

## MIT Architecture

### Teaching Assistant Department Information

The Teaching Assistant (TA) role is critical to the success of the Department, the faculty and the students, and it comes with a great deal of responsibility. As a TA you have the chance to help shape pedagogy and act as a link between the faculty, students and staff. You are seen as an extension of the faculty; it's a position that calls for respect and trust.

### Department of Architecture Expectations

- Understand your role. At the beginning of the semester you should meet with your faculty member to discuss expectations, including the number of hours you'll work per week. Make sure you understand the goals and responsibilities including any end-of-term support that is essential.
- Clear communication is crucial. You're expected to communicate clearly with students and faculty, and to follow up.
- Respect and courtesy are extremely important. You are seen as a leader, so lead by example.
- Abide by policies, including MIT sexual harassment. You are in a leadership position and are expected to understand and uphold the policies. If you observe behavior that seems like sexual harassment or is inappropriate in some way, it is important that you discuss it with someone. It may not be easy or pleasant, but you are in a position of responsibility for the well-being of the students. MIT encourages everyone to speak up. [https://titleix.mit.edu/policies/sexual\\_misconduct](https://titleix.mit.edu/policies/sexual_misconduct)
- Avoid initiating or maintaining inappropriate relationships with students. As someone in authority there's potential for you to intimidate students, or take unfair advantage. While we certainly don't expect this to happen, it's something you should be aware of and guard against.
- Social media connections with students. It's up to you whether to connect with your students through social media. It's probably not a good idea, but we recommend you use your common sense. Consider whether you want them to know about you personally, and what you're up to. If you decline, be frank and friendly.

### Helping Students in Distress

<https://medical.mit.edu/services/mental-health-counseling/helping-others>

**Please visit the website above; it explains clearly what you can do to help.**

If you think someone may need help, act on it; trust your gut. You can try gently and discreetly asking the student how they're doing. Sometimes people appreciate just having an opportunity to say they're not okay. Or they may say they don't want to talk.

Resources:

- Architecture Academic Administrators in 7-337: Cynthia Stewart (Graduate students/stewart@mit.edu) and Renee Caso (Undergraduates & PhDs/yammie@mit.edu)
- Mental Health and Counseling Service, Urgent Concerns, days: 617-253-2916 or nights/weekends: 617-253-4481. Whether you talk to a student and still feel concerned or don't feel comfortable asking them directly, you can call: they will give you advice about how to approach the situation.
- Student Support Services (S ) – for undergrads: <http://web.mit.edu/uaap/s3/>
- Graduate Personal Service (GPS): <http://odg.mit.edu/development/gps/>
- IF IT'S URGENT call MIT Police: dial 100 on any campus phone, or 617-253-1212 (enter this number in your cell phone directory).

### Benefits of Being a TA

In addition to getting paid, if you do a good job you will be recognized for your thinking and your personality as someone who is capable. People will get to know you, which is good for your development, your CV, and building your network. You will be in situations that will improve your organization, project management, and conflict management skills. Remember, students will have the opportunity to evaluate your performance in class.

We recognize that being a TA can be challenging: it takes effort to manage the extra responsibilities and hours of work. Try not to stress! Take advantage of the learning opportunity. There are resources to assist you with learning how to teach at the MIT Teaching & Learning Lab <http://tll.mit.edu>.

Remember that if you have questions about anything at all, don't be afraid to talk to the staff – we're here to help you.

### Additional Resources:

- Purchasing materials and MIT tax exempt form, see your teaching area discipline assistant
- Stellar, MIT Course Management System, <http://stellar.mit.edu>
- CRON Equipment loan, <http://cronlasso.mit.edu/cron/p.lasso?t=3:3:0>
- Booking classroom space, see your teaching area discipline assistant
- Booking pin-up space, <https://cron-cronlasso-s.mit.edu/rooms/p.lasso?t=1:1:0>
- End-of-term archiving studio work, <http://cronlasso.mit.edu/cron/p.lasso?t=3:6:0>
- Architecture end-of-term Reviews and Exams Chart, [http://mit.edu/miller\\_t/www/17FA-eot-exam-chart.pdf](http://mit.edu/miller_t/www/17FA-eot-exam-chart.pdf)
- Writing and Communication Center, <http://cmsw.mit.edu/writing-and-communication-center/>
- Mind and Hand Book 2016-17, <http://handbook.mit.edu>
- ODGE Teaching at MIT, <http://odg.mit.edu/development/teaching/>
- “The Torch or the Firehose: A Guide to Section Teaching” <http://web.mit.edu/Tll/teaching-materials/torch-hose.html>
- Personal Support and Wellness, <http://resources.mit.edu/resources/personal-support-and-wellness/all>