first tutorial, introduce yourself and have your name written on the chalkboard or overhead and explain to the students what your function is at the tutorial. When you begin the first tutorial, explain to the students what is expected of them and why the tutorial is important (how does it supplement the lectures, etc.). If there are special requirements regarding the tutorial, announce these. Outline what will be taught and how the grades will be assigned.

Preparation is the most necessary requirement for successful tutorials. Make sure equipment is available in the room and is in working order. Know what has been included in the lectures; this may mean that you attend lectures or speak regularly with the Instructor or review his/her lecture notes. For each tutorial, make an outline of the material you intend to cover. A detailed outline can also serve as a handout for students. An overhead can be useful because you can write on the overhead and still maintain eye contact with your students. Encourage questions. For questions you are not able to answer immediately, ask the student to jot down the question for you and get back to the student later. If one particular student is taking up an inordinate amount of time, suggest (s)he make an appointment with you. Ask a friend (or the Instructor) to attend a tutorial to give you feedback about your presentation. You may also want to ask to review the notes of a student in the tutorial to evaluate whether you were successful in conveying the information you wanted to get across.

8. MARKING

Assignments are the major source of feedback for both the Instructor and the students. The TA who marks assignments is a vital link between the two. The student is provided with information about how well (s)he has assimilated course material and used the correct terminology to express certain concepts. To the Instructor, the assignments indicate how well the course material has been communicated to the students. Being more intimately acquainted with the work of the students, the marker is the one to communicate any progress, problems, or difficulties to both the Instructor and the students.

8.1 Contact with the Instructor

Your responsibilities as a TA are determined by many factors including the subject of the course, its size, its level, and the approach of the Instructor. The Instructor is responsible for deciding what to teach and for choosing the methods of evaluation, as well as for determining your duties. Most Instructors will have already decided on the role of the TA. However, it is important that you and the Instructor discuss this role to ensure you have a mutual understanding of your responsibilities and the time they require at the start of the term.

Your first meeting with the Instructor is a step in the development of a cooperative relationship. Open and honest communication will benefit both you and the Instructor, and students will likely benefit from your ability to represent and articulate their needs to the Instructor. In your first meeting, you and the Instructor should discuss the following issues:

- Course structure. Review the course outline and try to get a sense of the approach to the subject.
- Determine with the Instructor your specific responsibilities. Find out exactly what tasks you will be performing.
- Determine how you will receive feedback from the Instructor on your performance and progress..
- Determine if the amount of time you have been assigned to perform duties is reasonable. Discuss matters such as preparation time, the length and type of assignments you will have to mark, and the type of feedback you are expected to provide. If you foresee problems, this is the time to discuss them.

During your initial meeting with your Instructor, you should work out the details about how absences (e.g. illness or emergencies) should be handled/reported. Please remember that it is essential for TAs to be present at assigned tutorials and during posted office hours, so whenever possible, inform appropriate people promptly of your absences. Remember, students depend on you! You should also note that the University Graduate Calendar stipulates that periods of absence exceeding four weeks in any one term must be approved. Please refer to http://www.grad.uwaterloo.ca/acms/default.aspx?sectionID=5189&pageID=8944 for more details.

8.2 Establishing Marking Guidelines with the Instructor

Most interactions with the Instructor will concern procedures for evaluating students' work. **Go over the assignments or exams with the Instructor to ensure that you both have a similar understanding of what is expected of the students.** Discuss the following issues:

- Who is responsible for maintaining detailed, accurate and secure records of marks?
- Ask the Instructor for detailed guidelines or an answer key before you begin marking assignments or exams.
- Does the Instructor have preferences regarding the relative weight of questions or the total value of the assignment?
- When must you complete your marking?
- Another matter to consider – are you subtracting marks for mistakes or adding marks earned for material presented? A subtle difference, perhaps, but it may be that the Instructor has a preference. Be sure to check.
- Determine whether extensions are acceptable and under what circumstances.
- Are there penalties for late submission of term work and if so, how are these determined and applied?
- Will the Instructor spot check your work or review it in some fashion?
- Who arranges for alternate exams if a student misses an exam?
- How do you deal with cases in which you are uncertain about assessing a piece of work?
- You may mark reports or other assignments whose contents can range from the suspicious to the flagrantly dishonest. If you believe that you have enough evidence to support an allegation of plagiarism, how should you handle the situation? Use UW Policy 71 as a guide.

If you are a novice TA acquaint yourself with the marking conventions at UW, which may be quite different from what you are used to. Numeric grades on a scale from 0-100 are used by all faculties. Averages are reported in all faculties as percentages.

8.3 Marking Hints / Assigning Grades

Once you have obtained the answers to the above questions:

1. Mark clearly and ensure that your remarks stand out, for example, by using a different colour pen than that used by the student. If a pen is used, choose your words with care as mistakes are difficult to erase. Some instructors may ask that you use pencil so that they can make alterations if necessary. If any part of an exam is left blank, draw a line across the page. This ensures that students do not come back later and tell you that "you forgot to mark a question".

2. Mark positively. If something is clearly wrong, give explicit feedback and suggest alternative approaches so the student knows where (s)he went wrong.

3. Check your answer key. Instructors have been known to make mistakes or give ambiguous answers. (for short answer questions you may want to write your own "model answers" to refer to since this practice may enable you to see just how difficult (or easy) the questions were to answer; alternatively, the instructor may provide you with such "model answers") Check with the Instructor to ensure that your expectations are realistic.

