

## HARVARD GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT HANDBOOK FOR HEAD TEACHING FELLOWS



As the Head Teaching Fellow for a large Government course, you are the primary point of contact between the Professor and the students, as well as between the Professor and the other Teaching Fellows (TFs). You are also responsible for the organization and efficient operation of both the course and its TF meetings. While the majority of your work as Head Teaching Fellow (HTF) will be organizational and logistical, you will likely have more input in the substantive elements of the course than the other TFs. In fact, your role as HTF provides you with an ideal opportunity to begin to gain experience in designing and implementing a large course in political science. While this is undoubtedly a beneficial experience, the following handbook is geared more toward providing information about organizational and logistical issues that you must address as HTF in order to ensure the course runs efficiently and effectively. The resources and tips provided herein are a rough guide, and should be adjusted according to the demands or needs of your particular course and/or Professor.

### **I. Pre-Semester Planning**

#### ***Initial Meeting with the Course Head***

There are a number of organizational tasks that you should begin well before the start of the semester. Once you have secured an HTF position, you should meet with the Professor of the course (Course Head) to discuss expectations and plan the general structure of the semester. During this first meeting with the Course Head, you should get a clear sense of what is expected of you in terms of input on syllabus design and preparation of course materials. In consultation with Thom Wall, the Graduate Program Coordinator, you and the Course Head should also decide on the anticipated number of TFs needed. The Department is in the process of revising the way that teaching fellows are matched with courses, so please consult with Thom Wall about how to secure commitments from suitable TFs.

#### ***Setting up the Course Website***

Once TFs have been secured/hired, request the Course Head to authorize all TFs to have access to enrollment information on the course iSite or Canvas Site (Canvas is the platform that is gradually replacing iSites). This will give every TF the ability to view, access and print out student information. The HTF should compile a list of all of the TF's for the course, along with HUID#s and FAS e-mails and provide this list to the Course Head. Requesting access is typically done by the Course Head e-mailing the FAS Academic Technology Group ([atg@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:atg@fas.harvard.edu)) with the list of TFs, their HUID#s and e-mails. More information can be found at: <http://atg.fas.harvard.edu>.

The HTF should contact the Registrar for registration and training (the training can be completed by you on-line) on the sectioning tool, prior to the start of the semester, at: [ro-help@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:ro-help@fas.harvard.edu).

The syllabus for the course should be uploaded prior to the start of classes. You should also make double-sided hard copies of the syllabus and bring them to the first and second lectures during shopping week.

### ***Room and Section Planning***

Approximately 2-3 weeks before the beginning of the semester, the HTF should solicit day and time availability from all committed TFs for sections. Try to schedule sections spread across Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday at various times, including a few night sections if possible. Mondays and Fridays are typically non-ideal because of the need to synchronize with lectures, student attendance, and holiday conflicts. Note that many students have labs, athletic practices, and other commitments in the late afternoon. Smaller courses may want to poll students before choosing section times. Based on estimates from previous years and the number of TFs hired, the HTF should use the following resources to reserve the requisite number of rooms. This should be done (ideally) 2-4 weeks before the start of the semester, as CGIS rooms tend to fill up quickly.

- The main room booking resource is the new FAS RoomBook system: [roombook.fas.harvard.edu](http://roombook.fas.harvard.edu) They now book rooms for the registrar as well as CGIS, so they consolidate the previous separate systems to book rooms.
- One exception to roombook is the possibility of having sections in Houses. If sections will be held in the Houses, contact each House directly (see list of Houses and contact info in the Appendix). Each House website has contact information and specifies the procedure for reserving classrooms.

### ***Setting up Audiovisual Services***

During the initial meeting with the Course Head, determine whether or not the lectures will be video taped. If they will be videotaped and the lectures are NOT being held in CGIS, the HTF should e-mail or meet with MTS (Media & Technology Services), located in the Science Center basement, Room B-02, to arrange for videotaping of the lecture ([mtsequip@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:mtsequip@fas.harvard.edu); phone: 617-495-9460).

If the lectures ARE being held in CGIS, the HTF should e-mail CGIS AVS to arrange videotaping of the lecture. You should call 617-495-9807 for audiovisual and equipment assistance in any of the conference or meeting spaces. CGIS has a full-time AV technician in S053 (CGIS South concourse) assigned to support the complex.

### ***Preparing Course Materials***

Once the Course Head has finalized the syllabus, make sure that textbooks or other required books – both for students and for TFs – are ordered through the Coop. The Course Head typically does this, but may ask you to as well. The Coop can be contacted at (617) 499-2223 or by e-mail at [textbooks@thecoop.com](mailto:textbooks@thecoop.com). Note that books should be ordered no later than July for the fall semester and no later than November for the spring

semester. For desk copies, the Course Head should contact Jaronica Fuller in the Government Department at [jfuller@gov.harvard.edu](mailto:jfuller@gov.harvard.edu) or 617-496-1512. Please keep in mind that it normally takes at least 3-4 weeks to obtain these books from their publishers.

