Diversity and Inclusivity

Discrimination

• How do you deal with “annoying” – learn to be accepting of individual quirks
• Difficulties with English, encourage group communication
• Make students feel apart of the learning community
• Use different teaching materials, visuals
• Mix up groups, so students get to know more people
• Consider time spent helping students
  o Address common questions – en masse
  o Groups, easier to handle fewer questions
• Get to know your students, learn names
  o At least recognize faces

Inclusivity

• Dealing with different personalities
  o Shy → gregarious***
  o Observe for signs
  o Alternative ways for students to interact with you, make them comfortable*, one on one
  o Start with easy questions to start
  o Try group activities* - reduce barriers, form consensus, students teach each other
  o Try different ways of teaching*
• Diversity of motives*, backgrounds → language, culture, educational, experience, age, handicaps, religions, dyslexia
• Watch language – avoid slang
• Create culture of “nerds”
• Accept differences including opinions
• Form study groups

Time/Stress Management

• Plan ahead to keep things in balance
• Make “To-Do” lists → attainable lists
• Make a schedule → put it on your calendar, prioritize
• Be organized
• PLANNING
• Sleep well
• Set aside time for prep-work
• Keep BIG picture in mind
• Make workplace “homey”
• Include “fun” activities in your days → helps keep stress levels at bay
  o Yoga/workout/hikes
• Make your goals clear for the time, then try to plan to do something about it
  o What do you want to get out of your time as a TA/grad
  o Goals should be specific, realistic, achievable, measurable, timely (SMART goals)
• Be efficient → smart phones → know when to keep “ON” and “OFF”
• Try not to procrastinate → but also designate work/ “down” time

CUPE2278 → TA Union

Talk to other TAs or instructors if struggling

Participatory Learning

• Ask Good Questions **
  o Clear
  o Not “Yes”/ “No” answers, use open-ended questions
  o Rephrase
  o Group discussions/brainstorm
  o Minimize pressure (“no wrong answer”)
  o Give question on board
  o Ask a series of questions to help students work towards answers
• Jokes **
  o Benefit – reduce stress, relaxed atmosphere
  o Ideally should be course-content related
• Games **
  o Bingo, Jeopardy
  o Generate enthusiasm
  o Specific for course content
• Group work/quizzes ****
  o Reduces stress
  o Randomize groups (for diversity)
  o Provides time for self-reflection
• Demonstrations with student input
  o Helps students absorb/remember info
• Create respectful, open atmosphere
  o Community guidelines
  o Be encouraging in your phrasing, especially if students provided the positive atmosphere
• Have students answer questions
  o Posed by fellow classmates
• Have/use an incentive system
  o Stickers or some other reward system (treats spoons)

**Grading**

• Types of grading
  o Quiz
  o Short answer
  o Essay
  o Lab
  o Final exam
• Essay
  o Rubric useful
  o Breakdown of marks/weighting of components
  o Examples – read a few first without grading, relative ranking
  o ID class standards
    ▪ Preliminary mark
    ▪ Some classes look for average or range of grades
    ▪ Talk to TA coordinator
• Time management
  o Schedule ahead
  o Set goals
  o Be realistic
  o Breakup work
  o Record hours
  o Mark 1 question at a time
  o Choose questions based on your background
• Grading anxiety
  o Lack of trust in philosophy of absolute evaluation
  o Responsibility for student grades
    ▪ Check with instructor
  o Breakup grading into manageable blocks
• Grade complaints
  o Responsibility of coordinating
  o What is course policy?
  o Use of detailed key
  o General discussion of key
  o Set time limits/where/when
  o Debating marks – how to avoid
• Writing quiz questions
• Meets with other TAs to discuss questions
  • Mix of questions – difficulty levels?
  • Proofreading
  • Have others take the quiz to determine timing
• Grading prep
  • Reviewing material that is less familiar
• What are the standards/expectations
  • Matching grading to expectations
  • Rubrics/talk to instructor
• How to be consistent?
  • Take notes why marks given/taken off

**Classroom Management**

• Noise levels – keeping attention, talk individually to student
  • Call student out, stop talking, bell
• Extensions/make-ups – stress class policies
• Intellectual challenge – 2 question limit, then office hours
  • Open up for discussion
  • Redirecting tangential conversations
• External noise – microphone/project voice
• Quiet student(s) – group work
  • Acknowledge different learning styles
• Rude/dysfunctional – peer evaluation at end
  • Talk to members, what is going on
• Timing of class – checklist, breakdown time, time warnings, built-in wiggle room
• Lateness – ask why, talk to student about time management
  • Establish policy – 15 min rule
  • Initiative/professionalism for grade
  • Collecting assignments at start
• Lab safety – introduce it 1st
  • Fear!
  • Protections, policies
• Student responsibilities
  • Remind them that learning is up to them
• Disabilities
  • 10 people who may need more help
  • heads-up to faculty
• Cell phones/laptops
  • Tell them what they need; turn off phones
  • Laptops at back; cell phone vs. non cell phone section
Policies

**TA/Faculty Relations**

- It is nice when faculty provides opportunities to prepare us for our teaching responsibilities
- It helps for faculty to make her/his expectations clear
- Faculty should stand behind/support TA’s decisions in marking etc. issues
- Ongoing communication between faculty and TAs
- Communicate your problems/issues/concerns timely/early