A brief guide to being an awesome HTA

Spring, 2013
Summary

- General administrative responsibilities
- Reserving a room
- Logging hours
- Recording grades
- Managing student accounts
- Useful tools for HTAs
What does an HTA do?

• “The role of HTA is more open and flexible than that of a UTA. You should do whatever you feel is important to keep the class running smoothly, keep lines of communications open, and make sure that your UTAs are having fun. And you should have fun!”
  – Source: http://cs.brown.edu/ugrad/jobs/hta

• The exact scope of the role is shaped by the HTA and the professor for the course.
General HTA Responsibilities

- Ensuring that UTAs record their hours accurately and promptly
- Manage course room reservations (ie: for TA hours, labs, help sessions, etc)
- Maintain the course directory and student list
- Work with professor to gather evidence in cases of suspected academic dishonesty
- Overall: whatever your professor asks you to do
  - Keep the course running smoothly!
Food Budget

• Each course is allocated a small budget
  – $3 per student enrolled in the course at the end of the second week

• This budget can be used at the HTA's discretion: some courses use it to provide food for grading meetings

• Bring receipts to your professor's administrative assistant to start the reimbursement process
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Room Reservations are Important

- Courses need rooms for a variety of purposes (grading, TA hours, help sessions, labs, etc)
- We have finite space in the department for everyone to share
- QED: We need everyone to schedule rooms in advance of when they need them to avoid conflicts
Today's Room Reservations

• Today we're reserving:
  – Sunlab
  – MSLab
  – Fishbowl
  – 219
  – Moonlab (227)

• We're only handling recurring reservations (ie: TA hours, labs)
Future Room Reservations

• General Procedure:

1. Go to http://cs.brown.edu/places/

2. Is the room you want to reserve listed on that page? If not, email mta@cs.brown.edu

3. Check the schedule for the room. Make sure your reservation does not conflict.

4. Contact the person in charge of reservations for that room, CC mta@cs.brown.edu
Things Not To Do

• Schedule TA hours anywhere except 219, 227, and the Fishbowl

• Hold any event with students on the 3rd-5th floors after 5:00 PM or on a weekend

• Decide to spontaneously hold extra TA hours
  – Make sure your UTAs know this too!
To: cs666students@lists.cs.brown.edu
Subject: impromptu hours

Due to a scheduling change, I will be holding my hours right now from 5:45 - 7:45 in CIT 404 (all the computers are taken downstairs).

Please email me directly (jcarberr@cs.brown.edu) if you need to get up the elevator.
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Handling Timesheets

• As an HTA, you are responsible for signing UTA timesheets
  - Verify that the hours logged are accurate
  - Don't let your TAs forget to turn timesheets in

• All timesheets are due in the bin (lower left handback bin by the Fishbowl) by **Friday at 12:00 PM**

• Do not turn in timesheets late. But if you do, email **mta@cs.brown.edu** and let us know
You should also keep track of your course budget

Create a budget file, run XXXhours budget

[neal@gemini ~]$ 321hours budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TA</th>
<th>This pay period</th>
<th>Prev pay period</th>
<th>All time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neal</td>
<td>0h 0m 0.00</td>
<td>3h 0m 26.10</td>
<td>69h 0m 600.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aimee</td>
<td>0h 0m 0.00</td>
<td>1h 0m 8.70</td>
<td>47h 5m 408.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL  | 0h 0m 0.00      | 4h 0m 34.80     | 116h 5m 1009.20 |

TOTAL BUDGET: $ 9001.00 REMAINING BUDGET: $ 7991.80
Handling Timesheets

- This process is slated to change in early February
  - Student payroll will be handled via WorkDay
  - tahours2 may be obsolete
- More details will be announced as we get closer to the switch
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How to Store Grades

- There are a few “standard” ways to keep track of student grades
  - Cakehat
    - Maintained by cakehat@cs.brown.edu
  - Evalpig
    - Maintained by MTA-Tech
  - Google Docs
Grade Restrictions

• Due to FERPA regulations, grades must be stored on University systems
  - Department machines are OK (ie: Cakehat, Evalpig)
  - Brown's Google Apps is OK (but doc must only be shared with @brown.edu accounts)

• If you're sending out grades via email, you must send them to @brown.edu or @cs.brown.edu email addresses
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Managing your student group

- Every course has a “student group” on the filesystem: csXXXstudent
- The group affects file permissions, course hooks, ability to the run handin script, etc
- Membership in the group is maintained by the course HTA via tstaff
- Full directions are available at https://wiki.cs.brown.edu mediawiki/index.php/Student_Groups_and_Accounts
Managing your email list

• Log in to https://lists.cs.brown.edu/sympa/

• You will need to subscribe your students and TAs (group2sympa is useful if your student group is set up properly)

• May also want to change who can send messages (Edit List Config → Sending / Receiving Setup) and “Reply address”
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wiki.cs.brown.edu

- Department wiki, available internally and externally (requires you to login with your username and LDAP password if outside the department)
- Contains lots of great resources, including documentation for a lot of TA tools
chmod! and chgrp!

- Allow HTAs to change permissions on any files in /course/csXXX
- Useful when permissions have accidentally been set wrong on a file/directory
- Does not work in web directories
- If you notice a directory without the set-gid bit (g+s), be sure to set it!
moss

• Moss (for a Measure Of Software Similarity) is an automatic system for determining the similarity of programs.

• To get a copy for your course, email mta@cs.brown.edu

• Instructions and example usages are available online at https://wiki.cs.brown.edu/mediawiki/index.php/Moss
handin

- Most courses should have this set up already
- Full documentation available online at https://wiki.cs.brown.edu/mediawiki/index.php/Handin-interp
Miscellaneous

• Test accounts: csXXX000. Password is in /course/csXXX/admin/csXXX.kerbpass
  – Should use to test permissions
• /admin/tasupport has useful programs
  – Sort of...
Resources

- http://wiki.cs.brown.edu/
- http://cs.brown.edu/courses/ta/pubs/hta_missive.pdf (the full version of this talk)
- mta@cs.brown.edu: email this first with random questions (related to TA'ing)
- problem@cs.brown.edu: if you have problems with the departmental systems
- http://cs.brown.edu/system
- http://cs.brown.edu/places