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

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Fall 2009 Teaching Conference for new GSIs 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
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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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- 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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- 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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- Share work preparation with other GSIs
- Use bspace forums, announcement, resources, chats, etc.
- For a large class, create a common e-mail account
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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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- Teach to multiple learning styles
- Give a roadmap
- Be aware of body language and use of tones
- Be enthusiastic and spark students' curiosity

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
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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.

- A student consistently asks you for the answers to the homework. How do you respond?
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• Students complain about the lecturer. How do you respond?

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

A student relies heavily on your help for every assignment.
 How do you protect your time and encourage this student's independence?

Questions, concerns...

Evaluations