

ECE Mandatory Teaching Assistant Workshops

Teaching assistants (TA's) are one of the key elements in delivering a high quality engineering program. The instructions and services provided by TAs directly influence the quality of education and training of our undergraduate students. The department is grateful of the contribution by many of our graduate students who have been TA's. Without your contribution, our undergraduate programs would not have been successful.

Over the years, the department has seen TA's with outstanding performance and also TA's with sub-par performance. We have also seen TAs who have performed poorly initially, but improved progressively and became great TA's. Effective fall 2013, to ensure a minimum consistent standard among TA's, the department established the following policy on mandatory TA workshops:

1. All new graduate students or those who haven't been appointed as TA before in the faculty are required to attend the workshop:
Roles and responsibilities of a TA
2. All new graduate students or those who haven't been appointed as TA before in the faculty, and for whom English is a second language, are required to attend the workshop:
Challenges of being an international TA, or Serving as TA with English as a second language
3. New students are expected to complete the mandatory workshops as soon as possible and within the first year of study. Recognizing that the required workshops may not be offered every term, new graduate students or those who haven't been appointed as TA before, may apply for TA positions without having attended the mandatory workshop(s).
4. Based on TA evaluation and the discretion of the department, a graduate student with a poor evaluation may be notified and may not be selected for TA appointment until he/she has attended one or both mandatory workshops.

The aim of this policy is not to punish; rather, it is to help graduate students to become effective teachers so that everyone can benefit as a result. In addition to the two mandatory workshops, there are optional workshops that would prove useful. The department encourages everyone to take advantage of these workshops provided to graduate students for free.

Login to Engineering TA Development in UVic Coursespaces for the scheduled workshops and other events. Watch for email announcements of the schedule at the beginning of the fall and spring terms. The TA workshops are conducted by the Teaching Assistant Consultant (TAC). Every year, the Faculty of Engineering and the Teaching and Learning Centre (TLC) jointly hire a TAC. The TAC is a fellow graduate student who is an experienced TA enrolled in one of the engineering departments.