Brown University

Department of Computer Science

HTA Missive

Meta-TAs and The Director of Undergraduate Studies
Spring 2010

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Contents

0 About this document

This document outlines the role and responsibilities of head teaching assistants within the Department of Computer Science. It describes the tasks which are required of most, if not all, HTAs, and includes important information regarding administrative and technical practices. Some of the content found in this missive will not apply to every course, but it is a useful resource nonetheless. **All HTAs, new and returning, are strongly recommended to read this document and refer to it as necessary.**

0.1 Contributors

0.2 Related documents

ugrad missive: `http : //cs.brown.edu/courses/ta/pubs/ugradmissive.pdf`

HTA job description: `http : //cs.brown.edu/ugrad/jobs/hta/`

old HTA missive: link

UTA missive: link

1 Basic responsibilities

Congratulations on being hired as a head teaching assistant! We hope that you are excited for the coming semester and the challenges (and rewards!) it will bring.

Being a head TA is a large responsibility. You are entrusted with thinking of the "big picture": that is, what is your course's mission, and how will you achieve it? It is up to you to think ahead, to stay on top of things, and to know when to delegate to your UTAs and when to escalate to your professor. You will be hiring a staff, planning TA camp, and making sure that assignments and grades go out on schedule.

In addition to these new responsibilities, you are still expected to adhere to the policies outlined in the UTA missive (found at link). Now more than ever, you must remain professional at all times. You set the tone for how your course's UTAs will behave, which affects the experience that your students have, which in turn contributes to the reputation of our department as a whole. Be respectful of your students, staff, and of course, your professor.

2 Immediate tasks

The following tasks should be undertaken once you have been officially hired as a head TA:

- See Kathy Kriman (`kpk`, CIT 572) for departmental card access. This will allow you to use your Brown ID to swipe into the CIT rooms which have been reserved for undergraduate TA use. All TAs for all CS courses have access to the I-Lab (CIT 316), the Fishbowl (CIT 271), and the TA Lab (CIT 344). Some courses have access to additional rooms.
- See Janet Eager (`jeager`, CIT 471) for your building access and elevator key. Building access allows you to swipe into the CIT when it is closed and use the stairwells after hours. Make sure to return your elevator key at the end of the semester.
- If you do not read your CS e-mail every day, set up e-mail forwarding to an account you check often by running mailconfig. It is vital that you respond quickly to all e-mail sent to you as a head TA. Make sure your UTAs do likewise.

- Set up your course's mail aliases by editing the following files: `/var/mail/alias_dir/csxxxheadtas` and `/var/mail/alias_dir/csxxxtas` . Remove old TA logins from these files and add your own so you will receive mail sent to these aliases.

- Make sure you have been added to the `csxxxta` and `csxxxhta` groups. If not, e-mail `problem@cs.brown.edu` .

- Clean out your course directory. Remove old, unnecessary files.

3 UTA hiring process

Before you begin interviewing UTA applicants, set up a meeting with your professor to discuss what kind of course development will be done for next semester. From there, develop a rough plan of what will need to be done at TA camp: will you be writing new problem sets and solution keys? Creating a new project (and new support code to go with it)? Adding a new unit or removing an old one? Once you have a rough plan for TA camp, pick a start date which will give you enough time to accomplish these goals. You and your co-HTAs may wish to return a few days before this start date to plan and prepare for TA camp. Remember to budget a half-day for the UTA orientation, which is mandatory for all TAs–even returning TAs and head TAs! The Meta-TAs will let you know the earliest day your TA camp may start.

3.1 Recruitment and the UTA Infosession

Head TAs are encouraged to actively recruit potential UTAs. How you do this is up to you and your professor, but you may wish to consider e-mailing people who TAed the course or did well in it as students last year. Individual e-mails which address the recipient by name are much more effective than BCCed mass e-mails. At this point, you should start using a more professional tone in your e-mails as a head TA. Use your new HTA mail alias as your Reply-To address, but never send e-mail directly from that alias–many people consider this rude.

