

An Overview of the TA Hiring Process

To become a TA in the CS Department, a student must be hired for a course through the structured hiring process outlined below.

Note: This process applies only to Undergraduates. Grad TAs are also an integral part of the TA program, but are included through a different process.

The TA Information Meeting

The hiring process starts in early November or April, respectively for semesters I and II. Before there are applications, interviews or decisions, there is a general meeting (each semester) to start the process rolling. At these meetings, the Meta-TA and current and past TAs discuss what it is like to be a TA in the CS Department and field questions. In addition, professors for courses hiring TAs talk about their courses and the requirements for TAing their courses. Most importantly, refreshments are served! Anyone in the department is welcome to attend, and if you have any interest in TAing, or just are curious about the program, you should be there. This is the starting point for becoming a TA.

TA Applications, HTA Hiring and Deadlines

After the information meeting, TA applications are made available electronically from the TA web page: <http://www.cs.brown.edu/courses/ta>. The application is an HTML form, and there is one for UTA and one for HTA applications. Upon submitting the form, you will receive confirmation of your application.

If you wish to apply for more than one class, you will be asked to list a preference order for all the classes to which you are applying. While we will do our best to ensure that everyone gets their first choice if hired, it is important to understand that you may be hired for ANY class that you list. So, don't choose to apply for a class unless you would be willing to TA for it.

At the initial info session, deadlines for submission of both types of applications are announced, as well as deadlines for faculty to make TA selections. Generally, the deadline for submitting HTA applications will come a few weeks after the hiring meeting. The faculty then have about a week to make HTA choices, and then shortly after those are announced, UTA applications are due. This is done so that those not chosen to HeadTA may still apply to be a UTA.

It is important that the deadlines that are announced be observed. Once the deadline for a TA submission has passed, application will no longer be accepted. This is in fairness to everyone, and exceptions will only be made with just cause (in any case, if you wish to submit a late application, it MUST be cleared through the Meta-TA first). Likewise, for fairness, it is important that HTAs or UTAs not be hired until after the respective application deadlines have passed, so that everyone who wishes to apply may have the chance to do so.

Hiring UTAs

After all the HTAs have been hired, they and the faculty member for the class must choose the UTAs who they wish to hire. They will be given the complete list of applicants who listed their class on their apps, and there will be a 1-2 week block of time where interviews will be held to help make the UTA choices. You will be contacted by faculty or HTAs for the courses you listed on your applications about scheduling interview times.

List of Potential Hires

Once interviews have been completed, professors and head TAs must compile a list of potential hires. This list should contain a few more candidates than the course needs to hire and should be completed approximately a week before the hiring meeting.

The Hiring Meeting

At a regularly scheduled faculty meeting chosen by the Department Chairperson and the Meta-TA, the first agenda item is UTA hiring. The Meta-TA and newly-hired head TAs are invited to participate in this part of the meeting. The faculty make final UTA hiring decisions for their courses, resolving conflicts that arise when an applicant who listed multiple courses on his/her application is sought by more than one of the courses s/he listed. The goal of the meeting is to match applicants with courses in a way which benefits everyone involved. Faculty absent from this meeting are represented in negotiations by the Department Chairperson or their HTAs.

When deciding how conflicts should be resolved, the ratings assigned to each course by each applicant on his/her TA application are used in conjunction with the ratings assigned to each applicant by each course (when professors and head TAs come up with their list of potential hires).

Notification of UTA Applicants

After the UTA hiring meeting, the head TAs for each course have a list of applicants who may be hired for their course. At this time, accepted applicants should be notified that they have been hired. Candidates who were waitlisted or were not hired should also be notified by this time. Applicants will be offered at most one position. If you are put on the waitlist for a class, you may still be asked to join the TA staff for meetings and/or TA camp to prepare you for TAing the class.

If you have any questions about this, or after the fact are concerned or confused about anything, please contact the meta-TA.