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Course: Math 129

The opportunity of being an undergraduate teaching assistant is something I greatly appreciate having not passed up. Being on the other side of the desk has given me a lot of perspective as both a teacher and especially as a student. Explaining material and concepts to students has really helped me to understand how I think about math in general, and how I can best learn and study in my own classes. I've also gained some useful skills in approaching math problems from helping so many students; I used to approach math by doing large numbers of problems and memorizing certain facts, but this semester has led me to grow into a more logical and methodical problem solver. Since student's problems are not something you can predict, the ability to do problems on the fly is important. I feel that being a UTA has really helped me grow in the sense that my problem-solving abilities have become to be based more on iron logic than on memorization.

But this is perhaps not the most notable aspect of being a UTA. My confidence in my ability to solve problems has grown substantially, and I have gotten to meet some fun and interesting people in the math department. One of my favorite parts of the program is the weekly meetings in which the art of how to approach helping a student and the best way in which to present yourself in a classroom was often the topic. It was very interesting for me to observe how the tone of your voice, your body language, and the mathematical language you use on the board all factor into giving a good presentation. Getting to know some of the faculty and graduate students is also a great perk that would be quite difficult to do otherwise. The UTA program is a wonderful one, and I think it is one especially beneficial for math majors. I hope everyone has as great of a time as I did!