My Post-TA experience

Organization
Teaching
Instruction
Support to Students

Learning
Assessment – e.g. Grading
Management
Your expectation?

What is the biggest concern about TA in your mind now?

, or

What do you want to take away from this workshop?
Overview

- Being a TA
  Roles & Responsibilities
  Good vs Bad TAs

- Common Problems and ways to handle them

- Teaching resources
Being a TA

Roles and responsibilities
Change of Role

Graduate  Teaching Assistant

http://static.guim.co.uk/Guardian/culture/gallery/2008/oct/23/television/GD9313478@Title-BOY-NAMED-CHARL-8397.jpg

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What am I supposed to do??

http://2.bp.blogspot.com/_V9mssXHqYmo/RgPeVDU4sOI/AAAAAAAAADM/763IASPtKWg/s320/charlie%2Bbrown.jpg

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HKUST said…

Roles and Duties:
http://celt.ust.hk/ta/tahome02.htm

“Teaching assistants, a group of active postgraduate students who bridge the gap between the instructors and the students. …”
No matter how competent you’re, It’s pointless if you don’t know where is the gap (responsibilities).

How much do you know about it?

Give me some examples.
Possible responsibilities of a TA

- Conduct Tutorials
- Conduct labs
- Mark quizzes, tests homework assignment
- Conduct review sessions
- Create solution Sets
- Invigilate Examinations
- Attend Pre-Lab
- Meet with students
- Attend lectures
- Become familiar with lecture assignments
- Setup a class email, list server or website
Clarify with the **right person at a right time!**
1) Clarify your responsibilities at the beginning

- Course
- TAC
- The other TAs (current/previous)

2) **TAKE INITIATIVE** for your own sake.
(They may or may not approach you.)
What questions should I ask my instructor/professor?

http://www1.istockphoto.com/file_thumbview_approve/2334825/2/istockphoto_2334825_puzzled_kids_cartoon.jpg
Handout: “Questions To Ask The Instructor”

This is to help you:
• To think about the right questions to ask
• To check if there is anything unclear or missing about your duties
We are here to support you!

Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching (CELT) 教學促進中心 &

The Teaching Assistant Coordinator (TAC)
Being a TA
Roles and responsibilities
Good vs Bad TAs
Discuss in groups of 3 and come up with Three characteristics of a good TA and a bad TA.

From your past experience:

- What do you think a good TA is like?
- What do you think a bad TA is like?

~ 5 Minutes ~
Characteristics of a good TA

Summary

- Time management between being a TA and PG student
- Good preparation before class
- Good relationship with students (charming, friendly, out-going)
- Fair in marking and grading
- Good communication/interpersonal skills
- Teamwork skills
Characteristics of a bad TA

Summary

- Start late, end late
Being a TA  Roles and responsibilities
Good vs Bad TAs

Common Problems of TAs
Common problems of TA

Insufficient preparation
Nervous
Too fast
Too much information
Boring
Nervousness

In particular the first lesson…
It’s just normal. You will get over.
Some tips for the 1st day

- Check out the place before the 1st lesson
- Arrive earlier
- Chat with the students who arrive early
- Clean up the white board (every time)
- Write down your name and course name on the board
- Explain the assessment and the course policy clearly
- DON’T distribute the syllabus and dismiss the class
1. Course content, administration and policy
   (read the course outline)

2. Do the pre-lab properly AND attend related lectures

3. Read supplementary reading
Insufficient Preparation
I don’t have enough time...
Time Management Workshop

TA 124
Balancing Time between TA Duties and Research

By Dr Lucia Yeung
Common problems of TA

- Insufficient preparation
- Nervous
- Too fast
- Too much information
- Boring
Too Fast

Presentation Skills

Too much information

http://www.delivery.superstock.com/WI/223/1538/PreviewComp/SuperStock_1538R-49866.jpg
Speak slower

Use powerpoint / Notes

Ask students if they have any questions

TA113 Effective Presentation Skills

This is a 1.5-hour workshop mandatory for ALL new TAs to attend. It aims to (1) introduce TAs strategies for effective presentation, and (2) conduct group activities and case studies to consolidate what TAs have just learnt and to let them review their own presentations. After the workshop, TAs will learn how to prepare, construct and deliver successful presentations during their teaching.

TA 131 Advanced PowerPoint Presentation
7 ±2 rule

Selection
- Primary focus
- Things that students don’t understand the most

Coherent
Common problems of TA

- Insufficient preparation
- Nervous
- Too fast
- Too much information
- Boring
Too Boring

http://images-0.redbubble.net/image/i/251867-7-baby-yawning.jpg
Question

Why would you feel bored in a class?
Too Boring...

- Too difficult/ Too simple
- Lack of motivation
- Disengagement
  - e.g. Unfairness, bias
  - e.g. Presentation
Scaffolding

- Built/ created by students themselves
- New knowledge is built upon prior knowledge
Teach at the right level
Scaffolding

- Assess the **current level** of your students (e.g. by asking questions)
- Decide the **next level** of appropriate instruction
- Assess if students have moved to the next level
EXAMPLE:

- **Current Level:** 2 digit addition
  - $25 + 81 = ?$
- **Next Level:** ??
- **How to assess?**
Too Boring...

- Too difficult/ Too simple
- Lack of motivation
- Disengagement
  - e.g. Unfairness, bias
  - e.g. Presentation

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Many students just focus on personal interests of academic tasks. If they are not interested, then they are not motivated.
Problem with VALUE

“‘I’m not interested in this…’”

“I study Chemistry, I don’t see any value of this major in my future career...so I’m not motivated to learn all these equations...”

**Question**: What is the value of studying for a major that is NOT related to students’ future work?
The Role of Task Value Beliefs

- **Intrinsic Value** - Enjoyment

- **Attainment Value** – Importance of doing well on a task
e.g. student and self-identity

- **Utility Value** – Usefulness of tasks for future goals.
e.g. organic chemistry and doctor

Too Boring...

- Too difficult/ Too simple
- Lack of motivation
- Disengagement
  - e.g. Unfairness, bias
  - e.g. Presentation
Common problems of TA

Insufficient preparation
Nervous
Too fast
Too much information
Boring
Summary

- Being a TA Roles and responsibilities
  Good vs Bad TAs

- Common Problems of TAs and ways to handle them

- Teaching resources
Any Questions?
Available Teaching Resources
GOOD LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

At the start of the semester, you may wish to highlight to your students your expectation for academic integrity and good classroom behavior. To support you on this, we have produced a short PPT presentation (http://www.ust.hk/vpaao/conduct/good_learning_experience.pps) for your reference. Feel free to adopt this for your use, or to edit this resource as you wish.

CONDUCT IN THE CLASS ROOM

Behaviors that will facilitate/disrupt learning in the classroom http://www.ust.hk/vpaao/conduct/classroom_conduct.ppt
Maintaining a good learning atmosphere is more difficult for large classes, and hope some of these ideas on teaching large classes and fostering active learning are useful to you.

A GUIDE TO GOOD REFERENCING SKILLS
(to avoid plagiarism)

http://lcms01.ust.hk/sbm/wsc/referencing/introduction/index.html

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

http://www.ust.hk/vpaao/integrity

UST places a strong emphasis on academic integrity and has introduced regulations to back this up. To help students and staff to understand the policy, a website has been established that explains the regulations, provides assistance for students in avoiding plagiarism, and sets out the role of faculty and staff when a case of cheating or plagiarism comes to their attention.
“Do to others as you would have them do to you.”

Luke 6:31
The End

Thank You