If the Course Head has decided to utilize course packs, and has asked you to compile and prepare these, your best course of action would be to arrange to have these created by Gnomon Copy, unless the Course Head has indicated an alternative. (See: <http://www.gnomonhs.com/coursepacks.asp>) Please note that the cost of the course packs for Teaching Fellows should be folded into the price charged to students, as the Department cannot cover these costs. Thus you should estimate the number of additional course packs you will need before determining the cost for students.

A large amount of assigned readings can now be uploaded or linked via the course iSite/Canvas Site. The websites itself provide instructions on how to embed hard links to journal articles, newspaper articles, etc. and Academic Technology Services (ATS) is available to assist in designing and setting up the site so that it is user friendly (see: [http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=course\\_isites\\_help](http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=course_isites_help)).

Harvard University requires that copyright permission be acquired for all course materials. Materials that are linked to your course website via Hollis have their copyright permissions paid for by the library. Extensive information about copyrights can be found on the Office of the General Counsel's website (<http://ogc.harvard.edu/>) under Publications and Advisories. Gnomon Copy is willing to clear copyrights, create and sell a sourcebook for you. You may also put PDFs of materials up on your course website. Selections from books are restricted to a total of about 10% of the book.

All requests to place books on reserve for a course (typically a good idea if there are certain books you are requiring students to purchase) should be submitted using the Reserves List Tool through the course webpage. Specific instructions on submitting requests can be found at: <http://hcl.harvard.edu/info/reserves/instructions.html>.

### ***Teaching Resources for the HTF***

The HTF should contact the Departmental Teaching Fellow (DTF) for consultation about training new TFs, scheduling videotaping of sections, obtaining important early feedback from students on sections and lectures, and other pedagogical topics. For 2014-2015, the DTF is Kris-Stella Trump ([kstrump@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:kstrump@fas.harvard.edu)). In addition, the Course Head and HTF should encourage TFs to attend the Bok Center Teaching Conferences, held just before each semester. For more details: <http://bokcenter.harvard.edu>

The HTF should join the Bok Center's Head TF Network, an e-mail list that connects HTFs around the college, in order to assist one another with questions, issues, and challenges of all types. To join the list, contact John Girash at the Bok Center ([girash@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:girash@fas.harvard.edu)). In addition, the Bok Center maintains a resource website for HTFs at:

<http://bokcenter.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page29714>.

If possible, attend the HTF Orientation Session for the semester that you will be HTF.

### ***Initial Organizational Meeting with all TFs***

The HTF and the Course Head should schedule an initial organizational meeting with the entire teaching staff of about 1.5-2 hours in duration, ideally about two weeks before the semester begins, and at the latest during the first week of classes. The HTF should reserve a CGIS room for the meeting (see above for how to reserve rooms). One of the primary agenda items for this meeting should be determining the time slot for a weekly TF Meeting. Following this initial meeting, you should reserve a room for your weekly TF meetings. This is also a good time to organize food for the meetings, if you are provided a budget to do so.

During this first organizational meeting, you may want to cover some or all of the following topics:

- Introductions
- Outline responsibilities and schedule for the full semester
- Solicit from TFs preferred days/times for holding sections, making clear that it may not be possible to accommodate everyone's wishes.
- Discuss when and where TFs will hold office hours. Rooms are available in CGIS North and the basement of CGIS-South for office hours. Let the TFs know they can contact Joanna Lindh in the Government Department ([jlindh@gov.harvard.edu](mailto:jlindh@gov.harvard.edu)) to reserve these rooms.
- Go over all class policies, rules, and assignments.
- Make sure all TFs—novice and otherwise—are comfortable coming to you with questions or concerns. Inform them of the resources available to them (see Appendix for list of resources available).
- Discuss the possibility of videotaping their sections and holding a microteaching session with the DTF and the Bok Center (prior to this initial meeting you should contact the DTF regarding doing this systematically for all TFs).
- In advance of the semester, perhaps at the first organizational meeting, the HTF and the Course Head should discuss grading policies, methods and distributions for overall section and course grading. Decide early how exams/papers will be graded, what to do about late papers, missed exams, etc.

Shortly before the term starts, you may want to meet individually with all confirmed TFs to get to know them, discuss teaching styles and outline responsibilities. At this point, or during the initial organizational meeting, you should address the issue of **TF Absences**. Make sure that all TFs understand that they should attend lecture every week. If they miss a lecture, they should get notes from you or watch the video recording. If a TF must miss section, he/she should notify you (the HTF) in time for a substitute to take over. If a long-term absence is foreseen, arrangements for a permanent replacement may be necessary.