The UTA Infosession is usually held shortly after the new head TAs are announced. This is where professors and head TAs have the opportunity to advertise their course to prospective UTAs and students. Usually, this consists of a speech lasting a minute or so in which the professor and/or HTA explains what topics are covered in the course, what changes will be made to it next semester, who should take it/TA it, etc. Many undergraduates attend the UTA Infosession, making it the easiest way to pitch your course to a wide audience. It is important that your course be represented.

3.2 Applications

The application process is administered by the Meta-TAs. To check on the applications you have received thus far:

- Make sure you are on campus or in the CS Department/using the csvpn.
- Go to `https : //mta.cs.brown.edu/ta − manager`
- Log in using your LDAP password. Note that this is not necessarily the password you use to log in. For more information on LDAP passwords (specifically how to set/change them), go to `http : //www.cs.brown.edu/system/accounts/passwords.html`
- Once you have logged in you should be taken to the HTA home page. Select "View Applicants."

From there, you can get a PDF, plain text, or csv of all your current applications. To view a detailed version of an individual appliation, click on the applicant's name. Once applications close, you can use the "Contact Applicants" feature to BCC a message to all or some of your applicants.

3.3 Interviewing: the "Do's"

Once applications close, you will want to begin scheduling interviews. Remember that it is department policy to interview either all or none of your applicants, although there are occasional exceptions to this rule when a particular applicant is blatantly unqualified. Even returning TAs should be interviewed, as returning TAs are not automatically rehired. When contacting your applicants to schedule interviews, be sure not to accidentally publicize the list of applicants. Do not paste all of their e-mail addresses into the "To:" or "CC:" fields, as this is equivalent to publishing a list of your applicants. You should either send e-mails directly to each applicant or use BCC. Be sure to use the e-mail address specified on their applications, as not everyone reads their CS account regularly.

To set up interviews, we suggest one of two options: you can e-mail your applicants with a list of time slots (works for small courses), or you may use the CIS SignUp Center (better for large courses). The SignUp Center is available at `http://www.brown.edu/Facilities/CIS/Faculty/tools/signup`. Remember to opt for anonymous sign-ups.

It is up to you to determine how long you would like to spend with each applicant, although previous HTAs have noted that 20-30 minutes is ideal (and anything less than 15 minutes is probably unfair). During your interviews, you may wish to do the following:

- Describe the job and the responsibilities associated with it (e.g. attending class, attending a weekly TA meeting, writing homework problems, grading, holding office hours, occasional help sessions).
- Tell the applicant when TA camp will start. You may ask them if they will be able to attend, but this information cannot be used in making your final decision.
- Describe any changes you plan to make to your curriculum or coursework.
- Describe the approximate workload.
- Ask the applicant why they are interested in TAing and what related experience and coursework they have.
- Let them ask questions about the position and confirm that they have no qualms with the job description and time commitment.
- Ask about their technical skills (e.g. programming languages, LaTeX, web design, etc.)
- Review their knowledge of the course material. It may be helpful to have a few sample questions on hand.
- Review an interactive teaching situation ("Pretend you're on hours and I am a student. Don't worry about sounding like you're patronizing me; talk the way you would to an average student on hours.")
- Ask them what improvements and changes they would like to make to the course.
- Tell them when you expect to be contact applicants with offers. Note that this will be after the hiring meeting with the Meta-TAs. *Do not contact applicants about their hiring status before this meeting.*

You should take notes from your interviews. You may wish to determine a set of criteria (e.g. "past teaching experience", "understanding of course material", "enthusiasm for topic", etc.) and then give each applicant some kind of 1-10 score for each category. Make sure to schedule time in between interviews to discuss your thoughts on each candidate with your professor. Spacing out interviews will also help your energy levels and recollection, and it will give you a buffer in case your interviews run behind schedule.

3.4 Interviewing: the "Don'ts"

Remember that you may not, under any circumstances, interview an applicant on your own. There should always be at least two representatives of your course present: you and your professor, you and another head TA, etc.

