

Tyler Dille UTA Experience

In the fall semester of 2017, I was a UTA for Math 313 with instructor Jeremy Booher. I worked about seven hours each week. For two of those hours, I was a tutor for vector calculus in the MTL tutoring room. For another two hours I held office hours in MTH-220. The rest of the hours were sometimes spent grading papers, preparing lectures, preparing review sessions, or writing solutions to study guides.

Tutoring for vector calculus each week was fun and kept my calculus skills sharp, but was at times frustrating as well. It was fun to get a variety of interesting problems each week, and it was always rewarding when you helped a student out. Many students were very thankful for the help as well and it was nice to receive the positive feedback. The only downfall about tutoring was the fact that it had been over two years since I took vector calculus, so there were some days where I could solve very few of the students questions which was frustrating. Overall however, the tutoring was a very positive experience and taught me how to address the many conceptual challenges that students had.

My favorite part of the UTA program was giving lectures in class and holding review sessions. I was very lucky to have a mentor who let me give so many lectures in class. It was fun to come up with a lesson plan at home and practice the lecture in front of the professor to get some final critiques before presenting it to the class. And it was very exciting to see how the class reacted to you. It was an interesting challenge to try and pace your lecture based on the response of the class, but still get through all the material. It gave me a really good idea of what

it's like to be an actual math instructor. Review sessions were sometimes even more fun, because you got to run the show for an entire hour.

Another thing I did regularly for the UTA program was grading quizzes and homework. This was a time consuming task, but it was a useful tool to see how the class was doing with the material. If they were struggling a lot with a particular concept or computation in the latest quiz, I tried to focus on that in more detail during my next lecture or review session. Grading is about as fun as it sounds... it's not, but I appreciated the opportunity to learn all the different tasks of a math instructor.

The last thing I did weekly, was hold two office hours. The entire year, only two people showed up to my office hours, so I took the initiative to tutor someone in Math 454 during this time. This was a very relaxed part of the job, and it was a nice change of pace from the vector calculus tutoring and grading.

My experience in the UTA program has been extremely positive and rewarding. I feel like I now have a good idea of what it's like to be a math instructor, and I got to have some very unique experiences as an undergraduate. I would definitely recommend this program to other undergrads who are considering teaching math. It's fun and challenging, and will teach you a lot.