

## Diversity

- Make all students welcome
  - Language issues – limited vocabulary
    - For TAs and students resources are available
    - Deal with access and low tone
- Assumptions – all same
  - Show interest in individualities \*\*\*
- Respect individuals
  - Get midterm feedback
  - May be unaware of body language or attention that indicates bias
- Provide equal experience \*
- Be aware of diverse background eg. Cultural \*
- Students have diverse interests and motivation \*
- Hook students, make interesting
- Diversity of abilities, help needed
  - Make class worthwhile for all levels
- Inclusive environment
  - Share relevant personal into TA and student
    - \* Get to know their names
- separate “closed” groups to “mix” students – ensure TA is included
- community guidelines – set limits \*\*\*
  - TA and student expectations on conduct
- Humour examples has cultural context
- Use less specific (non-cultural) questions

## Time Management

- How to find out specific of assignment? Contact instructor.
- Can you grade during class time? Depends on course
- Plan research around class time – grading fit in
- How do we have other time for ourselves? Buy tickets, join sports team, etc.
- Keep track of hours – especially e-mail – maybe set timer
- Can we post answers to common questions on WebCT? Yes, will stimulate discussion, don't post names!
- Who do you talk to if consistently over hours? 1. Talk to instructor 2. Talk to Shona 3. Last resort, union rep.
- Do we get paid biweekly or monthly? Biweekly
- What if go over hours but students still need help? Maybe over 1 week, make up later, send to instructor
- What if big queue at office hours? May mean major miscommunication in class

- Students who don't come to class and show up at office hours and expect to be taught individually? Make clear not appropriate
- If 2<sup>nd</sup> term, when will I get details? Depends, if concerned, contact instructor
- How to structure time in class? Plan ahead
- How do multiple-section TAs get assigned to minimize in-transit time (if off campus)? Try and work out with course coordinator.
- Grade on the bus – max useful time
- Stop, start, continue – anonymously on paper
- How to access class as a whole – webct, make distribution list – pass list around section
- Use senior TAs' experience to help manage time
- What if no students show up during set office hours etc. until very last minute (a bunch of them)? Very appropriate to have them contact instructor etc. – maintain your boundaries
- How soon should we respond to e-mail? Set clear times in beginning and hold to them
- Where do we hold office hours? Depends on course – some have TA office space
- Set timer (lab) to keep students from absorbing all your time
- Do hours/week fluctuate? Depends on course, it may
- Does it help to TA same course? Yes, but some people like the opportunity for diversity of learning

## **Preparation**

- What is realistic in terms of prep? – talk to instructor
- Plan at beginning of semester
- Talk with professor about course expectations
- Identify teaching objectives
  - Avoid spending excessive time on minute details
  - Identify where students likely to need help to focus prep
- Talk to other TAs in the course
- Make outline for intro talk in labs
- Try to identify the point of over-prep that is not productive
- Evaluate whether prep is helping to achieve learning goals
- Identify how to prepare effectively
- Mark useful figs/parts of text-lab manual
- Take advantage of lab notes + prep material provided for professor
  - Don't re-invent the wheel
- Set-up expectations for 1<sup>st</sup> class

## **Grading and Evaluations**

- Detailed feedback (why good, why bad)
- Provide tips to students (to improve)
- Time-saving strategies (eg. Feedback for the whole class)
- Marking one question at a time
  - Increases consistency, faster
- Giving students the benefit of the doubt, but being consistent (with other TAs)
- Checking in with other TAs and instructor
  - Helps with consistency
- Fairness in marking essay questions:
  - Use rubric
  - Make own rubric
  - Do marking over a short time
- Dealing with plagiarism → supervisor
- Return assignment in a timely manner
  - Setting aside time for marking (at the end we may get frustrated)
- Decide how many comments per paper (e.g. 2/paper)
- Where to put comments
- If TA opinion does not equal supervisor opinion → communicate
- Comments on paper → helpful if student comes asking for more marks

Three key points:

- Consistency
- Feedback
- Time/time management

## **Classroom management**

- Being clear about general rules
- Have a clear structure
- How to get everybody (especially students) involved
  - Connect with students
  - Make students feel comfortable more around, eye contact, be comfortable yourself
- When there is a dominant student
  - Jump in → facilitate by asking other students, use a dice
  - Form groups → group consensus
- Guiding students to think – role
- Ask leading questions
- Dealing with disruptive students: circulate, gestures
- Enthusiasm – smile, jokes

## TA-Faculty Relationship

- Plan tutorial/lectures (role instructors)
- Expectation of instructors – provide rubric
  - Supervision
  - Know expectation from your instructor
    - Guidance
- If instructor does not pay attention to your suggestions – can talk to other instructors/ course coordinator/ “head” Shona
- What to do with too much duties – re-clarify expectations, ask other TAs/PIs/instructors
- What to do if your instructor is harassing you
  - Equity office (AMS)
  - Dean
  - Union-rep
- What to do if your supervisor = instructor? Hours?
- Record hrs
- Be professional
- If issues arise – talk to Dept head, other instructors