There are also a few questions which you are not lawfully permitted to ask of your applicants. The university explains here: https://www.financialaid.brown.edu/Cmx_Content.aspx?cpId=99#ask

Additionally, department policy states that you are not permitted to to ask your applicants whether they have applied to other courses, what other courses they have applied to, what their course preferences are, etc.

3.5 Ranking candidates

After you have completed your interviews, please note that you are not authorized to begin making offers to the applicants you would like to hire, as they may be in contention with another course. Instead, you should decide which of your candidates are "above threshold" (i.e., you would be willing to make them an offer) and which are not. You should then rank the above-threshold candidates in order of preference, with your most desired applicants at the top. Please do not attempt to game the system, as this will result in delays in the hiring process. Do not include ties, or separate your applicants into different groups and then order the groups by preference. If you are unable to properly rank your preferences, then we will not take them into account when resolving conflicts.

Also note that faculty are ultimately responsible for the selection of UTAs. They do, of course, base this heavily on input from the HTAs.

3.6 The UTA hiring meeting

The hiring meeting is held after UTA applications close and courses have had a chance to interview candidates and discuss their preferences.

Many students apply to TA more than one course. The hiring meeting resolves the conflicts which arise from the contention for these applicants. All courses who wish to hire one or more UTAs should have at least one HTA present, although ideally all HTAs should be in attendance.

Conflicts are resolved taking a number of factors into account, including the students' preferences as stated in their applications. However, at times these preferences are not followed to avoid short-staffing a course.

3.7 Notifying applicants

After the hiring meeting, you should send notices to all of the applicants you have been authorized to hire informing them that you would like to offer them the job and need to know whether they accept. At this point, you should not yet notify the applicants who are above threshold but who were not at the top of your list that you do not wish to hire them. (However, you may send an e-mail to the applicants who were below threshold informing them that you will not be able to hire them.) Once each of your applicants has replied definitively, tell the Meta-TAs if all have accepted, or if not, how many declined. Do not send offers to any applicants who were above threshold but whom you were not originally authorized to hire. They may be in contention. The Meta-TAs will determine who else on your list is not in contention with any other courses.

Once you have successfully hired as many TAs as your course was allocated, you may send notices to your remaining applicants informing them that you are unable to offer them a position at this time. After all courses have been fully staffed, the Meta-TAs will post the list of all hires to announce. After this post is made, you will want to make sure your UTA alias and group are updated, as you did with your HTA alias and group.

4 Staff organization and training

Congratulations! At this point, you have a staff of UTAs hand-picked by you, your co-HTAs, and your professor. You will now want to begin preparing for TA camp and the coming semester.

4.1 Hand-off meeting

If possible, get together with the previous semesters' HTAs and the professor. This is one of the best ways to get on-track with the myriad course-specific details related to development, administration, and staff organization. You may wish to ask them questions about what they would change about last year's curriculum or how the course was run, what issues they ran into, etc.

4.2 Pre-semester gathering

You should try to get your UTAs and professor together at least once before the end of the semester so they can meet one another and start discussing their goals for the course. You may also wish to use this time to go over general TA responsibilities, assign individual TA jobs, etc.

4.3 Before TA camp

Your course may or may not have a TA camp, depending on the size and experience of your staff and how much development needs to be done for a particular semester. Please make sure your staff knows to be back in time for the mandatory UTA Orientation even if there is no camp.

If you are having TA camp, choose dates before you begin interviewing. That way you can alert every applicant during the interview that part of the commitment to TA your course is to be back on campus for those dates. Inability to attend TA camp is not grounds for turning down an applicant. Some people come from far away (and perhaps have already purchased plane tickets at great expense) and requiring that all staff attend TA camp introduces bias into the hiring process. That being said, you may require very good reason for not attending TA camp.

