

TA Panel Session
2006 Annual TA Conference
University of Delaware

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TA Experiences

- Food Engineering FOSC 445
(Spring 05/06)
 - ❖ Set up teaching labs
 - ❖ Mini-tutorials/ one-to-one help sessions

TA Experiences

- Food For Thought FOSC 102 (Fall 05)
 - ❖ Encouraging in-class participation
 - ❖ Recording attendance
 - ❖ Presentations (certain topics)
 - ❖ Preparing exam questions
 - ❖ Grading

Q. 1: What are the characteristics and expectations of undergraduates (UG) and how to deal with them?

1. Grade-focused

- a legacy of their high school education
- UG often confront the TA when dissatisfied with their grades

1. For each assignment, prepare a tailored rubric

- Detailed rubric
- Describes expectations of TAs
- Points allotment
- Ensures consistency during grading

Q. 1: What are the characteristics and expectations of undergraduates (UG) and how to deal with them?

2. Discipline

- not all students equally disciplined
- Some students show irregular attendance or lack of punctuality
- Some students turn in coursework late

2. Syllabus is important

- describes particular policies relating to attendance and punctuality
- schedule lists deadlines for coursework
- describes penalties for late coursework etc.

Q. 1: What are the characteristics and expectations of undergraduates (UG) and how to deal with them?

3. UG are people after all

- may have social/personal/academic/financial problems
- Impact on their studies

3.

- Be open listeners
- Direct them to appropriate people/sources on campus
- Mention issues with professor

Q. 2 How to get students involved in the class?

- Use other teaching approaches in addition to lecture-formats
 - Brain storming sessions accompanied by follow-ups such as written summaries, lab reports etc.
 - Student oral presentations
 - Student poster presentations
 - Questioning (all levels of the Bloom's taxonomy)

Q. 2 How to get students involved in the lab?

- Encourage them to read their lab schedule beforehand
- TA should be familiar with lab exercise too
- Labs accompanied by report/oral/poster presentations etc.

Q. 3 How do TAs balance their multiple roles?

- Order of priority:
TA > Classes > Research
- Ensure TA 20 hour/week requirement is fulfilled
- Classes/ Exams and then time left goes into Research
- Prioritize coursework and research work according to deadlines

Q. 3 How do TAs balance their multiple roles?

- TAs for a class can work together rather than independently
- Make intelligent and informed decisions even it means procrastinating occasionally
- Check emails regularly and respond quickly to UG who have questions regarding coursework etc.

Summary

- TA-ing is fun but be prepared
- TAs do not have to know everything, they can direct students to reliable sources of information
- TA-ing involves time management and knowing your priorities