4. Whenever possible, give feedback in writing on the assignment as a whole and make suggestions for improvement, but be sure that your feedback is clear and not open to misinterpretation. Avoid ambiguous or cryptic comments or symbols, e.g. "????" or "No!" and qualitative comments that can easily be misunderstood.

5. When you return the marked assignments or reports to the Instructor, give the Instructor a general impression of the progress of the class. If a mistake is common to many assignments, mention this to the Instructor who can comment on it to the class as a whole. (It may also mean that you have misunderstood the requirements of the questions, so checking with the Instructor will eliminate this possibility)

Now consider yourself. You wish to optimize the use of your time while providing fair evaluation of the students' work. With few exceptions, TAs participate in evaluating students through the marking of quizzes, essays, assignments, and mid-term and final examinations. TAs with more autonomy may also be involved in assigning final marks. It is therefore important to develop and apply fair and consistent standards of evaluation. It takes considerable experience to achieve a proper balance between being "too tough" and being "too lenient". (Anecdotal evidence suggests that, if anything, TAs tend to be more stringent than professors in marking) Regardless of the approach taken, it is important to provide students with a means of reaching your expectations.

The essential question is how to best evaluate the extent to which students have achieved the teaching goals, e.g. mastery of basic terminology, breadth of understanding, and conceptual insight. Several steps can be taken to make this easier:

1. Common types of questions are multiple choice, matching, fill-in-the-blanks, short answer, and essay. For multiple choice, look at assignments from previous years or ask the Instructor for an example of one. These tests are generally easily marked with computer scoring. For other types of tests, it should be possible to use an answer key provided in consultation with the Instructor with whom details of scoring should be discussed.

2. For short answer and essay questions, it is best to establish the range of the grades in consultation with the Instructor. A written answer key is useful, together with examples of good and bad answers. Some TAs find it useful to select range finder papers – middle-range A, B, C, and D papers to which they can refer for comparisons. An "A" answer presumably contains all the information required, presented in a clear and concise fashion.

3. Mark reports and assignments moving through the same sections or questions in each paper rather than reading straight through each individual student's exam. This will ensure consistency in marking as well as decrease the marking time. It also keeps your mind from being cluttered with details from other questions. If possible, finish marking the whole set of one section at one sitting. This way, you do not forget the marking scheme. As well, when time permits, and especially with important essays, it may be a good idea to read through borderline cases to confirm your judgement that the work as a whole deserved the numeric grade assigned.

   Reading fifty papers or two hundred essay tests presents special problems, namely, the possibility of inconsistency in marking. You are likely to be more thorough in your reading and more careful and detailed with the comments you provide with the first few papers you examine than with the rest when you are getting tired, irritable or bored. (Take frequent breaks so that you don't penalize students because you are tired.) To minimize such variation, read five or six papers before beginning to assign marks in order to get an idea of the range of quality you can expect. You may also find it useful to rank order the papers in groups before assigning marks. When energy flags, stop marking. When resuming, read over the last few papers you marked to make sure you were fair and consistent.

4. If several TAs are marking the same assignments or reports, discuss how to divide the work. For example, one TA may mark one half of the reports each time, or one TA may mark all the reports one week and the other TA will do all the reports the next week. Or you might try to organize the work so that each TA marks ALL of a particular section of an exam. No matter how extensive the answer key, people often mark the same questions differently, creating a source of frustration in students.

5. Once you have recorded the grades, return the papers to the Instructor promptly or directly to the students, as requested by the Instructor. **DO NOT** leave them lying outside your door.

6. When modifying marks, change only those due to addition errors or those related to material which you graded; otherwise send the student to the Instructor responsible for the course or the TA who marked the work. Initial any change you approve on the student's paper.

8.4 Dealing with Complaints about Marking

It is likely that you will have to reply to at least some questions and complaints about your marking. Students' questions about marking typically fall into two categories:
(1) questions about why the substance of their answer was incorrect or inadequate, and
(2) questions about the particular mark assigned to that answer.

Post the answer key, if available, so that students can check their answers before coming to see you. It is a good idea to ask students to drop off the piece of work that you have marked, with a brief note about their concerns, and to make an appointment to discuss the exam. This provides you with time to check over your marking to ensure you have not made any errors. As well, this approach allows you to check that you, and not some other TA, did the marking. It is never a good idea to defend someone else's marking, especially if it is subjective marking, so always refer the student to the person who marked the work.

Don't be bullied or cajoled into changing the grade, but try not to be, or appear to be, defensive. Although some students at times lack tact, those who approach you with complaints about their marks are not criticizing you personally. Sometimes they do not understand the material, or just what they have done wrong. Sometimes they do not understand how you assigned marks, or how they might have written a better answer. Sometimes they realize that the mark you assigned was fair, but hope that you might give them an extra mark anyway. Maintain a calm professional manner and make it clear that you are prepared to discuss the question reasonably, that you will listen to what the student has to say, and that you are taking the student's concerns seriously.

Address the substantive issues. Many questions seemingly about marks actually arise from misunderstandings of what was required for a correct answer. Clearly state what was required in the question and the student will often see where his/her answer was deficient. Having dealt with the substance of the answer required, questions may still remain about the mark you assigned. TAs who regularly give extra marks find, that they get a lot of students coming to ask for more marks - this is not much fun and is a waste of your time. Be fair in your original marking and "stick to your guns" if you feel the mark was accurate. However, be prepared to accept that no one is infallible and if your mark was not correct be prepared to revise it and acknowledge that you had overlooked something in your original assessment and identify what was missed. This involves no "loss of face" and can even enhance your relationship with the student. If a change of grade is going to occur it should be in consultation with the instructor (if it were a factual mistake in the marking, just a quick notification, but in the case of an essay or more subjective piece of work, the instructor should re-read the work in question).

