



East Asian Studies
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

A HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS

2024-2025

Revised May 01, 2024

HANDBOOK FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES

This handbook is designed to answer some of the basic questions that graduate students may have about Teaching Assistantships in the Department of East Asian Studies.

The Department of East Asian Studies employs Teaching Assistants to lead tutorials and help with marking and course administration in courses taught by the Department on the St. George campus.

Where possible, students are assigned positions reflecting their qualifications and preferences. Primary appointments are made for the Fall/Winter Session (September-April), for Full (Y) courses and/or Half (F or S) courses. There are also a few positions available for the Summer Session (May – August).

Please address any questions about applications or teaching assistantships in general to:

Angela Ho
Graduate & Undergraduate Program Administrator
Department of East Asian Studies
Robarts Library, Room 14-086
130 St. George Street
416-978-7260
angelakp.ho@utoronto.ca

Please address any questions about payroll and contracts to:

Paul Chin
Business Officer
Department of East Asian Studies
Robarts Library, Room 14-091
130 St. George Street
416-946-5230
paul.chin@utoronto.ca

By **April 30**, all TAs with a subsequent appointment entitlement will be emailed a Confirmation of Intent to Take Up A Subsequent Appointment letter on which to indicate their intention to take up the subsequent appointment and, when they do intend to accept the subsequent appointment, the TAs will indicate their preferred subject area.

There is a separate application round for Summer-session TAs, for which the job postings will be announced by **March 15**.

**DEPARTMENT OF EAST ASIAN STUDIES POLICY STATEMENT:
APPOINTMENT OF TEACHING ASSISTANTS COVERED BY THE CUPE
[3902, Unit 1] COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT**

I. APPOINTMENTS

A. Posting of TA Positions Timelines

TAships - Session	Job postings announcement
Fall-Winter session (commencing in September)	On or before June 30th
Winter session (Commencing in January)	On or before October 31st
Summer session	On or before March 15

Notices announcing positions to be filled are posted will be posted as follows:

- [EAS website](#)
- [Unit 1 Centralized Electronic Job Posting Board](#)
- Emailed to EAS student listserv
- Emailed to CUPE 3902

B. Application Procedures

For each position of interest, applicants will submit the following documents:

- Cover letter
- C.V./ Resume
- [EAS TA application form](#)

Fall/Winter session

1. M.A. and incoming Ph.D. students in the Department of East Asian Studies must apply for TA position(s) in July.
2. Teaching Assistants seeking renewal for their subsequent appointments must indicate their intent to take up their next subsequent appointment and fill out a Course Preference form (deadline: Mid-May). Teaching Assistants have until August 15th to request a deferral of their subsequent appointment.

Summer session

3. For the Summer session, all students submit their application. The due date for applications is at the beginning of April.
4. All students seeking a Teaching Assistantship in EAS must provide accurate and complete information for each section on the application form.

C. Selection

1. The planification of Teaching Assistantships is handled by a committee consisting of the Chair of the Department of East Asian Studies, Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, and the Program Administrator. The awarding of appointments is made by the Chair after consultation with Language Coordinators and the Program Administrator.
2. Hiring criteria: Academic qualifications, the need to acquire experience, previous experience, and, for continuing students, previous satisfactory employment under the provisions of the Collective Agreement. The Department of East Asian Studies considers and implements all these criteria when making appointments. As stipulated by the Collective Agreement, students who have lapsed are ineligible for a TA appointment.
3. TA offers are made no later than April 22nd for the Summer session, and no later than August 7th for the Fall/Winter session. Students are notified of the outcome of their applications by email.

D. Training

1. TAs in their first appointment are allotted 4 additional paid hours for training and continuing TAs will have an optional 2-hour training. First-time Course Instructors are entitled to 6 hours of paid job training. In addition, TAs and CIs are also eligible for 2 extra hours of additional training which will be considered upon request. **Attendance is mandatory for First Time TAs and Instructors and TAs in core courses (EAS103/105/209)**. TAs assigned to EAS core courses will be allocated 2 hours training from TA Day. New TAs in core courses must complete the additional 2-hour training online and new TAs in non-core courses must complete all training online and/ or with the appropriate Language Coordinator to meet the minimum required 4 hrs. Completion of TA training will be confirmed prior to payment.

