



Yale SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Proposed Policy for TA Staffing and Compensation in SOM Courses (Effective Fall 2024)

1. Summary

This document describes a new policy, effective as of Fall 2024, for staffing and compensating master-degree students who support SOM courses as teaching assistants. The policy's details are important, but its main points are summarized below:

- Wages for half-semester courses (currently excluded from the Local 33 union contract) are set to match the contract's hourly rate for full-semester courses.
- Half-semester electives with enrollments under 30 are allocated a TA for 7.5 hours per week. As enrollments increase above 30 students, allocated TA hours increase linearly at the rate of *one* weekly TA hour for every *four* students above 30. For example, a half-semester course with 40 students will be eligible for 10 hours of TA time per week rather than 7.5. TA staffing for full-semester courses and MBA core is similar but somewhat modified to conform to the union contract for full-semester courses and the more intensive TA needs of core courses.
- As before, TA hours allocated to a given course can be assigned to one TA or split across multiple TAs (as long as the TAs' work commitment does not exceed 20 hours per week).
- **Important note:** The policy ties a course's TA allocation, defined in terms of the *average weekly hours worked during the course's term*, to the course's enrollment. TAs are **not** asked to submit weekly timesheets for faculty approval.

2. Background and Introduction: Collective Bargaining Agreement with Local 33

In December 2023, Yale and the union Local 33 UNITE HERE (henceforth L33) entered into a [collective bargaining agreement](#), effective as of December 16, 2023, that establishes a new scale of salaries and benefits for Ph.D. students. The agreement also covers MBA and other master degree students at SOM *who are employed as TAs for full-semester courses*. The current contractually agreed-upon compensation for these master-level TAs is \$5,400 per semester for a job that requires 10 hours/week. For hourly commitments between 10 and 20 hours/week, the contract requires that the compensation be pro-rated (*e.g.*, a TA working 13 hours/week would earn \$7,020). These salary levels will go up by 2.5% each year for the next three years.

Salaries for Ph.D. students are set separately in the L33 contract. Faculty sometimes engage Ph.D. students as TAs, and in setting an allocation of weekly TA hours for each course, this proposal is neutral with respect to TA staffing with master-degree or Ph.D. students. Ph.D. student salaries are *not* the subject of this proposal (even when they work as TAs).

Many of our courses, including all MBA core courses, are *half-semester* long (some are shorter). Though master students working as TAs in courses shorter than full-semester are excluded from the L33 contract, this policy establishes parity in the compensation rate for master degree TAs, regardless of the course duration. The basis of achieving parity is the use of a uniform *hourly* wage rate. The policy departs from the previous practice of allocating a

discrete number of TAs for a course based on its enrollment, and paying them a flat compensation for the term. Instead, it allocates to the course a TA staffing budget, based on enrollment, that is defined in terms of *average weekly TA hours*, and allows faculty to choose within that budget: (a) the weekly work commitment of each TA, and (b) the number of TAs for the course.

Though the transition to L33 compensation increases the School's cost of TA support, it is also an opportunity to achieve greater uniformity in TA staffing and compensation across SOM's courses. Prior to the L33 contract, we paid master-level TAs a flat compensation of \$3,600 for a full semester course and \$1,800 for a half-semester course. Though the nominal expectation of work in this role was 10 hours/week, the actual varied greatly from course to course, and the average seemed considerably less. TA allocation previously permitted one TA for every 30 students of enrollment. The allocation was higher for core courses because of the greater intensity of TA work and the need for coordination across sections, often entrusted to a Head TA.

The next section provides details of the new policy for determining TA staffing for a course and describes its parameters. The last section contains implementation details.

3. Allocation of TA Hours for a Course

A course with an enrollment of E students is allocated the following *average weekly TA hours* (TAH) for the duration of a course:

$$\text{TAH} = W_1 + W_2 \frac{\max\{0, E - T\}}{30}$$

where

W_1 = standard weekly TA hours for *base* support

W_2 = standard weekly TA hours for *augmented* support

E = course enrollment

T = enrollment threshold for augmenting TA hours

In the equation above, W_1 , W_2 , and T are parameters which this policy sets differently for different types of courses. If, for instance, $W_1 = W_2 = 7.5$ hours/week and $T = 30$ (which, as described below, are the policy's parameters for half semester electives), then for a course with an enrollment (E) of 50 students, the allocated TAH is:

$$\text{TAH} = 7.5 + 7.5 \frac{(50 - 30)}{30} = 12.5$$

This allows the faculty member to hire one TA for 12.5 hours a week for 7 weeks or to allocate the TA hours in some other combination, *e.g.*, one TA for 7.5 hours/week and another at 5 hours/week. Note that every course with enrollment of 30 or below is guaranteed 7.5 TA hours. Section 3.1 below contains policy settings for W_1 , W_2 , and T .