In some cases, even when the student seems to understand both the material and how the mark was assigned, a disagreement may persist. At such times, there are two avenues worth pursuing: one is to describe clearly to the student what a complete answer to the question entailed (possibly with an example) and to point out as specifically as possible how the answer the student gave fell short; the other is to point out that even if your marking of the question was somewhat hard, the same standard was used for all students and that any change would require remarking this question for the entire class.

Sometimes students will insist they really knew what the right answer was, but just "couldn't put it in words properly". Your response should be that marks are assigned on what students demonstrate they have learned. Expressing ideas clearly is an important part of university education and it is not unreasonable for you to respond to the presence or absence of the demonstration of such skills.

If a student does extremely poorly on a TA-graded assignment, this situation should be brought to the Instructor's attention, especially if the grading involved subjective marking, such as, an essay. It is helpful to be in a position to inform the student that the Instructor is in agreement with the grade assigned.

Most discussions about marking can be dealt with amicably. To summarize:

- first discuss the substance of the answer
- make sure the student now understands the material
- discuss the marking of the student's answer, contrasting it with a complete or model answer
- point out to the student that marks are relative and that consistency with the rest of the class is important

If, at the end of this, you still have a disagreement, agree to disagree politely. At this point, it is very important that you refer the student to the Instructor who can act as a third party to settle the matter.

8.5 Other Complaints

Sometimes students will complain to you about other TAs, about the course, or about the Instructor. It can be difficult to respond to such complaints - especially if you believe the complaints are justified. However, it is unprofessional to engage in or encourage such criticism in your role as a TA. A noncommittal comment will often suffice, and you should suggest that the student would be better served by discussing the complaint directly with the person involved, or with the Undergraduate Advisor. If the complaint is justified, you might pass on the thrust of the complaint to the Instructor, without, of course, identifying the student in question. Instructors want to know whether the course is going smoothly or whether there are problems, and TAs can effectively serve as a mediator/communication link between the students and the Instructor.

8.6 Keeping Records

Guidelines for maintaining records of marks will usually be given to you by the Instructor responsible for the course; however, as a general rule it is recommended that each TA maintain at least two sets of records, in two separate locations to ensure that marks are not lost or misplaced. For example, one set may be kept in your office and the other may be in the form of the computer listing of students, updated with marks to date. At the end of the term be sure to ask your instructor (or Brigitte Schneebeli) about where to store marked final exams for safe keeping. The University requires that marked final exams be kept by the department for a one year period. Don't leave "old" marked exams lying around your office.

8.7 Workshops

The university offers numerous workshops for graduate students related to teaching and grading. Please be aware of these and avail yourself of them.

9. PROCTORING EXAMINATIONS

Proctoring midterm tests, as well as final exams, during class time or the final exam period, is an essential duty. Check the course outline for the dates and times of midterm tests and final exams that are held during class time. Verify with the course Instructor that there have been no changes since the course outline was prepared. The final exam period is two to three weeks long and usually begins within one week following the last day of classes for the term. The date, time, and location of final exams scheduled during the formal final exam period are not known until the last month of classes. All proctors for final exams scheduled during this period are notified of their proctoring duties in advance of the exam date by the Instructor or Brigitte Schneebeli. Most of these exams are held in the Physical Activities Complex (PAC). **If you are unable to proctor a midterm, or final exam, as requested, you should arrange for another graduate student to take your place and inform the Instructor and Department Secretary accordingly**. You will likely be required to proctor exam(s) for the course to which you are assigned. **However, you should note that you may be called upon to proctor an additional course (beyond the one to which you have been assigned) as part of your normal TA assignment.**

Usually, only the Instructor sees a copy of the examination before the time of the examination, but if the Instructor provides you with a copy, you should look over the test questions and their answers. This will enable you to answer any relevant question from the students with confidence. It is a good idea for you to take the test yourself beforehand; if you identify any errors or ambiguities in the test paper or perceive a problem with the length of the test, inform the Instructor of your findings. If you receive a copy of the question paper from the Instructor before the exam, please remember that security is critical.

If aids such as textbooks are allowed in the examination room, take along your own; these will certainly be useful for students who forget to bring theirs. Bring along a couple of pencil erasers as well – there are always requests to borrow them. For final exams held during the exam period, you are requested to appear one half hour before the exam begins to have the exam material distributed on time. In any case, you should have everything prepared so that the exam begins on time; latecomers can then be handled quietly, with a minimum of disruption to the other students. If there are sufficient seats, a staggered seating plan is a good precaution against cheating.

If there is a mistake or a typographical error in the exam questions, announce this at the beginning of the examination period and write the changes clearly on the blackboard. Also announce any examination procedures to be followed. Once the students have settled down, quietly take a head count as it is useful to know the number of examinees present (if a test paper gets lost, for example). A seating plan may be circulated to the students for them to indicate their position in the examination room. In this way you can take attendance and discourage collaboration between neighbours. During final exams in the PAC, students must present their student ID cards and fill out the coloured identification cards supplied by the Registrar's Office, (or enter their names and IDs on a seating plan provided by the Registrar's Office, if that is what the instructor prefers) and follow formal exam procedures outlined by Registrar's office.