The absolute earliest date that students living on-campus can move in to their dorms is set by Residential Life and can be found here: `http://www.brown.edu/Administration/ResLife/dates.html`

The department will pay for TAs to move in early beginning the day before the start of their TA camp (e.g., if your TA camp starts on August 30th, your TAs may move in as early as August 29th without having to pay any fees). The Meta-TAs will request certain information from you regarding which of your TAs are moving in to a dorm early, when they are moving in, what their Banner IDs are, etc. It is vital that you supply them with this information as soon as possible, and certainly before the deadline they set. Failure to do so may result in your TAs not being able to move in early.

UTAs returning early for TA camp are unable to use campus eateries, but a food stipend of $25 per day is paid to UTAs and HTAs each day they are in attendance. **HTAs are responsible for keeping track of how much each UTA works, accurate to the half day.** Note that this covers time HTAs spend preparing for TA camp and getting administrative details together but does not cover extensive course development, which is never funded directly through the UTA program. It does include the UTA Orientation.

4.4 During TA camp

One of the first things you will want to accomplish during TA camp is getting your TAs the same building and departmental card access as you have (see section 2, "Immediate tasks"). You will also want to figure out some course logistics, such as whether you will need a handin or handback bin, whether you will need a course locker, when you want to hold lab, and when/where your TAs will hold hours. A few things to keep in mind while scheduling TA hours:

- Avoid having all of your hours on the same day.
- Avoid having all of your hours at the same time on different days (especially the same time on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays or Tuesdays and Thursdays).
- Avoid holding hours before 5 p.m., when many students are still in class.
- Avoid being a jerk with your course's hours schedule. If your homeworks are due on Tuesday mornings, do not schedule all of your hours on Tuesday nights. You should be scheduling your hours to maximize the number of students who will be able to use them, not to avoid students.
- Be flexible: you may have to reschedule some of your hours to avoid overcrowding the Fishbowl and the Moonlab.

And again, remember to keep track of how much your UTAs are working during TA camp!

4.5 Staff organization

There are many ways to divide up responsibilities among your UTAs. Here are a few of the classic methods used by past HTAs:

- TA jobs: web TA, scripts TA, grades TA, etc.
- Put each UTA or pair of UTAs in charge of a project, from start to finish. This can include editing handouts and rubrics, running helpsessions, etc.
- Assign two or three TAs to each category of assignment (e.g. labs, sections, homeworks, projects).
- For classes with problem sets, split up solution and rubric writing on a per-problem or per-week basis.

5 Reference

5.1 Administrative reference

5.1.1 Class

Textbook and Classroom These will be determined by your professor.

The library will put course texts on reserve if they already have a copy or if a new copy is supplied by the course. If the library does not currently own a copy of the text your course intends to use, talk to your professor about purchasing one for this purpose (if you need help with funding, talk to the Meta-TAs). For course-related books other than textbooks, the library will purchase copies for reserve—contact the Sci-Li reserve desk for instructions on how to do this.

For technical books of interest to students in your course, tstaff will usually buy copies for the Sunlab. Get in touch with the Meta-TAs and the head consultant, who will collect the proposals and seek funding.

Syllabus Depending on the professor you are working with, your course will put together some kind of syllabus with project/homework deadlines in it. Deciding who creates this document and sets these deadlines is between you and your professor.

If you have programs due on Fridays and Saturdays, make sure they are due by 10 p.m. at the latest. It puts undue pressure on the consultant (and students, for that matter) when assignments are due after the lab closes. You should also double-check holiday schedules across a variety of faiths when considering due dates and late policies.

5.1.2 Money

TA Salary TAs are paid according to the following formulae:

UTA pay = $885 + $100 * (number of semesters previously TAed)
HTA pay = $1085 + $100 * (number of semesters previously TAed)

In order to be paid, you need to fill out an I-9 form. If you have worked for Brown before, you have already been cleared and do not need to worry about this. If not, visit Ayanna Torrey (`alt`) and show her the required identification. A passport or a combination of state-issued ID and social security card work nicely. You can also refer to the full list on page 3 of the I-9:
`http : //www.brown.edu/Administration/Human_Resources/forms/i − 9.pdf`

As a head TA, you should instruct each of your UTAs to do this. If a UTA does not complete their I-9 before the end of the first pay period, they will receive a reminder from the Meta-TAs.