## **II. HTF Duties in the Early Weeks of the Semester**

### ***Students Requiring Special Arrangements***

You should make every effort to reach out to students with disabilities and those requiring other special arrangements. Such students can typically be identified when the student provides to the teaching staff a letter from the Accessible Education Office (AEO) (<http://aeo.fas.harvard.edu/>). These letters spell out special arrangements, such as extra time on exams for students with challenges ranging from legal blindness to ADHD. Be sure to let your TFs know that they should submit all of these letters to the HTF, who can ensure that our commitment to accessibility meets or exceeds the requirements of each of these students.

### ***Sectioning***

Expect to be fairly busy sectioning between the last day of shopping week and the beginning of sections (about a one week period). During this time the Sectioning Tool will facilitate much of the actual sectioning, but the HTF will receive many requests from students, many ADD/DROPS will be occurring, and relative section sizes may need to be balanced, rooms changed, etc. The HTF should plan to be busy during this critical time. Before sectioning actually begins, you should have undertaken the requisite training to use the sectioning tool – you will need to acquire a log-in and familiarize yourself with the (antiquated; the College is working on a future replacement) system. Be sure to sign up a couple of weeks before term starts at the latest.

For smaller courses, you may want to poll the students regarding good times for sections and then manually assign students to sections based on preferences they have sent to you. For larger courses, the sectioning tool will essentially do all the work for you. You input the section days/times that will be available and then open up the sectioning tool for students to input their preferences. After you close the sectioning tool, it will assign students into sections for you. You can then manually move students into other sections if conflicts arise.

### ***Confirm AVS needs***

If the course lectures will be videotaped, the HTF should review or confirm the syllabus with the AVS personnel to ensure that they know on which dates any special equipment like microphones will be needed, when exams are scheduled that preclude the necessity for a video, and other important details.

### ***Running TF Meetings***

How the weekly TF meetings are run will vary widely across courses and Course Heads. Still, there are some general tips that could prove useful in ensuring productive use of these meetings.

- Before the semester starts, and perhaps in collaboration with the Course Head, figure out what precisely you hope to accomplish during each TF meeting. Goals can entail simply ensuring that all TFs are substantively prepared for the upcoming section – including discussion of lesson plans and discussion questions. They can also include joint preparation of a midterm or final, or collective grading of a few papers to ensure grade consistency. Write a schedule of these goals down and distribute them to the other TFs and Course Head(s) so that everyone has a sense of the general timetable for the semester.

- Create a timetable for TFs to return graded work to the students, and check that they have done so during the meetings. Inconsistency in returning work might be a major and justifiable complaint from the students to you. Remind TFs that undergraduates have strict add/drop dates, and that students need to have some idea of their grade at all points in the course.
- Grade sample papers or exams as a team. You might consider distributing an average paper (something you would give a B) and have everyone read and mark it. During the TF meeting, discuss what grades were given and why; from this discussion, establish a grading rubric or guidelines for the assignment.

### ***Midterm Grades***

Midterm grades for undergraduates are due to the Registrar (generally SAT/UNSAT) after approximately five weeks. The HTF should have collected from the TFs any course data available at that point, and assist the Course Head in making this filing with the Registrar. This is not the students' scores on a particular midterm exam, but rather an estimate of their global grade for the course so far. If this estimate is below C- (i.e., D+, D, D-, or E), the student should receive an UNSAT grade, and the HTF should e-mail the student and her/his Resident or Freshman Dean. A complete list of Administrative Deans, Resident Deans, Freshman Deans, and other key administrators is here: [http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/faculty\\_handbook/current/chapter8/index-1.html](http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/faculty_handbook/current/chapter8/index-1.html)

### ***Obtaining Early Feedback***

By approximately the third section meeting of the semester (the 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> week of the semester overall), the HTF should arrange for all Course TFs to obtain early feedback from students regarding the sections, as well as the lectures if the Course Head would like this information. Complete information on how to conduct this, including sample forms, can be found at:

<http://bokcenter.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k1985&pageid=icb.page29688>.

It is recommended that this process be assisted by the Departmental TF.