If there is no clock in the examination room, or if the one there is not giving the correct time, post the time on the board at fifteen-minute intervals (more often as the exam period nears the end). If a student asks to leave the room for a short period, make sure all the others are present before allowing him or her to leave. Glance up at the class frequently to make sure no one is trying to catch your attention. Walk past the desks occasionally; students will be encouraged to ask questions which they may otherwise hesitate to ask. When answering questions, you must be careful not to give out too much or too little information. You should clarify the test question and perhaps hint at what is expected. Unlike tutorials and office hours, here you are not supposed to help the students solve problems; rather your job is to make sure they understand what the problems are.

Make an announcement when there are only five minutes left in the exam period. Collect exams punctually; extend the exam period only on the Instructor's instructions. As papers are turned in, check each to make sure it has a name and ID number on it. Remind the students not to discuss the exam until all papers have been collected. Make sure to collect question papers as well as answers if that is what the Instructor has requested. Before leaving the exam room, compare the number of papers turned in with the number of students who took the exam. If there are discrepancies, try to resolve them, eg. by searching for missing papers in the exam area, by checking whether each student who signed a seating plan or turned in an ID card has done so for the right course. If there are discrepancies which cannot be resolved, notify the Instructor immediately.

9.1 Cheating

Please take a look at the following websites pertaining to:
Student Academic Discipline Policy - http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm
Examination Regulations and Related Matters - http://www.registrar.uwaterloo.ca/exams/ExamRegs.pdf
Academic Integrity - http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity/index.html

10 EVALUATIONS (arranged by Instructor)

10.1 Course Evaluations

Undergrad students have an opportunity to evaluate the course, as well as the instructors and TAs performance during the last two weeks of classes. Neither the course instructor nor the course TA should be present when course evaluations are administered because students' responses on the evaluations could be positively or negatively influenced by the instructor the TA's presence. The course evaluation packages contain instructions for administering the evaluations. This task likely will not take more than a half hour of your time. (Note: Administering course evaluations in a course other than your own TA will not exempt you from assisting once during the term with proctoring duties described in paragraph 2 of 2.1.1.)

11 ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

11.1 Relevant University of Waterloo Policies

As a TA, you are an employee of the University and are subject to all its policies and procedures and you are expected to represent the department in a professional and ethical way. There are a number of relevant policies as follows:

Policy 19 - Access to and release of student records
Policy 29 - Smoking on University Premises
Policy 33 - Ethical Behaviour
Policy 34 - Health and Safety
Policy 69 - Conflict of Interest
Policy 71 - Student Academic Discipline Policy

11.2 Policy #33, Ethical Behaviour

Of particular interest is Policy #33, entitled Ethical Behaviour. There are five general elements which form the basis of Policy #33, Ethical Behaviour: Equality and Respect; Academic Freedom; Interference; Discrimination; Abuse of Supervisory Authority. Every person in the University community has a right to institute and participate in proceedings under Policy #33 without reprisal or threat of reprisal for doing so. Individual members of the Ethics Committee (including a graduate student) are available on an informal and confidential basis to advise students on the application of this policy or on appropriate alternative UW resources. Copies of a brochure entitled "Ethical Behaviour" including the names of Committee members is available from the Secretariat, located in Needles Hall.

Policy #33 is relevant to you as a TA in two ways. First, you may feel that you are a victim of sexual harassment/discrimination for example by the Instructor or a student. Although you may be hesitant to complain for fear that it could adversely affect your future in the Department, your academic references and your job prospects, the problem should not be ignored and a record should be kept of dates, times, locations and details of all incidents. Second, you yourself may be accused of sexual harassment/discrimination by a student. In either case, Policy #33 can protect your vulnerability, advise you on options and procedures, and help resolve the situation.

As a TA, you are in a position of some authority with students and should be vigilant about situations that could be construed by students as sexual harassment. Physical contact is particularly suggestive. Many of us, as part of our personal style, may occasionally touch people, or even hug them as a greeting or to offer support and reassurance. Although this action may not be viewed as inappropriate between individuals of equal and familiar status, such actions are generally inappropriate with students whose cultural backgrounds, personal styles and subordinate status may lead to a different interpretation of your behaviour.

Verbal conduct can also be inappropriately suggestive and compromise the professional relationship with students. Remarks which focus on sex or the sexual orientation of others could be construed as sexual harassment under the terms of our Policy. Comments or questions about such things as a student's appearance, sex life, or domestic arrangements should be avoided. You should realize that as a TA you have power over your students, and social or sexual invitations that you consider innocuous may carry an undertone of pressure or coercion because of that power.

TAs who become romantically or sexually involved with their students are in a dangerously compromising situation, clearly leaving themselves open in the future, if not the present, to allegations of sexual harassment. If you are personally involved with a student whose work you supervise or evaluate, then at the very least you are expected to inform the Instructor of this "conflict of interest" so as to arrange for someone else to mark that student's work. "Conflict of interest" should also be declared when supervising or evaluating the work of close friends and family members. Any further questions or concerns should be discussed with the Instructor, the Associate Dean for Graduate or Undergraduate Studies, or the Department Chair depending on the situation. All discussions are held in confidentiality.

12. RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO TAs

12.1 Graduate Student Association (GSA)

The Graduate Student Association presents and promotes the common interests of graduate students, represents student interests on a variety of University committees and boards, and participates in conferences. The GSA is governed by a Board of Directors, and has committees which cover a range of interests (e.g. International Students, Women's Issues, Day Care). In addition the GSA publishes a newsletter, hosts many social events, operates Association offices and a (licensed) living room at the Graduate House. Call ext. 33634 for further information.

