



# Tips for Being An Effective Teaching Assistant

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FOR OFFICE HOURS,  
REVIEW SESSIONS, AND  
ANSWERING EMAILS

# Clarity

- Use concrete examples
- Define unfamiliar terms
- Repeat difficult ideas
- Stress most important points – pause, speak slowly, change intonation
- Use graphs, figures, illustrations
- Suggest practical applications
- Suggest ways to memorize complicated ideas

# Enthusiasm

- Speak expressively
- Smile
- Walk around (review sessions)
- Maintain eye contact
- Avoid constant reading

# Interaction

- Encourage student questions
- Avoid direct criticism
- Praise good ideas/responses
- Use a variety of media and activities
- Incorporate student ideas when appropriate

# Organization

- Use headings and subheadings to organize presentations or review sessions
- Give an outline – preliminary overview
- Explain how topics/concepts fit together
- Summarize periodically

# Pacing

- Not too fast or too slow – check with students
- Check to see if students understand before moving ahead

# Disclosure

- Be explicit about what you will cover and any requirements
- Suggest ways to prepare for tests, exams, assignments
- Develop sample questions to assess understanding
- Remind students of test and assignment dates

# Rapport

- Address individual students by name
- Announce availability for consultation
- Offer to help students with problems
- Demonstrate acceptance of other points of view
- Talk with students before and after class or via Webcourses



# Discussion Posts & Comments and Quiz

## Discussion 1

- Select 2 qualities characteristics essential to your effectiveness as a UTA in your assigned course
- State your rationale for selecting these
- Describe what you will do or plan to do to demonstrate these qualities
- Post comment

## Discussion 2

- Select 1 quality/characteristic we discussed, and 1 behavior associated with teacher immediacy and explain how each might contribute to your professional development/future success
- Post comment

## Immediacy Quiz