January 8, 2013

To: TAs and Faculty in the Department of Physics
From: Kathie E. Newman, DGS
Re: Spring 2013 TA assignments

Version 0.0 of the Spring 2013 TA assignments is being released on January 8, 2013. In making these assignments, I took into consideration a large number of factors, including:

- Requests from the instructors and the TAs;
- The times of labs, tutorials, graduate classes, and seminars;
- The past performance of a TA in previous assignments and in graduate classes;
- Enrollment estimates;
- The TA’s ability with spoken English;
- Numbers of TAs available to assign;
- The dates of departmental exams.

As most of you know, the task of making these assignments is a constrained puzzle. Generally, the greatest constraint in making these assignments comes from the schedules of the first- and second-year students. Another large constraint comes from departmental exams.

This time there is one central spreadsheet describing the TA assignments. It was sorted twice, once by course and once by TA name. I assume that a full-time TA works, on average, 15 hrs/week, so student assignments should sum to 15.

TAs, it is your task to report to the assigned instructors. Please listen carefully to the instructor’s instructions and expectations for the semester. If your duties average to more than 15 hrs/week, then please discuss this with your supervisors and, if needed, with me.

Please bring to my attention any problems or mistakes, so that corrections can be made. If I’ve given an assignment more time than can be used, please let me know. If more help is needed to cover an assignment, please also let me know.

Finally, those who desire changes to the schedule should understand the “domino effect.” Changes due to new requests (rather than problems or mistakes) will not be made if this disturbs another portion of the assignments. It is likely that at least one more version of this will be released before assignments are finalized for the semester.

Thanks for your help and patience.