Discretionary funds Each course is allotted a small amount of money to use on food for its TAs during long grading meetings. The standard amount is $3 per student still enrolled in the course via Banner after a few weeks of classes (the exact date will be given to you by the Meta-TAs). You may access this money through your professor's administrative assistant, or if he or she does not have one, through Lori Agresti (`laa`). Whenever you want to order pizza, buy sodas, or go out to dinner, you should go see your professor's admin or Lori first. If you or one of your UTAs purchases food for your staff and wishes to be reimbursed for it, **the receipt must be kept**. If you do not have the receipt, the department will have no way to reimburse you.

5.1.3 Facilities

Reserving a room The first step towards reserving a room is to check if it is listed on
`http : //www.cs.brown.edu/places`. If so, see if it is occupied at the time you would like to reserve it for. If the room is not listed online or the online schedule shows the room is not occupied, email `mta@cs.brown.edu` with the date, time, and name of the event you are reserving it for ("csXXX grading meeting" will suffice).

Remember to make your reservations *well in advance* of the actual event. Keep in mind, you may not be able to reserve the room you want at the time you need it. You will not want to go through the trouble of contacting all of your students to tell them there has been a last-minute change in plans.

Which room you reserve is determined by the capacity you need, whether your event is for students or TAs, and whether you need any special equipment (computers, projectors, etc.). Please note that the upper-level floors are closed to non-TA undergraduate students after business hours, so events attended by students should never be scheduled on floors three and above after 5:00 p.m. The following rooms are available for reservation:

- The Fishbowl (aka Birdcage, CIT 271) and the Moonlab (CIT 219)
  The Fishbowl and Moonlab are where TA hours are typically held. A course typically picks one of these rooms to hold hours in and sticks with it to avoid confusion among students. TAs have access to the Fishbowl and may choose to work there at any time. The Moonlab, however, is shared with the Registrar and may be occupied during the day.
  TAs often use the Fishbowl for doing work on their courses while hours are not being held. Students, however, should not be allowed to work in the Fishbowl. Usage priority for nodes in the

Fishbowl is as follows: (1) TAs currently helping students on hours, (2) TAs on hours, (3) TAs off-hours doing TA-related work, (4) all other TA usage.

- CIT 219
  This space, like the Moonlab, is shared with the Registrar, so you may not be able to access it during the day. You may reserve it for recitations or helpsessions during the evening.

- The TA Laboratory (CIT 344)
  The TA Lab is a room for TAs to do course-related work. No students are permitted in this room—it is not for holding hours or interactive grading. Unless there is a shortage of machines, TAs are welcome to do non-TA work in this room as well. It has around ten nodes.

- The I-Lab (CIT 316)
  During business hours, this room is open for general use. However, after business hours it is only accessible to TAs. Many programming-intensive courses choose to reserve this room for grading meetings because of it has more nodes than the TA Lab (20 in total, to be exact).

- Sunlab
  You may reserve a few rows of the Sunlab for labs or helpsessions which require students to do work at a node. Most rows have eight nodes, and there are nine and a half rows.

- MSLab
  You may reserve the MSLab for labs or helpsessions which require students to do work at a node which runs Windows. It has around 20 nodes.

  While there are some Linux machines in the MSLab (specifically, every large, single-screened node can be switched between Windows and Linux by hitting Scroll Lock twice), Windows users always have priority in the MSLab. Usage priority for the MSLab is as follows: (1) students doing coursework on Windows, (2) students doing coursework on Linux, (3) all other usage.

- Motorola Room (CIT 165)
  This first-floor lecture hall is popular for helpsessions for large courses. Its seating capacity is around 80.

- CIT 345
  This third-floor conference room is located across from the TA Lab and has one node, A/V equipment, and a round table which seats roughly 15.

- Lubrano Room
  This fourth-floor lecture hall has one node and A/V equipment. It is excellent for presentations, but not the best choice for round-table discussions.

