**Public Health Sciences Teaching Assistant  
Hiring Policies and Procedures**

**Preamble:**

This document outlines the process for all Teaching Assistant (TA) assignments in the Graduate Department of Public Health Sciences (PHS), and all TA assignments for undergraduate courses for which PHS has responsibility.

**Definitions:**

**PHS Teaching Assistant Hiring Committee**

The PHS Teaching Assistant Hiring Committee includes the Graduate Coordinator for PhD programs, the Teaching Assistant Coordinator, a representative from the Graduate Office, and selected Faculty. This Committee makes final hiring decisions for both posted positions and subsequent appointments, taking into account TA applications and the respective Course Instructors.

**Description of Duties and Allocation of Hours Form (DDAH)**

The DDAH form outlines the specific duties to be performed by the TA and the number of hours assigned to each duty. The form should also include any training to be completed (i.e., TATP for new TA’s) and the mid-course review meeting.

**Subsequent Appointments**

A “subsequent appointment” is an allocation of TA hours that is normally owed to a Ph.D. student following the receipt of an initial appointment. Subsequent appointments are assigned before TA postings are made available for open round applications. In the subsequent appointment process, students **do not apply for positions, but are *assigned* TA positions** by the PHS Teaching Assistant Hiring Committee in accordance with their entitlement under the CUPE 3902 Unit 1 Collective Agreement.

**Open Round Positions**

Open round positions are TA positions posted after all subsequent appointments are assigned. The open round positions are available to all applicants who meet the Unit 1 eligibility criteria.

**Emergency Positions**

Emergency positions are posted in the event that a position becomes vacant unexpectedly (e.g., an unanticipated change in course enrolment; the TA originally assigned elects not to take up the position; the TA becomes unable to fulfill the position, etc.).Emergency positions are available to all applicants who meet the Unit 1 eligibility criteria.

**Funding Package Contribution from TA appointments**

Starting in September 2017, PHS PhD students in the funded cohort are required to contribute $1500, or about 35 hours, of TA work annually, towards their funding package. The full funding policy for all PHS PhD students can be found here:  
<http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/students/current-students/funding-financial-assistance/>

**Step 1: Submission and Approval of Requests for TA Positions**

Course Instructors for Fall and Winter terms must submit their requests for TA’s for their courses, including an updated syllabus and a completed DDAH form. Courses that have not previously had TA support should contact the TA Coordinator prior to making the request.

**Procedure:**

* Notification by the TA Coordinator will be sent to all instructors (course directors) to submit their requests: course syllabus and DDAH form.
* Instructors requesting TA support must submit to the TA management website, by **April 15**:
  + Updated Syllabus
  + [Completed DDAH form](http://dlrssywz8ozqw.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/sites/27/2016/04/07-Description-of-Duties-and-Allocation-of-Hours-Template-CUPE-3902-Unit1-July-2015.pdf)
  + Draft Job Post template
* All requests will be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Coordinator.

**Step 2: Confirmation of Subsequent Appointments**

TA’s with a subsequent appointment entitlement do not need to submit an application, but must indicate whether they accept or decline the subsequent appointment.

**Procedure:**

* By **April 30**, all TA’s with a subsequent appointment entitlement will be emailed a Subsequent Appointment form on which to indicate their intention to take up the subsequent appointment and,

when they do intend to accept the subsequent appointment, the TA’s will indicate their preferred subject area.

* TA’s must return the confirmation form to the TA Coordinator within 20 working days. In the instance that the confirmation form is not returned within 20 working days, the subsequent appointment for the upcoming academic year may forfeited.
* TA’s will complete or update their registration on the TA management website, including the TA’s complete history of TA-ships held at the University of Toronto (St. George, Mississauga, and Scarborough).
* TA’s who are unable to accept a subsequent appointment for the upcoming academic year may request, in writing, to defer the subsequent appointment. Requests may be granted at the sole discretion of the Department, and cannot be guaranteed.

*Allocation of Hours in the Subsequent Appointment(s):*

Hours for the second, third, fourth, fifth, and sixth contractually obligated subsequent appointments shall be:

i. at least equal to the total number of hours of the initial appointment, or of the second appointment, whichever number of hours is greater, within the hiring Department in which the employee had the larger initial appointment, up to a maximum of one (1) regular appointment, as defined in Article 16:07 of the CUPE 3902 Collective Agreement**;** additional hours, if any, worked in any other Department are not included in determining the minimum obligation for hours of subsequent appointments.

ii. for employees with at least **thirty-five (35) hours** in the initial or second appointment, a minimum of **fifty (50)** hours in total per remaining subsequent appointments.

**Step 3: Posting of Open and Emergency Positions**

Fall term TA postings will be made available on or before June 30. Winter term TA postings will be made available on or before October 31. Any additional TA positions will be posted in accordance to Article 16:01 of the CUPE 3902, Unit 1 Collective Agreement.

Ph.D. students beginning their first year of study will be notified of Open Round positions, and will be expected to apply for these positions. Applications will require an official mail.utoronto.ca email address. Students applying from abroad who may not have their mail.utoronto.ca email address set up during the application stage must send their submissions to [**ta.info.dlsph@utoronto.ca**](mailto:ta.info.dlsph@utoronto.ca).

