

## UTA Reflection Paper

This semester was my first experience with the Mathematics UTA program, and I thoroughly enjoyed my time with it. There are many different facets to the UTA experience, and I was impressed by all the different ways that it motivated me and developed me. Not just as a mathematical student, but overall as a student, professional, and as an individual. That's what sets apart this UTA program from other opportunities, is the holistic approach it takes to being a teaching assistant, emphasizing total growth rather than simply being an extra grader.

The first way the UTA was able to develop me was obviously in the field of mathematics. Being able to teach mathematics gives one a deeper understanding of it, because you have to be able to thoroughly explain each step in the process when solving a problem. I also learned during the weekly seminars how to better communicate mathematically in writing. These are valuable skills that will serve me well whenever I am faced with math problems requiring proofs, or need to convince a team of peers how I reached a mathematical conclusion, just to name a few examples.

Beyond just a math student however, the UTA program also developed me professionally as well. Through the weekly seminars we were introduced to some valuable concepts and skills that will set me apart from other competitors in the job market. For example, we had a very enlightening week where we had a crash course into LaTeX, a really handy software for creating professional documents. This is a really neat skill to be able to put on my resume now that I have experience with it. Furthermore, communicating with your mentor all semester really gives you a good feel of what it's like to collaborate with other colleagues in a professional setting. I was very grateful for the time the program took to expand on non-mathematical content like this.

Finally, and perhaps most valuably, the program was able to encourage growth in me as an individual. By being able to interact and meet students, I built new relationships and friendships that I would not have had without the program. You really learn how to better interact with others outside of your normal circle of friends. In fact, one of the most impactful weeks of the seminar series was the week where we learned about implicit biases, and how to address them in a healthy way. This is all a testament to how the program cares about you, the individual, more than just you, the student.

These are all just a couple examples of why I enjoyed the program so much. It is a clear indicator of how there are some awesome people running the program that care a lot about the welfare of students! This experience is more than just a bullet point on a resume, it will continue to have impacts on my development down the road as well. If anyone is on the fence about doing the UTA program, I would say absolutely go for it!