

UTA Reflection

My experience with the UTA program has, fortunately, been a great one! Near the end of last semester, I decided that I wanted to become a teacher in mathematics, but it was too late to change my math major to the education emphasis. I was looking around at substitutes when another TA from that semester, Ashley Garber, told me about this program. It seemed like a very good chance to give teaching math a shot in a real environment, but without massive consequences. As it turned out, it was! I had a blast helping out with teaching Linear Algebra, MATH 413. My mentor, Darlayne Addabbo, was extremely helpful with being available for my questions and helping me set rubrics.

My duties as a TA were to set up rubrics for homework and grade it, hold an office hour every week, tutor two hours per week in online tutoring rooms for calculus, and finally, to set up review sessions for the exams during the semester. This certainly seems like a lot of duties, but, my mentor helped me greatly with getting me a feel for setting rubrics and jumped me into the flow of getting these things done in a routine manner. Dr. Addabbo helped me understand that the main goal of 413 is to learn to be convincing and confident in mathematical writing. Yes, you learn some great things along the way about finite spaces, but being able to present information and prove the results of the theorems is another large part of the class. It let me view the writing of proofs as more of an art form instead of just a rigorous process. Any art form takes lots of practice and work to be beautiful after all.

The most difficult part of the experience for me was setting up review sessions for the course. I did not know exactly what would be on the exams, and learning to

summarize the important parts of the class into a set of problems from the book that the class could do was difficult. With the assistance of my mentor though, I was able to create meaningful review sessions that went great!

Thanks so much to the UTA program for giving me this opportunity. Being able to dip my toes into teaching has only solidified my desire to teach mathematics!