Qualified incoming M.P.H. and M.Sc. students beginning their first year of study may apply to the Open Round and Emergency postings. First year Master’s students will only be eligible serve as TA’s in undergraduate courses. Second year Master’s students may also apply to graduate-level opportunities for which they are qualified.

**Procedure:**

* **By June 30, Open Round** postings will be posted as follows:
  + Unit 1 Centralized Electronic Job Posting Board: <http://unit1.hrandequity.utoronto.ca/>
  + DLSPH website: <http://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/students/current-students/ta-opportunities/>
  + Bulletin board outside the Graduate Department office
  + Emailed to PHS student listservs
  + Emailed to CUPE 3902
* Notices shall remain posted for at least **fifteen (15) working days** before such positions may be filled.
* Applicants will submit the following documents to the TA management website: <https://uoft.fluidreview.com/res/p/GDPHS/>
  + Registration on the TA management website, including the TA’s complete history of TA-ships held at the University of Toronto (St. George, Mississauga, and Scarborough)
  + Cover letter
  + C.V.
  + Transcript(s)
* **After June 30**, **Emergency** positions will be posted, as necessary.
* Emergency postings will follow the same procedure as Open Round postings, except Emergency positions may be filled after posting for fewer than fifteen (15) working days, but not fewer than **two (2)** working days.

**Step 4: Course Instructor Review**

Course instructors will be consulted in the TA selection process to provide input on hiring criteria for which they are in a position to assess. Input will be provided to the TA Hiring Committee for consideration along with the remainder of the hiring criteria.

**Procedure:**

* Instructors may vet TA applications submitted through the TA management website.
* Instructors may submit their ranking of **all** applicants through the website by **July 28** for Fall term positions and by **November 28** for Winter term positions.

**Step 5: TA Hiring Committee Adjudication**

The TA Hiring Committee will consider the following criteria for selecting and hiring applicants, based on Article 16:03 of the Collective agreement: “academic qualifications, demonstrable suitability for the position, the University’s need to support excellent students in pursuing graduate studies with the hiring Department

or a Graduate Centre or Institute, enrolment in a recognized graduate program of study in the hiring Department or a Graduate Centre or Institute, financial need, the need to acquire experience, previous experience, teaching ability, and, for continuing students, previous satisfactory employment under the provisions of this Collective Agreement.”

These hiring criteria are not presented in order of importance, but will be considered as a whole, when hiring decisions are made. The Committee will review instructor rankings as well as TA preferences, and will appoint TA’s to courses after considering all of the hiring criteria.

Despite best efforts, it is not always possible to offer all applicants a TA-ship or the positions they are most keen to take up. Unsuccessful first-year PHS Ph.D. applicants are expected to apply for Emergency postings; other students, including master’s applicants, may apply for these postings as well, as appropriate.

**Step 6: Accepting Offers and Letters of Appointments**

**Procedure:**

* TA’s will be notified by email (mail.utoronto.ca email addresses only) by **Aug 7** for Fall term positions and by **December 7** for Winter term positions.
* A Letter of Appointment and DDAH form (signed by the instructor and Graduate Coordinator) will be emailed to TAs (e-copy the course instructor) with general information and the deadline by which a response must be submitted.
* If a TA does not sign the Letter of Appointment and return it by the deadline, the offer may be withdrawn.
* First appointment TA’s, for whom PHS is their primary department, will complete the Teaching Assistants’ Training Program (TATP).
* TA’s will provide banking information and SIN to the TA Coordinator so that employment records can be created and payments made by direct deposit.
* Letters of Appointment, DDAH forms, and Teaching Assistants’ Training Program (TATP) forms will be archived by the TA Coordinator.

It is the responsibility of the TA to inform the instructor of any conflicts of interest, as soon as these conflicts arise.

**Step 7: Mid-Course Review**

Instructors are required to schedule a mid-course review with the TA’s, individually or as a group, at or around the mid-point of the appointment for the purpose of reviewing TA’s job descriptions and hours of work to ensure that these continue to be appropriate.

* Instructors will schedule a mid-course meeting by:
  + **November 15** for “F” courses
  + **January 31** for “Y” courses
  + **March 1** for “S” courses.
* Following this meeting, the instructor, with approval of the Graduate Coordinator, will inform the TA of any revisions to the TA’s DDAH, and will give a copy to the TA. The instructor and the TA will acknowledge any changes to the form by signing the amended document.
* Signed revised DDAH forms must be submitted to the TA Coordinator.

**Step 8: Evaluation of TA performance**

While it is true that the TA’s are casual employees of the University of Toronto, it is the course instructors who are in the best position to assess TA performance. Thus, it is incumbent upon course instructors to provide feedback to TA’s throughout the term. Specific remedies must be discussed with the TA, should the TA not be working to the level expected by the instructor. Documentation must be maintained by the instructor, and will be required to be presented to the Chair of PHS should there be continued difficulty.

12 April 2017