- CIT 506
  This fifth-floor conference room, located next to the SPOC Office, has one node, A/V equipment, and a round table which seats roughly 20.

Lockers, bins, etc. Courses have three main forms of physical storage available to them: lockers (which students have no access to), handin bins (which students can drop things off in, but not collect things from), and handback bins (which students can access, but only while the Fishbowl is open). All are located in the second floor, in or near the Fishbowl. These are assigned according to need at the start of the semester. The combinations for the lockers are maintained by the MTA-admin. The keys to the hand-in bins are available from Janet Eager (`jeager`, CIT 471).

Card access Building access (CIT building and stairwell) is managed by Janet Eager (`jeager`, CIT 471) and department card access (Fishbowl, TA Lab, I-Lab) is managed by Kathy Kirman (`kpk`, CIT 572). For more information, see Section 2, "Immediate tasks".

5.1.4 Resources

Printing The department no longer covers the cost of printing at Metcalf. Additionally, courses are not permitted to use the fourth-floor copy machine. All printed materials should be printed from machines in the CIT. *Only vital materials may be printed.* Examples of vital materials include exams and collaboration policies. Examples of non-vital materials include course missives, syllabi, homeworks, and homework solutions. If you have questions about what constitutes "vital" material, direct them to the Meta-TAs.

Supplies All TAs have access to some necessary office supplies for TA-related work. They are kept in an unlocked cabinet (labeled "student supplies") in the copy room on the 4th floor. These supplies include pens and pencils, notepads, and whiteboard markers.

Sunlab books Traditionally, tstaff and the DUG pay for Sunlab books as necessary. If there are technical books that would be useful for your students or TAs to have around in the lab, get in touch with the Meta-TAs about it, and they will propose them to the head consultant and user services coordinator.

5.2 Technical reference

5.3 Miscellaneous reference

5.3.1 Collaboration

Situations of suspected collaboration are among the most stressful and frustrating situations experienced by TAs, professors, and the students suspected of policy violation.

TAs should be proactive in alerting their head TAs and professors to cases of suspected inappropriate collaboration. However, their involvement in the investigation ends there.

HTAs may be asked to assist the professor "off-line" in documenting the grounds for a code violation charge but should under no circumstances be present if students are confronted on a charge. They may also be asked to testify in a dean's hearing.

Collaboration observed in the lab or in other public spaces should be brought to the attention of a head TA, who should, if possible, confront the individual at the time of the occurrence, then bring the incident to the attention of any other head TAs and the professor. As a head TA, you should instruct your UTAs as to what course of action they should take when encountering collaboration in the lab. There should be no improvisation: tell your UTAs exactly what they should do and say in these situations.

All information relating to collaboration policy infractions is extremely confidential and only released on a need-to-know basis. UTAs working on identifying collaboration cases should report their findings to head TAs, but must not discuss them with the rest of the staff. Similarly, head TAs should not be made aware of the actual outcome of a case unless it pertains to the course (i.e. they need to know if the student received a directed NC on an assignment or in the course; all other outcomes should be phrased as "the issue has been resolved"). This is a university policy, designed for the students' protection, which we take very seriously.

The department chair is the only other person who may be involved in these cases. Professors are urged to contact the chair if they need guidance about how to proceed with a specific case.

Brown's Academic Code:

http : //www.brown.edu/Administration/Dean_of_the_College/academic_code/code.html

5.3.2 Struggling students

The first thing to worry about is identifying students who are having trouble. There are many ways to do this, depending on how your course works. Low grades on homeworks or projects are useful, but sometimes indicate just bad time management skills rather than trouble with the material. Labs or other situations where TAs get to watch students working with the material directly are more useful. Note students who consistently don't finish labs on time. Talking to students, whether during labs, on hours, in interactive grading, etc. is very useful also. Note who tends to have the most misconceptions about the material, and who tends to come to hours the most with very general questions and misunderstandings (as opposed to just clarifications).

