

Responsibilities of Teaching Assistants for Pharmaceutics Laboratory (Fall and Spring Semesters)

Teaching Assistants (TAs) assigned to the Pharmaceutics Laboratory are expected to dedicate approximately 8–9 hours per week to their responsibilities, including 5–6 hours for laboratory sessions and 2–3 hours for grading. TAs should plan their academic and research commitments accordingly to ensure full compliance with these obligations.

1. Scheduling and Attendance

On designated laboratory days, TA responsibilities take precedence over all other commitments. TAs must not schedule research or academic activities that conflict with laboratory sessions. Required availability is from 1:00 PM to 7:00 PM during the Fall semester and from 12:30 PM to 6:30 PM during the Spring semester.

TAs are required to arrive promptly—no later than 1:00 PM (Fall) and 12:30 PM (Spring). In the event of an unavoidable absence, the TA must notify the laboratory instructor in advance and assist in arranging appropriate coverage.

2. Pre-Laboratory Preparation

Prior to each laboratory session, TAs must:

- Thoroughly review all laboratory manuals and standard operating procedures (SOPs).
- Clarify any uncertainties with the laboratory instructor at least one day before the session.
- Attend the weekly lab review with the laboratory instructor before the first session of each laboratory to understand the required tasks, the expected final product(s) and information on the labels.
- Prepare required solutions, if applicable.
- Arrange all necessary materials at student workstations, including chemicals, packaging supplies (e.g., bottles, jars, tubes), and equipment/glassware (e.g., molds, volumetric flasks).

All preparations must be completed by 1:30 PM in the Fall semester and 1:00 PM in the Spring semester.

3. Laboratory Session Responsibilities

During laboratory sessions, TAs are responsible for:

- Distributing graded laboratory manuals.
- Providing guidance and assistance to students.
- Refilling chemicals and supplies as needed.
- Monitoring student progress and ensuring proper compounding procedures are followed.

4. Laboratory Safety and Compliance

TAs must actively enforce laboratory safety protocols, including:

- Ensuring the use of appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Monitoring proper handling, labeling, and disposal of chemicals.
- Reporting any accidents, spills, or unsafe conditions immediately to the laboratory instructor.

- Maintaining familiarity with emergency equipment and procedures (e.g., eyewash stations, fire extinguishers, exits).

5. Professional Conduct

TAs are expected to maintain a high standard of professionalism at all times:

- Minimize cellphone use; usage is restricted to emergencies or laboratory-related purposes.
- Keep cell phones out of sight and set them to vibrate. Laptops should be used only for grading, laboratory-related demonstrations, instructional activities, or reference to laboratory materials.
- TAs should remain visibly engaged with student activities and avoid prolonged attention to personal devices during laboratory sessions.
- The use of earbuds or personal audio devices is strictly prohibited during laboratory sessions, except in cases of documented medical necessity.
- Refrain from engaging in non-laboratory-related activities.
- Maintain appropriate professional laboratory attire.
- Eating and drinking in the laboratory are strictly prohibited.

6. Student Conduct and Academic Integrity

TAs are responsible for:

- Promoting a respectful and professional learning environment.
- Ensuring fair and consistent treatment of all students.
- Reporting suspected academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, falsification of data) to the laboratory instructor.

7. Communication Responsibilities

TAs must:

- Respond to student inquiries in a timely and professional manner.
- Communicate recurring student concerns or issues to the laboratory instructor.
- Attend scheduled TA meetings or training sessions, if required.

8. Grading and Documentation

Laboratory reports must be graded within one to two days following the session. TAs must:

- Apply the grading standards outlined in the "TA Guide for Grading in Pharmaceuticals Laboratory" and ensure those standards are applied consistently across all students.
- Questions regarding interpretation of grading criteria should be discussed with the laboratory instructor before grades are finalized.
- Provide clear, constructive feedback.
- Maintain confidentiality of student records.
- Submit graded materials to the laboratory instructor's mailbox promptly.

9. Equipment and Inventory Management

TAs are responsible for:

- Ensuring proper use and handling of laboratory equipment.
- Reporting malfunctioning instruments.
- Verifying inventory levels prior to laboratory sessions and notifying the lab instructor of shortages.
- Ensuring proper labeling (including contents and date) of prepared solutions.

10. Post-Laboratory Responsibilities

At the end of each session, TAs must:

- Return all chemicals to their designated storage locations.
- Clean all laboratory surfaces, balances, sinks, and carts.
- Ensure all materials and equipment are returned to proper locations.
- Remain in the laboratory until all students have left and cleanup is complete.
- Ensure the laboratory is properly secured (equipment turned off, workspace orderly) for subsequent use.

11. Waste Disposal

Proper disposal procedures must be strictly followed:

- Dispose of laboratory products and formulations in designated chemical waste containers.
- Discard empty bottles and jars in regular trash after removing or obscuring identifying information on labels.

12. Accessibility and Inclusivity

TAs must:

- Support students with approved accommodations as directed by the laboratory instructor.
- Foster an inclusive, respectful, and supportive learning environment for all students.