

UTA Program Reflection Report

This was my first semester as an undergraduate teaching assistant in the UTA program and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as a participant in this program. This semester I worked with Dr. Nicole Fider as a UTA for her course MATH 223: Vector Calculus. Vector Calculus is one of the best courses I have taken at the University of Arizona, and I wanted to help other students tackle this difficult course. I am thankful to the UTA program for providing me with this opportunity.

I was very nervous about my responsibilities at the beginning of the semester as I had never been a teaching assistant before. However, Dr. Fider was very generous and gave me a lot of flexibility in deciding what I wanted to do and how I wanted to engage with the course. My responsibilities included monitoring the course Microsoft Teams channel and the Miro board to answer student questions, occasionally providing supplementary learning material to the course students, and tutoring underclassmen in the math department's virtual calculus tutoring room. My work as a teaching assistant has helped me understand the difference between mastering a concept yourself and explaining it to someone else. It gave me an insight into how the teaching side of a course works. It also gave me an opportunity to revise my vector calculus concepts and gain a deeper understanding of the subject. I enjoyed interacting with students as part of this program. The UTA program has helped me develop my communication and presentation skills. I can certainly say that the UTA program, to some extent, has helped me overcome my fear of public speaking and has definitely made me a better tutor.

This report would be incomplete without the mention of the UTA seminar. In my opinion, this seminar is one of the best features of this program. We UTAs had the opportunity to interact with scholars from different walks of life during the seminar and that certainly added to our knowledge base. The seminar also helped in developing teaching skills as well as reinforcing some concepts from vector calculus (the Vector Calculus Bootcamp!)

I would like to express my thanks to Dr. Christina Duron and Dr. John Peca-Medlin for leading the UTA program this semester and making this experience meaningful, especially to Dr. Duron since I pestered her at the beginning of the semester, but she was always very understanding and kind. I would recommend every math and SDS major who is interested in

teaching to apply to this program as this program not only hones your teaching skills but also helps you prepare for life beyond graduation.