Mandatory Teaching Assistant and Course Instructor Job Training is offered through [Teaching Assistants' Training Program \(TATP\)](#) as noted in the [USW Collective Agreement, Local 3902, Unit 1](#).

2. Please also consult the University's Policy on Conflict of Interest and Close Personal Relations (<https://www.provost.utoronto.ca/planning-policy/conflict-of-interest-close-personal-relations/>)

E. Graduate Student Funding Policy

1. Almost all Ph.D. students in the Department of East Asian Studies must work some hours as a TA as part of their funding package, except those students have major scholarship.
2. The number of hours varies according to other sources of funding but is usually in the range of 180–210 hours (maximum 180 hrs for students in the funded cohort). This number is subject to annual monitoring, and changes are incorporated as necessary.
3. Graduate Units in the Faculty of Arts & Science will provide a minimum financial support package of \$21,750 in 2024/25 for the humanities and social sciences, plus tuition and fees (total approx. \$29,964). Funding support is comprised of TAships, UTF payments (tuition, stipend and top ups for recipients of major scholarships). The Department of East Asian Studies will also provide an additional top up of \$5,000 to students receiving only the minimum base support without a major scholarship; this top up is paid as a scholarship and/ or department award. UTF offers a top up for students with major awards, UTF also offers a \$500 top up to unsuccessful applicants who applied for Tri Agency Grants; please contact the Graduate Administrator for more details.

II. REAPPOINTMENTS

- A. According to the current Collective Agreement, doctoral Teaching Assistantships are renewed for five subsequent appointments. After their sixth contractually obligated appointment, Ph.D. students will have the right to additional appointments of at least seventy (70) hours per academic year.
- B. TAs seeking renewal for each subsequent appointment must indicate their intentions. Confirmation of intent to take up subsequent appointments should be emailed to the Department Program Administrator by the end of April. Subsequent appointments are assigned by the Program Administrator in consultation with the Chair and Associate Chair, Graduate. TAs seeking subsequent appointments must return the confirmation letter to the Program Administrator within 20 working days of receipt of the form. On that form, TAs identify both preferred subject area and specific courses in which they wish to work. TAs will be notified by email by August 7 for the Fall term positions and by December 7 for Winter term positions.
- C. TAs unable to accept a subsequent appointment for the upcoming academic year may make a one-time request, in writing, to defer the subsequent appointment. Requests may be granted at the sole discretion of the Department and cannot be guaranteed.

III. PAYROLL

1. After Teaching Assistants have received notice of their placement from the Program Administrator and signed their contracts, TAs will be contacted by the Department of East Asian Studies

Business Officer Paul Chin (416-946-5230, room 14-091; paul.chin@utoronto.ca) to complete payroll forms (Payroll Bank Authorization Form for Direct Deposit and void cheque, Income Tax Credit forms, etc.). TAs must also submit ID documents (passport, study permit, TCard, Social Insurance); Failure to complete and submit forms and documents will result in a delay in payment. Students with study permits should monitor the expiry date and apply for renewal prior to expiry. If an application for permit renewal is submitted after the expiry date, TAShip will be suspended.

2. In accordance with the CUPE 3902 Unit 1 agreement, TAs are paid 4% vacation pay as a top up until TAs enter year six, when the higher rate of 6% will apply continuously until there is a break in service greater than four months. The exception is if the service break is formal leave governed by the Employment Standards Act (e.g. illness and maternity/parental leave).
3. TAs who qualify for Course Instructor (CI) positions should note that first time CIs are paid at a higher rate than regular CIs in accordance with the Collective Agreement; Employment Insurance (EI) hours for first time CI's are also higher. First time CI's must complete a minimum of 6 hours of training and 2 hours, if regular CI.

IV. CHANGES TO YOUR CONTRACT

- A. Teaching Assistants should promptly update their personal information on [ACORN](#) (under 'Profile and settings') to indicate any change in address, e-mail, or telephone number. If you decide to resign your assistantship, please inform Professor Poole, Department Chair immediately.
- B. You will receive your contract package from Angela Ho, Program Administrator.

