Faculty / Head TA / Admin TA Meeting Worksheet

Use this worksheet when discussing the organization of the course. The right margin has space for notes. Both the TAs and the instructor(s) should have copies of the final product.

1. Course information:
   a. Name of the course: __________________
      i. What Biology department administers this course?
      ii. Who enters the instructors into eSOC?
      iii. Who is in charge of ordering teaching supplies?
   b. Which lecture sections is the Head TA and Admin TA responsible for?
   c. What are the days and times of lecture?
   d. Is there a lecture time you would prefer the Admin and Head TAs attend?

2. Faculty instructors:
   a. Who are the faculty associated with the course? When do they teach?
   b. Who will make the Head and Admin TAs assistants through EEE? Can this happen today?
   c. Which faculty member should be forwarded all administrative issues?

The recommended responsibilities of the Head TA and the Admin TA are listed at the end of this document.

3. Go over the Head TA requirements and make sure all details are understood.
4. Go over the Admin TA requirements and make sure all details are understood.

5. Course syllabus:
   a. Do the Admin and Head TAs have copies of the syllabus?
   b. How many exams are there? When are they?
   c. What is the textbook?
   d. Do you have enough desk copies and media disks for all the TAs? Can you email the publisher and order them?
   e. Will you be testing on material in the book but not in lecture? What proportion of exam material will be book only?
6. Discussion Organization:
   a. What needs to be done to get all of the discussion sections scheduled to a TA by the beginning of Week 0?
   b. How many points are associated with discussion?
   c. Do we need to give quizzes in discussion?
   d. How many hours per week of “homework” or out-of-class work should discussions generate, if any?
   e. What is your philosophy about enforcing discussion attendance?

7. TA Training:
   a. When are the TA Training meetings before the quarter and during the quarter?
   b. Will all faculty be present at the pre-quarter meeting to meet the TAs?
   c. Will any faculty be present at the weekly meetings?

8. Exam prep and Grading:
   a. Will there be short-answer questions on the exams?
   b. Will any of the TAs be grading the exams?
   c. How many hours of grading do you expect for each exam?

9. Discussion Leadership:
   a. Does the Head TA have the authority to lead the other TAs as listed in the responsibilities?
   b. Have you had problems with discussion leaders in the past? What issues would you like me to be most alert to?
Overview of TA Responsibilities

The goal of the HHMI TA Training program is to train all grad students in teaching. We do NOT recommend that the Head TA also do the admin duties, as this will prevent them from teaching and will greatly lessen their effectiveness as a mentor to the other teaching TAs. The admin TA duties are best performed by a 25% TA or by a teaching TA who is very comfortable with technology problem-solving.

Discussion Leadership Duties (Head TA)
1. Set up discussion sections
   a. Meet with faculty to decide points, attendance, requirements for discussion
   b. Schedule grad TAs and lecturers among course discussion sections
   c. Order discussion supplies like flip chart paper, dry erase markers, textbooks, etc.

2. Attend pre-quarter and weekly training meetings with your discussion leaders
   a. Practice and discuss active learning techniques for discussion
   b. Prepare discussion leaders for upcoming lecture topics and likely student confusions
   c. Encourage interaction and teamwork among discussion leaders

3. Discussion section leadership
   a. Make sure all discussion leaders are providing useful learning opportunities to students
   b. Make sure that points awarded across discussion sections are comparable
   c. Help discussion leaders with teaching issues (unruly students, low participation, FERPA privacy issues) as they come up.
   d. Provide feedback to faculty about how discussion leaders are dealing with lecture material, exams, exam grading, etc.
   e. Visit the discussion of each discussion leader at least once during the first half of the quarter, and provide written and oral feedback.
   f. Obtain final grades from discussion leaders and exams, and provide a complete gradebook to students

4. Assist faculty with exams and grades
   a. Write exam questions and elicit more from discussion leaders, if desired by faculty
   b. Hold sessions with discussion leaders to review and compile selected questions.

Administrative Duties (Administrative TA)
1. Attend each lecture (only one section per day)
   a. Take notes as a record of content and administrative information given to students
   b. Assist faculty with technology or other teaching needs during lecture
   c. Understand the lecture material well enough that you could teach discussions if needed

2. Administer online needs of the course
   a. Set up and maintain course web site, help faculty to use if they wish to do so
b. Collect clicker data (if used) from faculty
c. Set up and regularly update gradebook, including quizzes, clicker participation, exam scores.
d. Set up and maintain online quizzes, noteboards, chat rooms, dropboxes as needed
e. Be easily available by phone or email to faculty, discussion leaders, and students

3. Manage student administrative needs
   a. Answer administrative questions from students after lecture.
   b. Answer student administrative emails, including those forwarded by faculty
   c. Resolve missed exams, incompletes, enrollment problems. Know when to involve faculty.

4. Assist faculty with exams and grades
   a. Collect exam questions from TAs and create single document for faculty
   b. Create exam versions and cover sheets for Rapid Return
   c. Get exams photocopied by Imageworks in a timely manner
   d. Delegate responsibility to TA's for collating exams, posting seating charts
   e. Produce seating charts
   f. Administer exams in lecture, get extra proctors as needed.
   g. Organize grading of exams by grad TAs
   h. Enter exam scores in Gradebook, send exams to Rapid Return
   i. Work with faculty to assign letter grades

Teaching TA duties (all other TAs)
(more specific duties listed in the training binder)
1. Attend the lecture associated with your discussion section
2. Attend TA training meetings
3. Plan and teach assigned discussions using active learning
4. Allow Head TA to visit discussion and give feedback on teaching
5. Respond promptly to contact from students, other TAs and instructor
6. Keep gradebooks accurate and up-to-date
7. Help with lecture proctoring and grading