After the first month or so of classes, it is possible to form an idea of which students are consistently having trouble and are in danger of failing if nothing changes. Do not wait until the middle of the semester to do something with this information. Try to act on it as soon as possible so that students have the greatest number of options available to them.

Meet with your professor (if you don't do that already) and talk about these students. Each TA is likely to know about only some subset of the students, so make sure everyone gets to talk. Mention examples of things that they asked on hours that you would not have expected anyone to ask. Talk about their performance in lab. Try to get a sense of why they're having trouble (lack of time, bad time management, emotional issues, lack of effort, etc.) and make sure other TAs know about all of this so that they know what to expect from these students on hours and in labs.

Make sure the professor is aware of students who are having trouble, and have him or her try talking to them as soon as possible. The easiest way to do this is to have the professor send them an email asking them to come to office hours or set up an appointment.

Try to give some special attention to these students (within reason). Keep them interested in the class by acting enthusiastic and interested on hours and complimenting their work in labs. When trying to help them on hours, be sure not to assume they understand previously covered concepts, and be prepared to explain material from weeks ago, if they never really learned it then.

Students that struggle in a course often consider dropping it for one reason or another. There is not much you can do about this besides being understanding when students ask for extensions, but there will be students who struggle and do not ask. When a project is due, keep an eye out for students who hand in nothing. Try to contact each of them individually if you can after any late-handin deadline is passed. This way you find out about any handin problems or personal emergencies, and it will be helpful and appreciated. It is a great way to help people avoid dropping out of the course.

5.3.3 Institutional memory

Future iterations of the course can benefit greatly from constructive advice left behind by former UTAs and HTAs. The professor can do a lot in this role as well. Without recording your history, you really will end up repeating it.

You may wish to implement any (or all!) of the following suggestions in order to help your course improve for future generations of TAs and students:

- Maintain TODO files for all projects, labs, etc.
- Hold a hand-off meeting with next year's HTAs. Come with a few things in mind that you would like to bring up and let them ask questions.
- Write up a concise week-by-week timeline for the course: what needs to be happening at each part of the semester?

5.3.4 Student technical support

Students can receive technical assistance not directly related to course-specific software (e.g. remote login issues, limited shells, etc.) from the Sunlab consultants. Introductory-level courses should acquaint their students with the basics of Linux if they intend to use it during the semester, but after that, students should direct their questions to the consultant on duty.

Courses below the thousand-level using Linux are encouraged to evangelize remote login to their students to avoid crowding in the Sunlab. Instructions are available here: link

Please distribute these remote login to your students. Try to avoid using a different set of instructions for your course.

5.3.5 HTA recruiting

Toward the end of your class, you should ask your UTAs to consider their interest in HTAing the following year. If course development seems worth doing, the summer before is really the time to do it (even for spring courses!). Getting the current UTAs thinking ahead to the following year may also encourage them to put some extra thought into long-term goals and to write down ideas as they go.

5.3.6 End-of-semester tasks

Before you shake off the burden of responsibility for your course, please remember to take care of wrapping up your course at the end of the semester.

- Clean out your course's locker, handin bin, and handback bin. These should be emptied before the end of the semester. *Do not leave any important, confidential, or otherwise valuable papers in these cabinets.* Anything left in any one of them will be thrown out before the next semester.
- Return your handin bin and elevator keys to Janet Eager (`jeager`, CIT 471).
- If any students have incompletes, put a list together and circulate it to the professor and other head TAs, and keep reasonably close tabs on them. You should also send the names and logins to the Meta-TAs so that these students' accounts and identities will not be deleted.
- Plan for an HTA organizational meeting with the professor and the next year's HTAs. If this is not possible, arrange for an in-person or written "exit interview" to pass on some official course-specific advice to the next HTAs.
- Clean out your course directory. Remove unnecessary material, like handins, etc.

6 Conclusion

Phew! That is quite a lot of information. If you have questions about anything covered in this document, or feel that something has been left out, or are just puzzled about what to do as a head TA, do not hesitate to contact the Meta-TAs at `mta@cs.brown.edu`.