Teaching Workshop for Quantitative Disciplines
(Math, Stat, Public Health/Biostat)
Part II

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UC Berkeley, Teaching & Resource Center
Index card follow up

- Some questions raised in the index cards
What’s the plan?

• Part I
  - Strategies to deal with fears and worries
  - Preparation before the semester starts
  - First day of class
  - Combination of slides, discussion, group activities

• Part II
  - Evaluating teaching
  - Time management
  - Strategies for effective teaching
  - Practice scenarios
Why are evaluations important?

- They are extremely helpful to improve our teaching
- Formal evaluations may be used to evaluate your teaching (for awards, etc.)
- They become part of your teaching portfolio
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There are different types of evaluations with different functions

- Evaluations that reflect students’ judgement:
  - End of semester evaluations
  - Mid or early semester evaluations
  - Electronic surveys (e.g. survey monkey)
  - Informal conversations with students or ‘suggestion box’

- Measures of outcome
  - Ask a multiple-choice question about the concept you just explained
  - Scores on a test/quiz

- Feedback from peers who observe you
  - Consider the possibility of being videotaped
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General strategies for evaluations

- Decide what aspects of your teaching you want to evaluate. Ask for specific comments (e.g. about the pace, the level of difficulty, etc.)
- Choose the appropriate timing for evaluations
- Encourage students to provide meaningful feedback
- Take the feedback from the students seriously
- What do you think?
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Time management strategies

- Being a GSI is a great experience, but it may become a ”black hole” of your time
- You want to be a great GSI, but you also have to prepare for your qualifying exams, write a dissertation, spend time with your friends and families, etc.
- Remember that there is a union’s agreement with UC Berkeley which states how many hours you are supposed to work per week on average
- Some weeks may be more intense than others. Talk about your schedule with the professor.
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Time management tips

- Ask previous GSIs for teaching materials
- Share work preparation with other GSIs
- Use bspace forums, announcement, resources, chats, etc.
- For a large class, create a common e-mail account
- Keep track of where your time goes
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Suggestions for effective teaching

- Create a sense of community
  - Learn students’ names
  - Show your confidence in them
  - Acknowledge students’ ideas and compliment them
  - Encourage students’ participation

- Use the chalkboard effectively
  - Think of how to use the different sections of the board
  - With a sliding three-layer chalkboard, you can choose to have some key concepts on the panel that will stay in sight
  - Practice: observe what you have written at the end of the section
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More suggestions...

- Teach to multiple learning styles
  - Diversify the presentation of contents
  - Show different ways to solve a problem
  - Do practical demonstrations

- Give a roadmap

- Be aware of body language and use of tones
  - Standing in front of the classroom denotes lecturing
  - Leaning against a desk while talking encourages discussion
  - Use your hands to point to elements written on the board

- Be enthusiastic and spark students’ curiosity
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Exercise

- Please write down 2 or more alternative approaches to teach a concept in a quantitative discipline. Please write them down in a language that is not English or your mother tongue. Alternatively, write them in English using your off-hand.
Scenario 1

- A student consistently asks you for the answers to the homework. How do you respond?
- How can you discuss an assignment in section without giving away the answer?
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- How can you discuss an assignment in section without giving away the answer?
Scenario 2

- Students complain about the lecturer. How do you respond?
Scenario 3

- A group of students in your class do not have sufficient background knowledge to understand the lecture material. How can you help them?
Scenario 4

- A student relies heavily on your help for every assignment. How do you protect your time and encourage this student’s independence?
Questions, concerns...
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