3.1 Parameters W_1 , W_2 and T in Different Courses:

- **Half-semester elective courses:** The policy sets $W_1 = W_2 = 7.5$ hours/week and $T = 30$. This means that the allocated TAH will increase by *one* for every *four* students enrolled beyond 30:

$$\text{TAH} = 7.5 + 0.25 \max\{0, E - 30\}$$

- **Full-semester courses:** The L33 contract requires $W_1 = 10$. To replicate the proportional increase of one TAH for every four students beyond base support, we set $W_2 = 7.5$ and $T = 40$:

$$\text{TAH} = 10.0 + 0.25 \max\{0, E - 40\}$$

An important requirement of the L33 contract is that TAs be compensated for at least 10 hours a week. The faculty member should therefore ensure that if the course enrollment is below 40, the TA's work requirement is still 10 hours/week. And for the same reason, for $40 \leq E < 80$, it is better to assign the allocated TAH to one TA rather than splitting between two.

- **Core courses:** Because their TA demands are heavier and because multiple sections of core courses require coordination, the policy sets $W_1 = W_2 = 10$ hours/week and $T = 0$, resulting in the following allocation:

$$\text{TAH} = 10.0 + (E/3)$$

Each core course, with an enrollment of 345 students in the MBA program, gets a TAH allocation of 125 weekly hours, which allows for the hiring of one Head TA at 15 hours/week and 11 regular TAs at 10 hours a week. This will match the number of TAs we currently allocate to core courses. Faculty may also have a larger number of TAs each working fewer hours a week.

3.3 Additional Notes:

- All TAs will be paid the same hourly wage (derived from the L33 wage structure) for the duration of the course (14 weeks for full-semester courses, 7 for half-semester). In 2024-25, the L33 salary for a 10-hour TA for a full semester course (of duration 14 weeks) is \$5,535. This implies an hourly wage of **\$39.5357/hr** ($= 5535/(14*10)$).
- The TAs' job is not piecemeal, and the policy is not intended to imply that. The hourly wage implied by the L33 contract is used only as the basis for achieving parity between union-mandated and discretionary compensation for TAs. **When hiring a TA, faculty should carefully assess the hours of work they expect of the TA. The resulting compensation for the term will be at the L33 hourly wage rate.** The total compensation so determined will be paid out biweekly in equal installments during the course's term.
- **The payment process *does not* require daily or weekly time sheets from TAs,** but it behooves faculty to assess the average weekly hours required for TA tasks. The greater the accuracy of this calibration, the better we will achieve parity in compensation. There was a simplicity to the previous approach of paying all TAs the same flat amount for a course, but it masked the large variances in TA work obligations and the resulting disparities in compensation.
- The TAH allocation for a course type is a function only of its enrollment. The TA support needed for a course may exceed the allocation due to the course's pedagogical requirements. Faculty may petition the office of the Deputy Dean for Faculty Affairs for augmentation of the allocation. Similarly, faculty may use their R&T accounts to augment the TA budget. **The only requirement is that the implied hourly rate for all TAs be the same as that implied by the L33 contract for each academic year.**

4. Implementation and Operating Processes

Though the L33 wage structure is in place starting December 16, 2023, the policy is intended to start in the 2024-25 academic year. For elective courses, faculty typically make TA hiring decisions before they know final enrollment numbers. For many courses, enrollments from previous offerings of the course serve as a reasonable estimate of anticipated enrollment, and the TA staffing can be estimated from these numbers. The TA allocation will be adjusted upward if actual enrollments exceed the estimate. When hiring TAs, faculty should indicate to students that the TAs’ work commitment may need to be adjusted based on final enrollment numbers.

Implementation of the new policy will be facilitated by the development of a new software platform. Not all faculty use TAs; those who do should create a job description with as much detail as possible, and communicate their hiring decisions to the administration by filling out a form with the information highlighted in yellow in the template below. The information in grey is provided in the user interface.

Course: MGT 405 <i>Modeling Managerial Decisions</i>	
CU	2.0
Term	Fall-1 2024
Total Enrollment:	345
Allocated TA Hours (TAH)	125
<i>Course TAs:</i>	
Name	Hours/Week
TA1	12
TA2	7.5
TA3	7.5
...	...
TA13	7.5
Total	109.5

A team led by AASL with representatives from the Registrar and the Business Office will manage the process in coordination with the faculty support staff for each course. Requests for augmentation of TA hours will be directed to the Deputy Dean for Faculty Affairs for approval. Once the list of TAs and respective weekly hours is finalized, the Business Office will set up the process for the TAs to be paid biweekly in equal installments during the term. In the example above, the TA working 12 hours/week will get paid a total of $12 \times 7 \times 39.5357 = \$3,321.00$ and the TAs working 7.5 hours/week will get paid a total of $7.5 \times 7 \times 39.5357 = \$2,075.63$ for the 7 weeks of Fall-1. Master-degree TAs will be paid from the Course Support budget managed by AASL and Ph.D. TAs will be paid from the Ph.D. budget.