

## Spring 2021 Math UTA Reflection

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This semester has been the culmination of many things for me: my last full semester as an undergraduate, hopefully the last full semester of the pandemic, and my last semester as a math UTA. The classes that I TA'd for over the past year and a half followed a natural progression from Math 313, introductory linear algebra, to Math 323, proof techniques and mathematical writing, to Math 413, linear algebra. This semester, my mentor was Dr. Leonid Kunyansky, and my duties involved holding one office hour a week, grading homework for two to three hours a week, attending the weekly UTA seminar, and helping out the math department with two hours of calculus tutoring a week.

One of the things that surprised me the most was how much I forgot from when I took the class. I did take it over summer, which probably contributed to not remembering so much, but at times I felt like I was learning the material right along with the rest of the class. This challenged me to always be on top of the material and learn it as well as I could so that I would be able to help the students as much as I could in office hours. I had a few regular comers to office hours, which made me really happy, as helping students in my office hour was probably one of the best memories of this semester.

I always dreaded grading, but I'm grateful that I got the opportunity to grade so much, because I was able to move past the fear of being in a position to judge other students' work, and the fear of being too light or being too harsh. I really enjoyed the opportunity to give feedback to my students, and I think this was a perfect opportunity to learn for me how to grade well before I have to grade even bigger classes.

The UTA seminar was a part of my life for the past year. It'll be weird not logging on to Zoom at 5:30 on Tuesday to see Dr. Jones, Dr. Duron, and my fellow UTAs. I learned a lot from the UTA seminar, probably the most important thing being good presentation skills. One of the things I took away in that department was the importance of timing; one learning experience for me was trying to cram a really big topic (defining the rational numbers) into my 2-minute presentation last semester, and not even being able to finish despite going as fast as possible!

I also enjoyed the calculus tutoring. I had a few regular comers that I really enjoyed working with, and it definitely kept my calculus skills sharper than they would've been otherwise; I certainly wouldn't remember anything from the calculus sequence if it weren't for tutoring!

Overall, my experience with the UTA program has been indispensable in making me a better student, a better tutor, and preparing me to be a good graduate TA and eventually professor, hopefully. It has helped me not only in mathematics pedagogy, but also in learning and retaining mathematics myself by helping others learn it. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who has interest in mathematics!