# Checklist – Clarifying GA Responsibilities with Your Professor

The GA role can take many forms, and not all faculty members are clear from the outset about their expectations for this working relationship. This checklist is designed to help you prepare for your GA duties and identify where to ask for guidance from your supervising professor.

GAs tell us that asking for clarification early helps remove guesswork, helps relieve stress, and can create opportunities for collaborative decision-making. Faculty tell us that they appreciate GAs taking the time to thoroughly review the course materials they have made available, asking when further information or clarification is needed, and giving them the chance to set expectations in areas they may have forgotten to address.

Here are key areas to be clear about as a GA:

## GA Hours:

* Weekly hours: How many hours do I devote each week? Might these vary over the course of the semester?
* How do I track my time?
* Delays and absences: Whom do I notify if I am ill or have an emergency?

## Blackboard and Technology Skills:

* What tools do I need to be able to use?
* Will I need to set up or monitor any technology before or during class (e.g., create polls, create breakout groups, monitor chat)?
* Where can I get training if I need it? (Note: you can always get support from the [Instructional Technology Lab](https://instruction.gwu.edu/instructional-technology-consultations))
* Where will my students get technology help if they need it?

## Course Policies:

* What are the policies for this course (e.g., attendance, confidentiality, late assignments)? What is my role in creating and enforcing these policies (e.g., taking attendance)?
* If there are student issues, at what point do I contact the professor?
* Will the professor be available to assist students? If so, when and how?
* What reminders do you want me to send to students?

## Course Content:

* Do I know how to access and use the materials I will be teaching or assessing?
* Do I understand the course syllabus?
* Do I understand the work assigned?
* Do I have any responsibility for creating assignments or exams?

## Working with my professor:

* What is my professor’s preferred way for us to communicate?
* Will we have regular meeting times to discuss the course? When/where will these be?
* Will you observe my teaching or provide feedback?

## If you are facilitating discussion boards or forums on tools like VoiceThread or Perusall:

* Are there discussion threads you want me to facilitate? Are they already created or do I need to add them?
* Am I clear on the participation guidelines for students?
* Do I know exactly what to look for in students’ posts? How frequently should I respond? Are there key points I should be making?

## If you are facilitating a recitation section:

* What degree of involvement would you like in planning section (discussing lesson plan together, reviewing lesson plan, coming up with discussion questions, etc.)?
* Should I have my own syllabus for the recitation section?

## If you are running labs:

* Am I clear on the purpose of each lab?
* Do I know what equipment the students need and what I need to set up?
* Do I understand safety procedures?

## If you are grading:

* What is the purpose of each assignment or test?
* Do I understand the grading criteria and any rubrics?
* Will there be opportunities to check how I am assessing the work and ensure I am grading at the right level?
* What is the expected turnaround time for returning work to students?
* Do I understand specific grading procedures (e.g., online submission of assignments, how to return graded assignments, etc.)?
* How should I respond if I receive a grade complaint or disagreement?
* How should I respond to academic integrity issues? (Look here for [GW policies and resources](https://studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academic-integrity))

## If you are one of multiple GAs for the same course:

* How closely would you like GAs to coordinate, and in what areas (e.g., grading, lesson-planning, etc.)?
* Is there a “lead” GA? If so, what is their role?