

Chemical Engineering 495A

Teaching Assistant Training Seminar

Week 3

Course Philosophy:

Most graduate student will become a TA as part of the department's requirement. But, HOW TO BECOME A GREAT TA? Ask yourself of what you would expect from your TA if you were the student in that class.

Scenarios:

1. You ask a question in class and a student answers it. His answer is obviously incorrect.
2. You are presenting some information about the subject matter of the class. One of the students interrupts and says that you are wrong (or that he disagrees with what you have said) and then proceeds to tell you the “right” information.
3. During class a student asks you a question about the subject matter of the class but you do not know the answer.
4. In your office hours one afternoon, a student comes in and says “What should I do I am failing the class? I have been studying but I just don’t get it. I am a senior and I need to pass this class or I won’t graduate. Can you help me?”
5. A student visits you during office hours after you have given back tests, which you have graded. The student tells you: “I answered this almost exactly the way my friend did, but she got more points for it than I did. I think I deserve a higher grade.”
6. Several of your students have been approaching you asking if you will hold extra office hours. Others have been asking if they can make individual appointments with you because they can’t make it to your office hours. And right before the exam, they are asking if you are going to hold a review session. How do you handle this?
7. You have set office hours 2 times a week, 2 hours each, in the syllabus. Some students still come to your office (very frequent) and ask questions outside the office hours.
8. While helping a student in office hours, they ask you if they can talk to you about something personal. They didn’t do very well on the last exam and it is because their boyfriend or girlfriend just broke up with them after four years. The student does not know what to do; they can’t sleep or concentrate on anything. They mention that there isn’t really anything to live for now.