12.2 Libraries

Collections at UW are housed as follows: Dana Porter Library (Arts, Humanities, Social Sciences); Davis Centre Library (Engineering, Mathematics, Sciences); University Map and Design Library (maps, atlases, gazetteers, aerial photographs, architectural design materials); Optometry Learning Resource Centre (Optometry, Physiological Optics). The Church Colleges (e.g. Conrad Grebel University and St. Jerome's University) also have more specialized collections in their libraries. The Trellis library catalogue does include material from all the affiliated libraries in the Tri-University Group of libraries.

The Classical Studies collection could be in more than one location & orientation brochures are available in September and January in all UW Library locations.

Requests for orientation and information should be directed to Christine Jewell, Liaison Librarian for Classical Studies at extension 35623 or by e-mail at cjewell@uwaterloo.ca. The Liaison Librarian is available to you by individual appointment to discuss library resources or any "library assignment" you may devise for your class; advise the librarian about any such assignments so she can alert the information desk to be prepared to assist your students.

12.4 Photocopying and Supplies

Supplies required for TA assignments are available from our Administrative Assistant, Brigitte Schneebeli, located in ML 224. When requesting supplies please identify yourself and the number of the course to which you have been assigned. Small TA-related photocopying jobs (under 15 pages) can be done on the department copier located in ML 250. Large copying jobs should be sent to Graphic Services, using a Graphic Services Requisition form, which requires department authorization before processing - forms are available from Brigitte. Please note supplies and photocopying are provided for TA assignments only; not for personal use. Administrative photocopying assigned by the Instructor falls under these rules.

12.5 Audio Visual Aids

A full range of classroom teaching aids are available in the language labs in ML 109 and ML 113. They are: Audio Visual Sharing Hardware (one in each lab), hand held digital recorder, television with DVD/ VCR capability, tape recorders, record players. As well, experienced staff are available to assist and advise on the use of equipment if needed. ITMS also has an extensive media library and its technical staff is organized to respond immediately to any problems in the classroom. The general office number is 36964 and they are located in MC 1052. After Hours: ext. 33257 or call Campus Police, ext. 22222 and ask to be put in touch with an AV technician.

If you are asked to book audio visual equipment, films, etc. on behalf of the Instructor or for tutorials, please liaise with the Administrative Assistant to ensure that the appropriate paperwork and departmental billing accounts are used.

Also, for your use is a data projector which is used by the Instructors and it is kept in the Department Office. Make sure to reserve it with Brigitte ahead of time, to avoid conflict with another course.

NOTE: VIDEOS RENTED FROM COMMERCIAL RENTAL OUTLETS ARE REGULATED BY COPYRIGHT AND NORMALLY ARE NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CLASSROOM USE - ALL FILMS OR VIDEOS USED FOR CLASSROOM VIEWING MUST BE CLEARED THROUGH THE AUDIO VISUAL AIDS DEPARTMENT TO ENSURE THAT COPYRIGHT IS CLEARED.

12.6 Text Books/Desk Copies

Check with the Instructor to determine if a copy of the textbook was ordered for you. If one has not been ordered, arrange with the Instructor to get one.

12.7 Staff Support for TAs

Normally staff support is provided to courses through the Instructor. In some instances, however, TAs may be asked to prepare handouts or notes for distribution as part of their TA duties. In this case, contact Brigitte in ML 224 for assistance.

12.8 Emergency Telephone Numbers

Ambulance, Fire or Police	dial 22222
Campus Police	ext. 22222 (24 hours) Off Campus 519-888-4911 Open 24 hours. Campus Police deal with issues such as personal and structural emergencies: aggression, threats, suicide attempts, theft, break-ins, accidents, etc. (Campus Police may assist you with transportation or to call a taxi.)
Health Services	519-888-4096 Physicians, nurses and counsellors are available to students by contacting the Health & Safety Office.

12.9 Other Help Resources available to students

Counselling Services	519-888-4567 ext. 32655 Offers personal/social, career development, reading and study skills support.
Chaplain's Office	ext. 888-4567 ext. 33633 Will deal with crises and short-term personal issues.
GLOW	Gay and Lesbian Liberation of Waterloo 519- 884-4569

	A student support group and help-line for people with concerns about sexual orientation.
Student Resource Office	ext. 32402 Offers support to students experiencing legal hassles, grade appeals, "red tape" difficulties, personal disputes and other problems.
Rec Pals Program	ext. 36340 or ext. 35082 A peer support program for students experiencing frustration, worry or concern.
Plant Operations	ext. 33793 (24 hours) Provides building maintenance such as replacing burnt-out lights, electrical and plumbing emergencies.
K-W Distress Line	519-745-1166 Confidential listening service that deals with worries, stress, loneliness, etc. 24 hour service
Crisis Clinic at Grand River Hospital	519-742-3611 Provides 24 hour help for emotional/behavioural crises
Director, Conflict Management and Human Rights Office	Matt Erickson, ext. 33765, MC Room 4048
Waterloo International	Provides assistance with a variety of issues (immigration regulations, health insurance, housing, etc.) Web Site address: http://www.international.uwaterloo.ca/about/index.html
Office for Persons With Disabilities	ext. 35082, NH 1132 The Office of Services for Persons with Disabilities provides a wide range of services to faculty, staff, campus users and disabled students to assure them equal access to programs and facilities at the University of Waterloo. Services Provided for Persons with disabilities: * Liaison with all campus and community resources * Advocacy * Co-ordination of campus accessibility issues * Alternate examination arrangements. * Counselling for disability related issues. * Learning skills evaluation and assistance. * Library Accessibility Centers. * Specialized technical equipment and loaner inventory. * Campus transportation. * Liaison with campus housing and attendant care services. * Pre-admission assistance/orientation. * Volunteer assistance program.

