TA Training CoP: Programming for Diverse TA Populations

Session Workbook Slides

Jan 2024

Your Questions:

Dept hiring more undergrad TAs for 200 level courses.
Designing sessions just for them?

Developing and advertising workshops to two different groups with major cultural differences: Two groups of TAs different content area - essay based, discussion based VS more quantitative

Unit wants to create more opportunities for grad students to TA - they are splitting TA roles based on tasks - they want to avoid having TAs spend too much time away from the labs/their research - TAships will be based on tasks (lab, lecture, marking, etc)
This change will impact training

Appealing to folks with different levels of experience - workshops beneficial for spectrum of experience

Needs of Returning TAs (Identified by previous TA Training Coordinators

Some of the needs of <u>New UTAs</u>:

- Knowledge of existing resources and department culture/policies, etc

- Support around conflict of Interest (TAing their friends/classmates)

- Logistical infrastructure (key cards / printing)

- Building confidence

- Scheduling support and time management (Busy class schedules)

Some of the needs of <u>Returning GTAs</u>:

- **Motivation**

- Reminders of (rules and regulations)

- Appreciation, recognition and validation (i.e: Involvement in course design; get together)

- Responding to their feedback

- Community/networking/support

- Integrating/building and developing based on experience
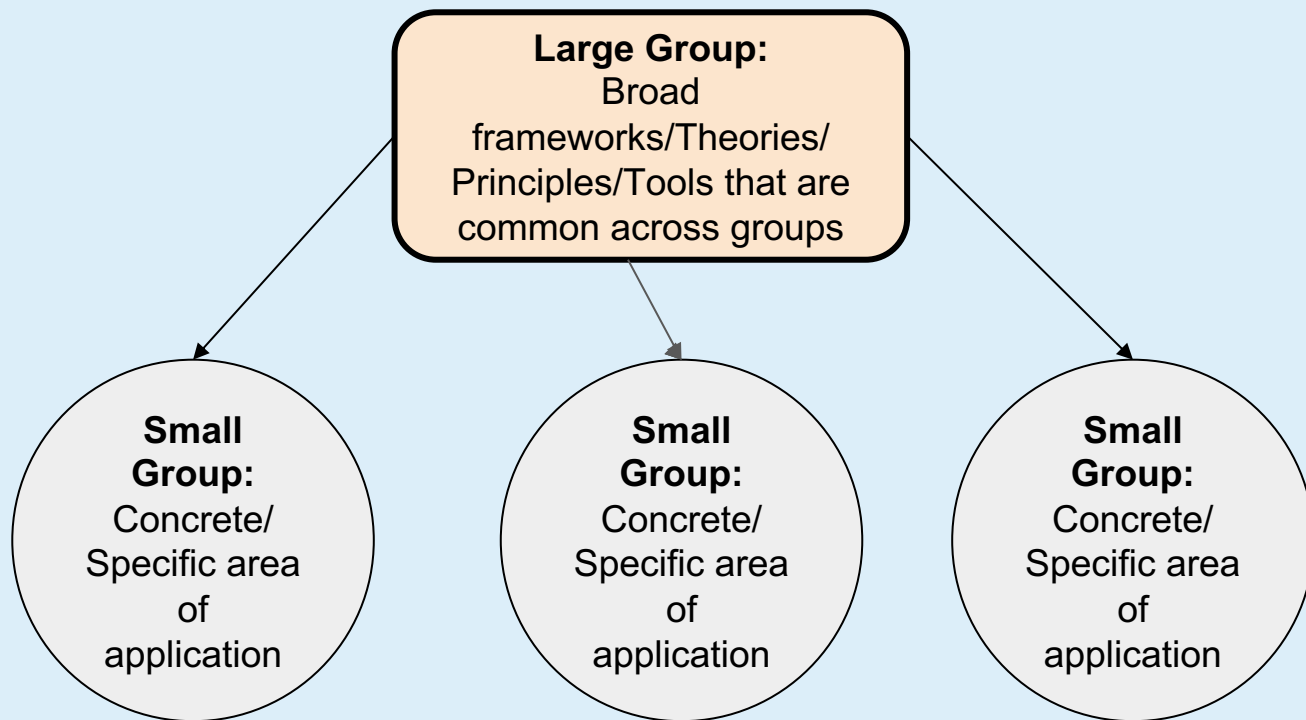
- Opportunities for Growth
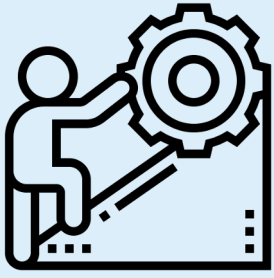
Training Challenges

Group/ Room	Training Programming Challenges	• How can we address these challenges in our programming? • What have you done that has been successful in addressing these challenges?
1	Only a few (i.e) 3-4 new TAs each year (plus many returning TAs)	Language you use for the events and promotions
1	Returning TAs don't attend training. 1. Why do you think that is? 2. How can we address this? 3. What are some ways to engage returning TAs in the training?	1. They are busy or uninterested 2. Make session relevant to them (perhaps their careers - emphasize transferability of skills learned in sessions and as TAs) - Assign leadership roles. 3. Have them involved in TA Training as facilitators, contributors, panelists, discussion leads, and so on. Maybe have them write challenging scenarios they can bring into the session.
1	Small group of TAs (UTA, GTA, new and returning) in your unit and you need to train them all in the same space	Use the strategy proposed on slide #6.
1	Diversity in terms of how much TAs care about their role as a TA	Emphasize transferability of skills - how can teaching skills be relevant to working in the industry. Reach out to faculty (esp those passionate about teaching). See if you can collect stories about ways in which TAship helped them grow. Get buy-in from faculty.
2	TAs engage in the same task - Marking- but different kinds of marking (i.e essayes, oral, short answer quiz)	Use the strategy proposed on slide #6.
2	TAs engage in very different tasks (i.e: Leading discussion, Marking, Lecturing, etc)	For small groups you can offer a session on "Alignment" of teaching activities with LO of the sessions. Then in breakout groups get each group to work on what alignment looks like in the task they are doing. (ie for leading discussion they can talk about keeping students on task and asking prompting questions that are aligned with the learning outcome of that discussion)
2	Major disciplinary/department cultural differences between units supported by TA Training program	If you cannot design separate sessions for those groups, make sure to team up with someone from the other units. Collaboratively come up with a language that is relevant to both/all groups (for the session title and description). Talk about broad frameworks,principles and tools relevant to both groups then break them into small groups where then can discuss more concrete strategies relevant to their context.
2	Communicating and supporting **TAs that are hired from other departments/units**	Listserv Best way to reach TAs is through faculty members they are TAing for. To get buy in from faculty find a way to share what is going on with TA Trainin in department meetings.