### ***Final Exams***

The Registrar's Exams Office assigns a room and time for the final examination. However, photocopying the exam, obtaining exam books, and proctoring the exam are the responsibility of the Course Head, and may be delegated to you as Head TF. The Exam Office handles the ordering and delivery of exam books to the Undergraduate Office. The Exams Office can be contacted at: [fasesams@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:fasesams@fas.harvard.edu)

## **III. General Information and Resources**

### ***Instructional Media Services***

IMS (part of Media and Technology Services) provides Media Production support for classroom instruction. They are a great resource to integrate technology and media into classroom instruction, and will often work with you individually to help create and set up these teaching tools. For further information, visit their main office in Science Center, B-02, or their satellite office in CGIS-South 053, or their website: <http://ims.fas.harvard.edu/>



### ***Library Resources***

Harvard College Libraries provide a number of instructional services and support functions for the design and implementation of courses. In addition, HCL research librarians are willing to meet with you and/or students to facilitate the research process for final papers. The Government Department has a Library Liaison who is willing to work with you to create course-related library instruction classes and materials. The current Department Library Liaison is Kathleen Sheehan, Widener Library, who can be contacted at: [ksheehan@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:ksheehan@fas.harvard.edu). For further information on all of the library services provided, see: [http://hcl.harvard.edu/research/for\\_instructors/](http://hcl.harvard.edu/research/for_instructors/)

### ***When students need help***

- **Allston Burr Residential Dean** – This is the academic dean for students in a residential House, and also is a member of the Administrative Board (Ad Board). If an upperclassman is in academic or other trouble, his/her Allston Burr Residential Dean is the person to contact.
- **Freshman Dean's Office** – This is the office that coordinates first-year life at Harvard. The three Assistant Deans of Freshman (each assigned to a cluster of freshman dorms) serve a similar function as the Allston Burr Residential Dean does in each of the upperclassman Houses.
- **House Tutors (resident and non-resident)** - Graduate students (and sometimes their spouses or partners) who are affiliated with a particular undergraduate House and who participate fully in the House community by eating, socializing, and studying with students. House Tutors also serve as academic advisers and chaperones. Some academic departments large enough to have one of their doctoral students serving as a residential or non-residential tutor in each of the 12 undergraduate Houses designates these House Tutors as official "House Advisers" for their department (this is a Departmental rather than House title). These House Advisers/House Tutors sign student study cards and may be an appropriate person to contact if a student is struggling in a course. *Note:* House Tutors should not be confused with the [Senior Tutor](#) (the House's Allston Burr Residential Dean), who is also called a "tutor" and who also lives in the House.
- **Concentration Advisor (CA)** – A doctoral student who assists the Tutorial Office in the academic advising of students concentrating in Gov. Concentration advisors are assigned to each undergraduate House, and he/she signs the study cards of all concentrators in that House. In addition to being a Concentration Advisor for a particular House, the CA may or may not also serve as a residential or non-residential House Tutor for that House. A list of current CAs can be found here: <http://www.gov.harvard.edu/undergraduate-program/people/undergraduate-concentration-advisors-houses>. Gov 97 TFs (i.e., the Teaching Fellows for sophomore tutorial) serve as the official concentration advisers for students in their tutorials.
- **Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)** – Professor Cheryl Welch (K151A) serves as the primary coordinator of the undergraduate concentration and functions as the general advisor for all departmental concentrators.

- **Assistant Director of Undergraduate Studies (ADUS)** – George Soroka (K151D, 495-9890) has special responsibility for the honors program, including junior and senior thesis writers. George is also an experienced HTF and can help with many questions—substantive and logistical—about course management.
- **Coordinator of Undergraduate Studies (CUS)** - Karen Kaletka (K151B) runs the Tutorial Office and manages the undergraduate concentration. Both TFs and faculty also send students to the Coordinator (and the Tutorial office in general) for information about deadlines, study abroad, writing a senior thesis, etc.
- **Student Services Staff Assistant** – Tricia Vio (K153) can help answer a wide range of questions about the concentration. She is the official Government Department contact for the Registrar and should be consulted for any questions involving official course descriptions, numbers, etc.
- **Bureau of Study Council (BCS)** – Located at 5 Linden St., the Bureau of Study Council provides academic peer tutoring (especially in English as a Second Language, mathematics, the natural sciences, and foreign languages) for a nominal fee. BCS also provides counseling services and short-term psychotherapy. For more information, see: <http://bsc.harvard.edu/>
- **Writing Center** – Located in the basement of Barker Center, the Writing Center offers free, confidential writing conferences for students in any stage of paper-writing in any academic discipline. Writing tutors are trained undergraduate students. Appointments can be made through the center's webpage: <http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr>.

**List of Important Websites:**

The Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning – <http://bokcenter.harvard.edu/>

The Bureau of Study Counsel – <http://bsc.harvard.edu/>

The Academic Technology Group – <http://atg.fas.harvard.edu/>

Media and Tech Services – <http://ims.fas.harvard.edu/>

The Writing Center – [www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~wricntr/)

A complete list of Administrative Deans, Resident Deans, Freshman Deans, and other key administrators –

[http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/faculty\\_handbook/current/chapter8/index-1.html](http://webdocs.registrar.fas.harvard.edu/faculty_handbook/current/chapter8/index-1.html)