Techmasters Work Duty Transition

Yatharth Agarwal, Tony Z. Tan, Philip Lamkin  
<redacted>@andover.edu  
November 2016

### Context and Background

Through its invitation-only Work Duty program, Techmasters offers proficient members the chance to leverage their digital expertise to assist peers with tech problems while fulfilling their work duty requirement. Under the current system, enrollees man a help desk in the library on Monday or Thursday evenings twice per term. However, we have noticed that few if any students seek assistance at these help desks.

In contrast, Techmasters recently instituted an online live chat feature on its website (techmasters.io), wherein students can request assistance from any location at any time and receive help from an available Techmaster registered with the chat system. This system has received much more traffic and solves many more problems than the help desk. The Fall term of 2016 recorded over 150 tickets, closing over 120 of them with an average response time of 1:51 minutes.

### Our Proposal

In the interest of best serving the Phillips Academy community, we propose the following change in the Techmasters Work Duty program. Two Techmasters will be designated as “on call” every day. With each Techmaster assigned either two weekdays or one weekend day, the program will employ nine Techmasters. Note that weekends are only assigned one Techmaster because they have hitherto observed only 7% of requests per week compared to 14% for each weekday.

On call Techmasters will be responsible for having the chat system app installed on their phones and configured to notify them upon a help request. They shall field requests when they do not have another commitment (i.e. school, sports, music). This consists of either solving the requester’s issue or informing other Techmasters that they do not know how to solve the problem and seeking their assistance. If another Techmaster is not available, they shall refer the help request to the PACC helpdesk or <redacted>@andover.edu. If the requester leaves the chat room before being helped, the Techmaster shall follow up with an email. The email shall be sent either using the tawk.to ticketing system or CC’ed to <redacted>@andover.edu in order to maintain a record.

Whichever the response, some action shall be taken shortly after a request is sent. We will monitor response times and preemptively have conversations when there appears to be a problem. Repeated failures of duties shall be reported to Mr. Mallick and result in an unexcused absence.

### Assessment and Evaluation

The solution of over 120 more problems during the Fall of 2016 thanks to Techmasters volunteers undoubtedly reflected a positive change for the Phillips Academy student community. We set our aims higher still with the implementation of our proposal, noting that all members of the work duty program will be formally required to participate on our web platform and have their performance reviewed.

Recognize first that over 30 tickets remained unclosed in the Fall term and furthermore that ticket resolution decreased towards the end of the work week, we aim for 100% resolution of tickets in the Winter term. We also project an increase in the absolute number of support requests received due to greater publicity afforded heightened trust and legitimization of Techmasters’ service. We shall compute metrics towards the end of the Winter term for assessment of the new system, reporting to Mr. Mallick.

The proposed Work Duty shall take effect on the first Monday at least three days after acceptance. We welcome questions at the email addresses listed above.

<redacted page>