* Transcription service for Correspondence lecture tapes.
* Provision of tape and Braille materials.
* Health and Disability Resource Center.
* Manual and Electronic note-taking arrangements.
* Campus access maps.
* Photocopying service.

ARRIVAL SURVIVAL

Pre-campus tasks

A home and a phone

Before you arrive on campus, what you really need are your full local address and a local telephone number, if at all possible.

Finding housing is not easy. Try to come down in early August if you haven't already arranged something. We have an off-campus-housing notice board at the Student Life Center (SLC) which is usually a great source of currently available student accommodation. You can access information about on-campus and off-campus housing online at http://www.housing.uwaterloo.ca/. Off-campus lists can also be obtained from the Turnkey Desk, Student Life Centre or the UW Police Department, both of which are open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also request to have the current list e-mailed to you by calling (519) 888-4567 ext. 35725. Students typically find these services very helpful. Also try the off-campus housing office, in Village One, room 205, which is open weekdays, 8:30 am - 4:30 pm. Notices are usually for people looking for roommates and apartments available to sublet. If you're looking for an apartment of your own, try the classified ads section of the Kitchener-Waterloo *Record* which you can also access online at http://www.therecord.com/. Other websites that commonly list accommodations are www.craiglist.org and www.kijiji.com.

Your telephone number may be even slower to come by. Once you have made housing arrangements, apply for a phone line installation a.s.a.p. In Waterloo, Bell Canada has an office at Conestoga Mall, on King St. at the Conestoga Expressway (Hwy 86). If you want to arrange this before you get here, you can call Bell Canada toll free from anywhere in North America at 1-800-668-6878, or visit them online at http://www.bell.ca.

You should also know that UW has its own graduate student residences. To apply for on-campus housing, you must provide your student ID number (it's on your "Offer of Admission" and your "Letter of Acceptance" forms).

Bank account

Depending on how far you are coming from you'll need a local bank account. Particularly if you are expecting to have a TA or RA position in the fall, you will need to provide an account number to which your earnings can be electronically deposited when you "sign up" at Human Resources. However, an account number from outside the Kitchener-Waterloo area will also be accepted.

Health Care

UW has an on-campus Health and Safety Department, where you can see doctors and/or nurses. Any incoming student who expects to use the on-campus health-care services should go over and start a medical file, even if you do not need any immediate medical attention. Doctor's appointments can be made by phoning **(519) 888-4096** (ext. 84096 from campus telephone).
Visit the Health Services webpage at **http://www.healthservices.uwaterloo.ca/** for more information. The services provided on campus are for students only. If you have a family, you may prefer to have one doctor for everyone in your family and Health Services may be able to provide a referral.

If you are a Canadian from a province other than Ontario, and if you will be residing in Ontario only as a student, you will simply stay with your originating province's health-care plan. Ontario has a reciprocal billing agreement with all provinces **except Quebec**. The staff at Health Services will take care of the paperwork for making claims for your health-care expenses, and you will not be required to pay any fees at the time of treatment. **Quebec residents:** Health Services will bill Quebec directly for services which are insured, however some doctor's visits, laboratory services, and immunizations will be billed directly to the student. For more information, you may wish to contact Health Services.

Health Services also provides certain services not covered by provincial plans free of charge to students, for example: telephone advice from your doctor, transfer of medical records (under 5 pages), and verification of illness forms.

Your student fees include a fee for coverage of certain expenses not paid for by the Ontario Ministry of Health. For example, prescriptions filled for 20% of the total cost of the prescription (you only pay a maximum of $15.00 per prescription), eye wear allowance, etc. Students with dependents can pay an extra fee to have their dependents included on the graduate student health insurance plan, about $45.22/term (2006 fees), purchased at the Cashier's Office, in Needless Hall. Know what coverage you already have, so that you can determine if you want to opt out of the additional coverage offered by the graduate student health plan. You can access information about the student health plan online at http://www.hr.uwaterloo.ca/student/student_health.html.

If you are moving your place of permanent residence to Ontario, then apply for an Ontario Health Card as soon as you arrive in Ontario. Application forms and assistance are available at Health Services, Room 124, or phone the Ontario Ministry of Health (519-893-3966; Unit 2B -1400 Weber St. E, Kitchener) for an application form. This should be done immediately upon your arrival. Medical plans from outside Ontario will be accepted at the University, but if you are receiving treatment outside Ontario, you may have to pay up front, and be reimbursed by your own province later.

For optometry services, you have the option of making an appointment at the Optometry clinic in the School of Optometry. This clinic is certainly close by, but your check-up may last for over an hour, as students do their training at the clinic, under supervision. Eyewear can also be purchased at the clinic. The range of eyewear is excellent, and costs tend to be as low as or lower than anywhere else in the area. If you have chosen to keep your health care coverage from a province other than Ontario, you will have to pay a fee of $50 to get a checkup. Depending on the province you are from, you may or may not be able to get this fee reimbursed. Eyeglasses, contacts, and repairs are covered up to $200 every 4 years under the student health plan.