It is important that you discuss the proposed duties with the professor with whom you will be working and that you both agree about your duties and responsibilities when you complete the DDAH (Description of Duties and Allocation of Hours) form. If you find that you are unable to agree with the supervising professor's proposals, contact the Program Administrator.

All required meeting hours with the supervising professor (initial meeting, mid-point review, final meeting/evaluation, etc.) count toward the total allotment of hours in your contract.

Similarly, should any difficulties arise during the academic session in your relationship with the supervising professor that cannot be resolved between you, please contact the Department Chair to discuss the problem.

A. GRADING

1. If you are marking essays, ask your supervising professor for clear guidelines on grades and comments.

2. Pay close attention to basic prose style: grammar, syntax, diction, and paragraphing. Ask your supervising professor which handbook on style to recommend to students who need help.
3. Be specific in your suggestions for improvement. For instance, if you are criticizing a student's diction, suggest alternatives. Remember to focus on the work ("Your essay...") rather than on the student ("You...") in your comments.
4. Raise questions about logical continuity within and between paragraphs. Many students need help with the development of arguments.
5. Your closing comments are particularly important. Try to be positive: begin with something encouraging so that the effect of your comments is not completely negative. Be constructive in your criticism, especially when giving a C or a D. Closing comments should offer specific suggestions for improvement. Never disparage or ridicule a student's work.
6. Make an accurate alphabetical list of the students and their grades. Return the completed record of grades to the supervising professor when you have completed a grading assignment. **It is essential to adhere to the supervising instructor's timetable for the return of graded assignments.**
7. Office hours should be spent helping the students who need assistance with their essays. If you find that a student needs more attention than you can give, send the student to one of the Writing Labs on the St. George, University of Toronto at Mississauga, and University of Toronto at Scarborough campuses. **You cannot unilaterally alter the allotment of hours on the DDAH form.**
8. If you are unsure of the appropriate grade for an assignment, consult your supervising professor.

B. **MARKS AND GRADES**

Percentage	Grade	Value	Grade Definitions
90-100	A+	4.0	Excellent
85-89	A	4.0	
80-84	A-	3.7	
77-79	B+	3.3	Good
73-76	B	3.0	
70-72	B-	2.7	
67-69	C+	2.3	Adequate
63-66	C	2.0	
60-62	C-	1.7	
57-59	D+	1.3	Marginal
53-56	D	1.0	

50-52	D-	0.7	
0-49	F	0.0	Inadequate

Teaching Assistants are advised to consult the **Faculty of Arts and Science Calendar** under **Rules & Regulations / Course Marks** for helpful interpretations of grades. The *Calendar* may be accessed here: <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/> or the Rules & Regulations directly here: <https://artsci.calendar.utoronto.ca/academic-record>

C. ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

Academic offences must be taken seriously. They are defined in the University's "[Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#)".

The Code also describes the procedures for dealing with offences. The full text of this Code is available from the Office of the Dean and from the offices of College Registrars. Below are some notes on academic discipline.

1. Students are too frequently ill-informed about the nature and severity of academic offences. It is important to warn students early in the course that plagiarism and cheating are serious offences. Discuss the difference between plagiarism and using published sources legitimately to compose an essay, or between consulting someone for help and submitting someone else's work for credit.
2. If you suspect cheating, plagiarism, forgery, or impersonation, you should speak to the supervising professor immediately.
 - a) Write down all the facts while they are fresh in your mind.
 - b) Make copies (and keep originals, if possible) of any relevant material such as essays, answer sheets, etc.
 - c) The supervising professor will report the matter to the appropriate authority in the Department. The matter will then be forwarded to the Dean in charge of student discipline. Normally, the Dean will contact the student formally and conduct an interview with the student. You may be asked to be present.

NOTE: You are not permitted to settle a case or impose a sanction on your own, even where there is clear evidence or an admission of guilt from the student. The Code allows for sanctions only at the Decanal level, which helps to ensure consistency and fairness. It also allows the university to detect repeat offenders.

D. START AND END OF CLASSES

Teaching Assistants' duties extend over the full academic session, including the examination period. **Please do not make travel plans that necessitate absence from the university during the full term of your employment contract.**

We trust that you will find your appointment as a Teaching Assistant in the Department of East Asian Studies will be both enjoyable and rewarding. Should you have any questions about the appointment, please do not hesitate to contact:

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