Major TA Populations

- UTA or GTA

- New or Returning TAs

- Differences in roles and tasks

- For Faculty wide TA Training: TAs in different departments

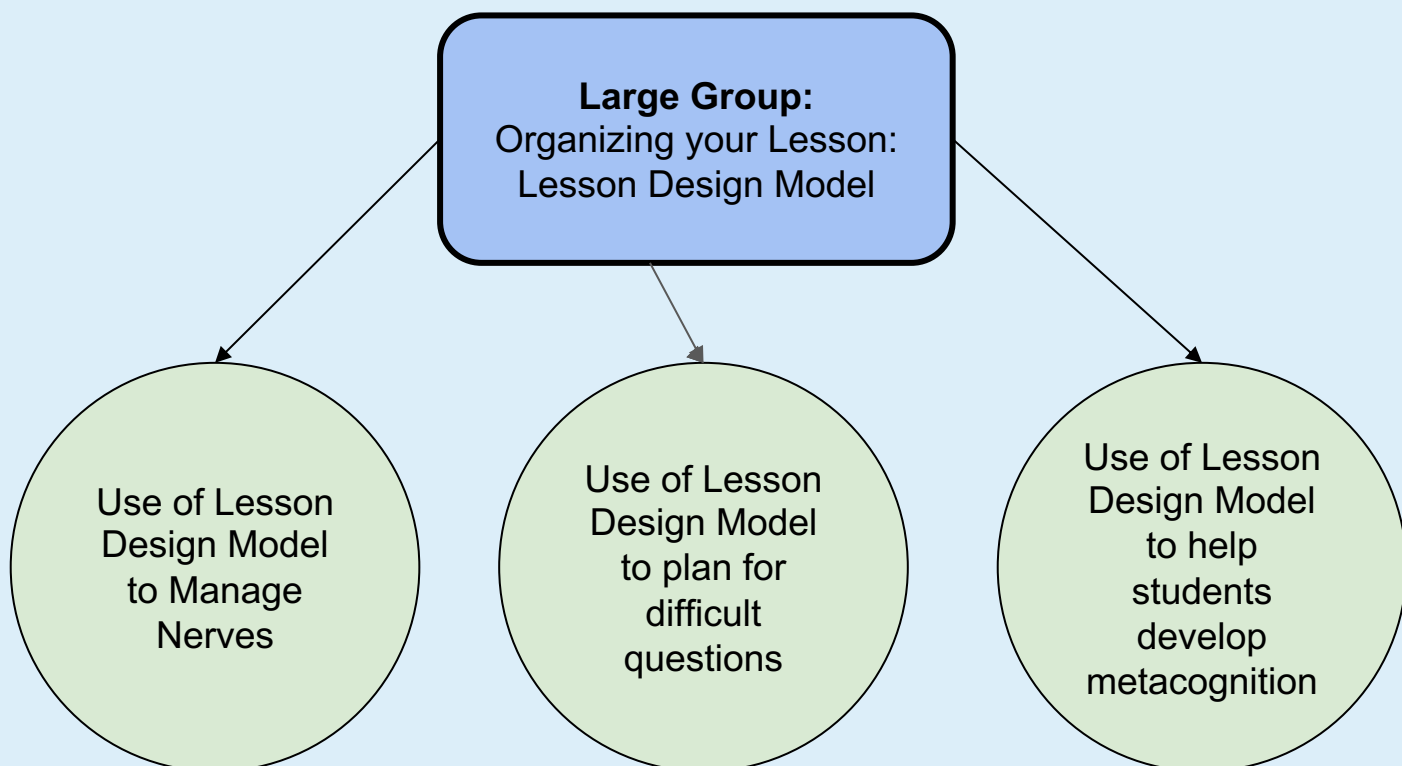 - Different department culture

  - Different roles and responsibilities

- TAs hired from different departments
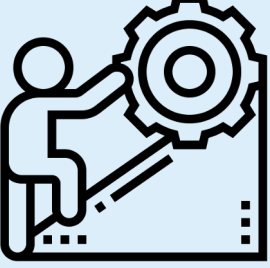
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A Strategy: Break out Groups

Large Group:
Broad frameworks/Theories/ Principles/Tools that are common across groups

Small Group:
Concrete/ Specific area of application

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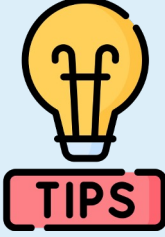
Example

Session Topic: Lecturing:

Large Group:
Organizing your Lesson: Lesson Design Model

Use of Lesson Design Model to Manage Nerves

Use of Lesson Design Model to plan for difficult questions

Use of Lesson Design Model to help students develop metacognition

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