

## MEMORANDUM

July 31, 2008

To: All Graduate Students

Cc: Faculty Associate Deans, Graduate  
Department Graduate Officers  
Department Graduate Assistants  
Presidents, Graduate Student Association and Federation of Students

From: Alan George, Dean of Graduate Studies  
Kevin Stewart, Director of Safety

Re: TA Health, Safety and Environment Training

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TAs are employees of UW and have supervisory positions. Under common law and various statutes, including the *Occupational Health & Safety Act* and the *Workplace Safety & Insurance Act*, UW has the following obligations: take every reasonable precaution; appoint competent persons; provide information, instruction and supervision to protect health and safety.

The Graduate Student Relations Committee believes that incorporating health, safety and environment training into all TA training programs would be an efficient and effective means to provide TAs with appropriate information and instruction to do their jobs, and demonstrate compliance with these obligations.

**Effective January 2009, all TAs will be required to complete an on-line health, safety and environment orientation training program (~1.5 hours) developed and offered by the Safety Office either as a stand-alone module or as part of a Faculty's TA training. The program will contain core health, safety and environment information, including: legislative rights; duties and responsibilities; applicable UW policies, procedures and guidelines; emergency procedures (fire and injury/illness); personal safety and security; hazardous materials -- WHMIS offered as either Awareness training (employees who have little contact with hazardous materials) or Competency training (employees who have regular contact with hazardous materials).**

This training program is intended to complement department- and/or Faculty-specific WHMIS hazardous material training. It is not a substitute.

Currently, only Engineering and Science have TA orientation sessions that address these obligations. The Safety Office will work with Engineering and Science to ensure that the health, safety and environment components of their TA orientation programs are consistent with that to be developed for the other Faculties.

The orientation/training program will be available by September 2008 in a text and multimedia web-based module format with assessment components and completion tracking. A training records database is under development as an application in UW's PeopleSoft Human Resource Management System. This database will enable departments to manage training requirements through booking and tracking features. TAs will also be able to check their training records through "myHRinfo". The Safety Office will arrange training sessions for Faculties and academic departments on how to use the training records database to administer their TA training records.