Your student fees also include a fee for the Graduate Student Association dental plan. For more information, go to: http://www.hr.uwaterloo.ca/student/student-dental. In addition, there is a preferred dental provider network. This includes local dental practices that offer a considerable discount to UW students. Check Health Services for a list of names and numbers, or go to: http://www.studentcare.net/.

International students have to use UHIP health insurance. The fee is currently $195.37 per term (2004-05 fees). You should receive information concerning this through the International Students' Office, or you can get information directly from UHIP's web-site: http://www.uhip.mercer.ca/

Driver and Car Licensing

In the past, many students have retained their driver's license and car license plates from their originating province. However, information on the Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) website contains the following information:

- If you are a new resident of Ontario and have a valid driver's licence from another province or country, you can use that licence for a maximum of 60 days in Ontario. If you want to continue to drive after 60 days, you must get an Ontario driver's licence.

- Note that Ontario has a system of **Graduated Licensing**, which means that to get a "full" licence, out-of-province and international drivers must show appropriate proof of driving experience, or else settle for a probationary license, and in some cases, a learner's license. Full details are available on the MTO website at: http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/driver/drvlicen.htm

- It is a good idea to obtain appropriate documentation *before* arriving in Ontario. Note that you can only exchange a non-Ontario licence at an MTO **Driver Examination Centre**. A Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Office (despite its name) does not provide this service. The **Kitchener Driver Exam Centre** is located at: 1405 Ottawa Street North, Unit 11, Kitchener. Phone: (519) 893-7110 or 1-800-265-6363 If you are bringing a car from home, you will also have to have your car license plates changed to Ontario ones. To get new plates, you first have to have your car safety checked (check with various mechanics, but the going rate is usually about $50 + repairs), and possibly emissions tested, then you can go to a **Driver and Vehicle Licence Issuing Office**: 701 Belmont Avenue West, Kitchener, (519) 578-3211
  501 Krug Street, Unit 125, Kitchener, (519) 576-9594
  105 Lexington Road, Unit 16, Waterloo, (519) 746-8332

  Be sure to have proof of insurance and note that the car must be registered in your name (or the registered owner must be there to register the vehicle). Read the details online at: http://www.mto.gov.on.ca/english/dandv/vehicle/rgoutcan.htm Those bringing a car from another country (e.g., the U.S.) are required to meet additional conditions, which are also outlined on this webpage. Car insurance is another issue again. Check with your insurer before you leave home to discover if they will also cover you, for the same fee, while you are in Waterloo. If not, shop around! Rates can vary widely from company to company.

Electricity and Water

If you will be living in a house, as opposed to an apartment building, notify the hydro folks (e.g. Kitchener-Wilmot Hydro, Waterloo North Hydro—it depends on where you will be living) one week before you will need to use these utilities. They will come and do a meter reading on your electricity and your water so that you will be billed appropriately.

School and Daycare for Your Children

If you have school-age children, and are coming from another county, province, or country, you should contact the Waterloo Region District School Board (519-570-0300) or the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (for Catholic Schools: 519-578-3660). Usually, you will go to your child's school to register during the last week of August. The city is divided into school districts, so although your child would most likely attend the district nearest your home, some children are bussed across town to even up enrolment figures.

There are four childcare facilities on campus. The Psychology Department houses an excellent pre-school (the Early Childhood Education Center; http://www.psychology.uwaterloo.ca/ecec/), the UW apartments are home to Paintin' Place daycare, and there are also facilities on the north campus: Hildegard Marsden Day Nursery, and the Klemmer Farmhouse Day Care. These facilities have long waiting lists, however, and even their lower rates for students aren't cheap.

The Graduate Studies Office offers daycare bursaries based on financial need and gender (female students get higher priority). The deadlines for the bursary applications are at the beginning of each term (approximately mid-September, mid-January and mid-May). These bursaries may be used at any daycare facility, not just those on campus, and can also be used for non-licensed childcare and babysitting.

Getting to the Airport and Back

For those of you who will be doing any traveling (going home for Christmas, conferences, vacations etc.), getting to Pearson International Airport is made easy by Airways Transit. This company provides shuttle bus services to and from the airport. They provide 2 services.

1) The Airporter (cheaper) service-you can catch a shuttle bus from the Student Life Center (check in at the Turnkey Desk) which will drop you off at the terminal you need. This service is about $37 each way, but you go on their schedule, which can mean waiting around for an hour or two. They make about 5 trips a day to the airport and back, except on weekends (no runs on Saturdays and only 3 trips on Sundays). You can pick up a schedule at the Turnkey Desk in the Student Life Center.

2) The Limo (more expensive) service-you can also arrange to have the driver pick you up at home. This costs about $55 (base rate) for one person, but if you are going with other people, from the same pickup location, the shared cost is less. You can also arrange to meet the driver at the airport on your way home. The advantage of this service is that you don't have to wait around for the next shuttle bus and you also don't have to find a way home from the SLC once you arrive.

Call Airways Transit at 519-741-2525 for more information on either service, or see their web-site: http://www.airwaystransit.com/index.shtml.

First Day on Campus

Student Fee Payment Arrangements

Keep in mind that your **fees are due by August 27th**, or you will have to pay late fees. See http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infofin/students/DueDatesLateFees%202012%202013.htm for complete details.

Fee payment methods are as follows:

- Money order or cheque (made payable to the University of Waterloo). Students, who wish to assign income from scholarships or earnings, must sign the Promissory Note on the Fee Statement and attach appropriate documentation of the source of funds.

