

**Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences**  
**Instructor Expectations**  
*Updated May 2022*

This document is to clarify the responsibilities of designated instructors in classes offered by the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences and in particular their roles with respect to TAs assigned to assist with laboratory or recitation sections. TA and TA Coordinator responsibilities are outlined in separate documents.

**University, College, and Department Expectations for Instructors**

**General policies:**

- Instructors are expected to follow all guidelines in the Syracuse University Faculty manual.
- Instructors are expected to abide by all SU guidelines including Religious Observances, Disability/CDR policy, and to facilitate any reasonable accommodations requested by students and TAs.
- Instructors are expected to be on campus (or available online) one week before the start of classes to allow time for pre-class organization. Course content should be created before the start of classes.
- Instructors are responsible for all aspects of classes to which they are assigned. Including but not limited to:
  - Creation of content for lectures as well as the associated labs and recitations
  - Mode of delivery of lectures and of labs and recitations (typically taught by TAs)
  - Development of a syllabus for the overall class and for labs/recitations (jointly with TAs) in line with current SU guidelines
  - Weekly communications with TAs and/or TA Coordinators (Weekly TA meetings)
  - Prompt response to student communications
  - Creating, preparing, and leading of course-specific fieldtrips
  - Maintenance and storage of physical samples used in lectures, labs, and recitations
  - Course evaluations for the Instructor and TAs
  - In-class evaluations of all TAs with teaching responsibilities
  - Grading of all materials
  - Establishing clear grading rubrics/expectations for TAs to provide consistent grading across multiple lab/recitation sections of classes
- Instructors should communicate with the Academic Support Coordinator to indicate their preferences for specific TAs and TA Coordinators for their classes as early as possible. While the Department will do its best to accommodate these requests but there are no guarantees.
- Instructors should contact TAs assigned to their classes as soon as possible after they have been assigned to review responsibilities and prepare materials for class in advance as possible. In some cases this may take place prior to the start of a TA or TA Coordinator's contract.
- In order to prepare materials before a semester begins, instructors may ask TAs who are under contract to assist in these preparations. Preparing lab and recitation materials in advance may help avoid excessive time demands later in the semester.

**Class policies and communication:**

- Class material including lectures, labs and recitations will be presented in the mode (in person, hybrid or online; synchronous or asynchronous) agreed upon when listed with the Registrar. Changes in mode of presentation after registration or during the semester must be approved according to current administrative guidelines.
- Instructors will make clear and have the final say as to the method of instruction and requirements for TAs presentation of instructor provided materials (audio, visual, and presentation requirements).

- Instructors will work with TAs and TA Coordinators to allow or deny exceptions for late or incomplete work to maintain consistency across sections within the course (following the guidelines as stated in the syllabus).
- Instructors, and if applicable, the TA Coordinators, will review, approve and oversee material presented in recitations and labs.
- The instructor and/or TA Coordinators will meet with TAs regularly to review the progress of labs/recitations.
- *syr.edu* email is the official mode of communication at SU (note that student email addresses as [NAME@syr.edu](mailto:NAME@syr.edu) are already entered into Blackboard).
- Instructors are responsible for ensuring that TAs clearly indicate expectations for students in labs/recitations including: attendance, participation, communications, grading, online etiquette, and any other expectations that is also clearly outlined in a provided syllabus for the labs/recitations.

#### **During the semester (teaching and grading):**

- Instructors are responsible for making sure that TAs understand the material presented in lectures and may require TAs to attend lectures (in person or online). Instructors are also responsible for ensuring that TAs have a good command of material to be presented in labs/recitations.
- Instructors should use Blackboard – for sharing of teaching material, communication with students and to keeping records (attendance, grades etc.).
- Instructors are required to hold regularly scheduled weekly office hours, grade student material promptly (for example – within a week, before the next class) and answer students' emails promptly, for example within twenty-four hours of their receipt. They should also ensure that TAs also follow these guidelines.
- Instructors will be required to record recitations/labs for asynchronous teaching for online or hybrid courses or as necessary to provide access to students who cannot attend otherwise. This will include using your own voice (no voice modulation or voice masking permitted) and may require that you appear on video depending on the program used. Any exceptions should be cleared through the Department Chair– prior to the start of classes. Teaching stations and other facilities have been created within the Department to assist with the technology required to share and record both audio and video presentations.
- By mid-semester, instructors should conduct in-class evaluations of all TAs with teaching responsibilities and submit the completed rubrics to the Department office.
- Instructors are responsible for encouraging students to respond to course evaluations for lectures, labs and recitations.
- Instructors should work with TAs and TA Coordinators to ensure that recitation/lab grades are input and available to students within a timely manner.
- Instructors should continuously monitor TA effort to ensure that twenty hours per week is not exceeded.

#### **The end of the semester (grading, reporting of grades, and wrapping up):**

- Instructors must ensure that TAs spend time in the last week(s) of the course to put away materials used in their lab/recitations. Those materials should be restored to the condition in which they were originally used (e.g., samples and corresponding labels returned to their proper places in a sample set) so that they will be ready the next time the class is taught. Any broken or missing items should be reported to the TA Coordinator who can arrange for replacements or repairs.
- Instructors should expect to meet with TAs after the semester is finished to discuss and assign final grades for majors' courses or lab/recitation grades in introductory classes promptly after the end of the semester.