



Guiding Your AIs: Grading Practices

Grading can be frustrating and time-consuming for instructors, especially for AIs who have less teaching experience. The following suggestions and strategies may help you guide your AIs in developing responsible grading practices and becoming more confident and efficient graders.

- **Meet regularly with your AIs** to discuss grading and other teaching practices.
- **Determine the grading scale for your course.** If a student meets your expectations, what grade will he earn? If he exceeds them?
- **Establish grading criteria** with your AIs in order to make grading more consistent and efficient. Encourage your AIs to discuss these criteria in class, precept, or lab.
- **Suggest that your AIs grade exams horizontally**--that is, recommend that they grade one question across a set of exams, which will also make grading more consistent and efficient.
- **Guide your AIs in commenting meaningfully on student writing.** A meaningful comment may engage with a student's ideas and her organization of those ideas, responding to her thesis, argument, use of evidence, or data analysis.
- **Establish procedures for dealing with grading disputes.** How much autonomy does an AI have in arbitrating such disputes?
- **Offer suggestions for dealing with disappointed students.** In your experience, have you found it useful to request that students wait 24 hours before coming to discuss their grades, to ask that students explain their concerns in writing, or to focus a meeting with a disappointed student on helping him prepare for the next assignment or exam?
- **Help AIs establish an appropriate, professional relationship with their students.** AIs may feel caught between being a peer and an authority figure to their students, especially when grading. Share with them your model of interacting with undergraduates.
- **Encourage AIs to discuss assignments or exams in class,** making general comments on the class performance and calling attention to any analytical difficulty--difficulty solving certain types of problems, for instance--that students are having. Make suggestions for how AIs can help students use their graded assignments or exams to complete the next assignment more productively or study for the next exam more effectively.