TA Training CoP: Programming for Different TA Populations - New and Returning UTAs and GTAs
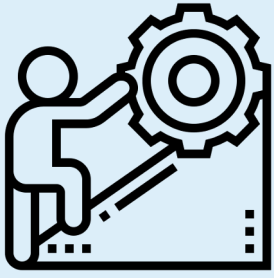
Session Workbook Slides

Nov 2022

Training Challenges

What challenges have you encountered with regards to training a combination of new, returning UTAs and GTAs?	How can we address this challenges?
How to engage with both at the same time	- **Make it clear which instructions are for which group (or both)** - **Create an event where one group has specific workshops for them, overlapping in the middle, then end with the other group specific things**
Returning TAs not wanting to participate (repeated sessions)	- Create leadership roles (i.e., leading discussions) - Create new TA training - Be strategic (e.g., a better time slot for them, snack/food provided)
Providing information which facilitates growth for **returning TAs**	- Support to connect TA skills with potential future careers in your discipline
Returning TAs not participating in the smaller recurring 'coffee breaks' we have hosted this year.	- Post a topic of discussion to help show relevancy to the different groups
Hesitancy to ask questions (New TAs during mixed training)	- Anonymous question submission prior to event, to then be brought up/discussed - Create FAQs for the course and review together - Use previous data on common questions to start the conversation instead of asking the current cohort to ask all the questions

Needs of **New** UTAs & GTAS

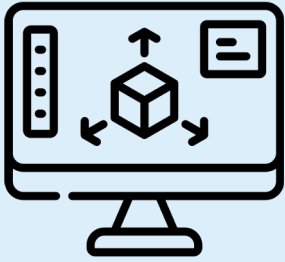| What needs have you identified and tried to address		What is the best way to address this need?
Needs specific to <u>new UTAs</u>	Building confidence	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Busy class schedules (scheduling support)	Saturday training Refer to UBC central training Offer resources During department meetings - During research colloquial , symposiums
	What resources are available	Creating a resource document to share with TAs
	Potential smaller knowledge base than GTAs	Purposefully create space for them to interact with other TAs or GTAs Curate specific leadership roles for UTAs Invited them to share experiences as learners in the classroom (support they needed from TAs) - use shift in the perspective
	Closer in age to their students (confidence / perceived authority)	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Feeling intimidated by GTAs	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support. Creating spaces for GTA/UTA interaction.
	Likely new to teaching	Orientation - centered around starting out
	Logistical infrastructure not set-up (key cards / printing)	Resources for these types of things-representative from department or faculty
	Might receive less freedom than GTAs (even when they have expertise to take on more)	Inviting TAs and faculty members to have an initial conversation to share expertise. Getting on the same page about everyone's unique strengths might opens up opportunities on both ends. TA and faculty member agreements
Needs specific to <u>new GTAs</u>	Building community / social circle	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Learning the course structure at a new institution	Meeting with the professor - to discuss setup of course
	What resources are available	Orientation workshop
	Unfamiliar with courses offered at institution	Pairing up GTAs and UTAs so that there is some amount of mentorship and context. Sharing course outcomes with the TAs so the purpose of assignments, grading, etc. is clear - giving them a compass so to speak!
	Balancing independent academics/ research	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Power dynamics with professors who may sit on your committee etc.	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Feeling intimidated by students who have attended the institution	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	Imposter syndrome	Incorporated into ongoing resource of support
	TAship is a part of funding package (financial anxieties) (required to do this / resentment)	Providing examples of how this could further their future career - putting on CV

Needs of **Returning** UTAs & GTAS

What needs have you identified and tried to address		What is the best way to address this need?
Needs specific to **returning/senior UTAs**	Leadership skills/roles	Create roles and pathways to provide a framework for increased responsibilities / roles
	Leading discussion groups	Providing training to meet these needs / build confidence in this skill
	Using feedback to improve skills	Goal setting and follow -up
	Motivation to participate/continuing learning as a TA	Clear outline of benefits to further training (certificate, money, reduced marking hours)
	Community building w/ GTAs	Creating mixed groups for discussions / training
Needs specific to **returning/senior new GTAs**	Leading discussion groups	Providing training to meet these needs / build confidence in this skill
	Leadership skills/roles	Senior TA panel where TAs can share expertise on predetermined prompts and spontaneous Q+As. Create workshop facilitation opportunities.
	Making lesson plans	Providing training to meet these needs / build confidence in this skill
	Navigating unfamiliar content/subject matter efficiently	Online community group to communicate with other TAs in the department or course.
	Using feedback to improve skills	Goal setting. Mid-course informal assessments.(Start, stop, continue)
	Motivation to participate/continuing learning as a TA	Clear outline of benefits to further training (certificate, money, reduced marking hours)
	Refresher on rights/duties that come with the role	Appropriate on-boarding documentation. Condensed training for returning TAs.
Needs specific to TAs with TA experience outside of your unit/department	Understanding and navigating the differences between the TA duties/policies in different units	On the part of the TA Training Coordinator, making resources and protocols clear. Clarifying the unique needs of your specific unit and keeping a written record of the differences across units. Making sure faculty and TAs are on the same page.

Needs of Returning TAs (Identified by previous TA Training Coordinators

- Reminders of (rules and regulations)

- Appreciation, recognition and validation (course design; get together)

- Responding to their feedback (do as group - in session)

- Update on course changes (both sides)

- **Motivation**

- Community/networking/support

- Integrating/building and developing based on experience

- Returning TAs as Mentors

    responsibility

    sharing

    opportunities for growth
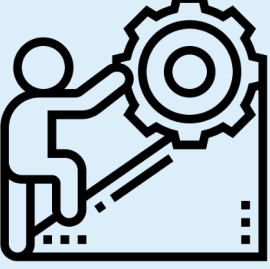
Sample Program for Returning/Experienced TAs

GROUP 1
Goals of the program
- Addressing the questions they may already have based on their current TA experiences   - Building a CoP   - Providing structure for improvements for Returning TAs
Components of the program (i.e: CoP, Mentorship, Events and Sessions, etc)
1. Q&A sessions based on the pre-workshop survey response (at the beginning of the workshop) 2. Q&A sessions to address any questions left (at the end of the program) 3. Peer observation (course specific)
Logistics: How should the program be run? How do you get it started? Who runs it? etc.
- Pre-workshop survey to gather people's questions and/or issues they want to discuss in the workshop. Based on the survey response, the TA coordinators (and certain faculty/staff members if the common questions involve engagement from faculty/staff) will design the components of the program   - Peer-observation: pairing new and experienced TAs, observation framework, goal setting framework. Meetings occur during weekly meetings, facilitated by the Head TAs

Sample Program for Returning/Experienced TAs

GROUP 2
Goals of the program
- Professional development and career readiness   - Transfer of knowledge to new/future TAs   - Continued returning TA participation   - Feedback collection and program altering to reflect
Components of the program (i.e: CoP, Mentorship, Events and Sessions, etc)
1. Community sharing event - transfer of knowledge from returning/experienced TAs to new TAs 2. Mentorships 3. Leadership workshops (i.e., CoP) 4. End of term needs assessment
Logistics: How should the program be run? How do you get it started? Who runs it? etc.
- Shorter sessions (low time burden)   - Initial endorsement from returning TAs and will to participate   - Started by TA training coordinator/returning TA committee but then continued through distribution of facilitation (self-sustaining)

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