- If you will be receiving a SSHRC, NSERC, or OGS award you will have received an award notice from the Graduate Studies Office. Attach a copy of this notice of support to the fee statement.

- If you will be receiving a UW Entrance Scholarship, you must deduct the amount of the award from the Student Fee Assessment and adjust the total. Attach a copy of the notice of the award to the fee statement.

- Students awarded a teaching assistantship (TA) must attach a copy of their TA offer to the fee statement. (If you choose to use this option, your fees are deducted in three equal instalments from the first three paycheques each term.)

If you do not need to make arrangements for paying your fees, but are paying with a cheque, print out a copy of your account from QUEST available through http://www.quest.uwaterloo.ca/index.php., attach a cheque and drop it off in an Express Payment Box located outside the Graduate Studies Office (GSO). If you are paying your tuition using one of the other methods outlined above, remember to attach the necessary documentation to the copy of your account prior to dropping the paperwork into the Express Payment Box.

Selection of Graduate Courses

You will be receiving an email from the Graduate Studies Office which will explain the procedure regarding the selection of graduate courses via the web. There is no paper to deal with. You will choose your courses on-line. Read the email newsletter carefully. You will need to confer with your "advisor" or a faculty person from your program area who is responsible for you before you choose your courses.

Office Space

When you are conferring with your faculty person about your courses, you can also ask her/him where your office will be (probably a shared office), and then start moving in. You will be provided with a desk, a small amount of shelving, and a chair. Your chair is not likely to be very substantial, so you might consider finding one at a garage sale this summer if your tailbone is rather sensitive to such furniture!

Office Key

Once you are aware of your office number, see Brigitte Schneebeli who will authorize a key permit for you. You must then go across campus to the General Services Complex (the building beside the Davis Center with the smokestack… take a map with you!) to pick up your key at Key Control. This little office hides behind an ivy-covered brick-block panel, and is sometimes quite challenging to find! No deposit is required, just your signature, but remember all keys must be returned to Brigitte when you leave the program. Also, be forewarned that Key Control is closed over the lunch hour!

TA and RA Payment

In order to be paid, you must attend the general campus "sign-up" during registration week. You will complete Federal and Provincial taxation forms, and fill in a form indicating at what bank, at what branch, and to what account your earnings are to be deposited (bring a sample cheque with you if you have a chequing account). No pay can be issued until you sign up and have formally registered and paid your fees.

TA and RA payments are made on the last Friday of each month, so prepare to support yourself through September.

If you are a Visa student, you must make sure that Brigitte has a copy of your work permit and student authorization prior to receiving either a TA or an RA. Canada Immigration issues work permits for a fee of approximately $125. Further information can be found in *Information for International Students*, a booklet published by the International Student Office (NH 2080) or by calling ext. 32814. Be sure to allow sufficient time for processing of your application. It typically takes several weeks to process this form. See also the International Student Office's web-site at: http://www.international.uwaterloo.ca/iso/.

STUDENTS WHO ARE NEW TO CANADA: You must apply for a Social Insurance Number at Human Resources Development Canada office at: 409 Weber Street West, Kitchener (Telephone Number 519-579-1550). When you receive your Social Insurance Number, please email it to Susan Koebel shkoebel@ uwaterloo.ca.

Library Tour

Now that you have your student ID card, you may want to sign out a few books. The library is the "sugar cube", the Dana Porter Arts Library, just across from NH. Graduate students can sign books out on term loan, and no limit is placed on the number of books that may be borrowed. Recent journal issues can be signed out for three days and older issues for a week. Your card allows you to use the Arts Library, the Engineering, Math and Science Library located in the Davis Center, libraries associated with the colleges (St. Jerome's, St. Paul's and Conrad Grebel), Wilfrid Laurier University and the University of Guelph. You can access the catalogues of all 3 libraries through the TRELLIS system and request books from the other two libraries to be delivered to the Dana Porter library for you to sign out. U of Waterloo also has an excellent interlibrary loan service, which can deliver photocopies of articles from journals not in the TRELLIS system directly to your mailbox in the Classical Studies Department.

Taking a library tour may help you to find your way around the reference materials available at the Dana Porter Arts library.

Computer Account(s)

All graduate students will receive several computer accounts for various computer systems when they arrive at UW. You probably will want to familiarize yourself with IST's Computing Help and Information Place (CHIP) Website (http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/cs/chip/) to get to know the big picture of what other computing services are available here on campus.

SSHRC and OGS applications

This is something you should try to start dealing with as quickly as possible. With the exception of those who are independently wealthy, or are certain they will not wish to continue in graduate studies beyond the MA, we must all apply for SSHRC and OGS funding (except international students, who can only apply for OGS). Check with Brigitte the first week in September regarding deadlines and application procedures.

Some final thoughts:

1. Be Proactive in all things.
2. Enjoy the Process and Material.
3. Be Disciplined.
4. Budget your Money.
5. You can’t do it all – that’s ok.
6. Keep on top of ALL deadlines.
7. Apply for things now (OGS, SSHRC, PhDs, etc.)
8. Plan your Thesis/MRP deadlines/outlines early (every supervisor is different).
9. Always do the Language Exams.
10. Look to Past Works as examples for your own: e.g. student presentations, footnotes, etc.
11. Be an Example and a Resource for the undergraduate students
12. Do unto others as you would have done unto you.

Should you have any questions after thoroughly reading this Handbook, or at any time during your TA assignment, please contact Professor Craig Hardiman or Brigitte Schneebeli. Suggestions for additions to this guide are always welcome.