

Teaching in Recitations

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Center for the
Enhancement of
Teaching and
Learning

Responsibilities and Strategies for Recitation TAs



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Overview: The Recitation TA



- Recitations- small “subsections” of large lecture courses
- Recitation class sizes range from 15-35 students
- TA responsibilities in the classroom often include:
 - ❑ Work homework problems
 - ❑ Review material covered in class
 - ❑ Answering student questions
 - ❑ Prepare students for exams
 - ❑ Administer exams or quizzes
- TAs may have administrative duties for the course



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Preparing for Recitation: Know Your Responsibilities



The most frequent complaint by TAs is that they did not have clarification from their supervising faculty member about what their responsibilities included!

→ “Checklist for TAs and Faculty or Instructors who Supervise TAs”

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Preparing for Recitation: Know Your Responsibilities



- ❑ Meeting with the Instructor and/or other TAs
- ❑ Attending the associated course lecture
- ❑ Preparing and collecting assignments
- ❑ Proctoring quizzes, tests
- ❑ Holding office hours
- ❑ Grading and evaluating students' work



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Preparing for Recitation: Know Policies and Procedures



- ❑ Where do I obtain course materials?
- ❑ Should I prepare a syllabus for my recitation?
- ❑ What are the course grading policies? Late work? Cheating?
- ❑ How do I handle uncooperative students?
- ❑ What is the policy on collaboration/group work?
- ❑ Where do I refer students who need academic or personal assistance?



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Preparing for Recitation: Know the Content



- Have a clear expectation of what the students should already know
- Have clear goals about what points they should learn by the end
- Present material in more than one way
- Have a clear lesson plan, know the timing (do assignments or give lecture ahead of time)
- Come up with a plan to assess your success



During Recitation: Getting Started

- Briefly review previous material you covered
- Make connections to current lecture material
- Give a brief outline of what you plan to cover that day



During Recitation: Effective Teaching

- Explain concepts clearly and concisely
- Use questioning effectively
- Incorporate “real world” examples where possible
- Avoid lecturing- Teach actively and to multiple learning styles
- Think about classroom management issues



During Recitation: Difficult Situations to Consider

- Students' backgrounds vary or are weak
- Unprepared students
- Running out of time
- Unmotivated or disinterested students
- Lack of participation/lack of questions
- Explaining complex problems



During Recitation: Wrapping Up

- Assess understanding
 - One-minute papers
 - Muddiest point (What was the muddiest point in ____?)
 - Short review quiz
- Review content
 - Give additional problems to work as examples
 - Provide pointers or strategies for studying
- Connect to the next lecture



After Recitation

- Office hours and Communicating with Students
- Grading and Administrative Duties
- FERPA, Academic Integrity, Grading
- Know where to go for assistance
 - The course instructor
 - Other TAs for the course (or prior TAs)
 - Campus Resources
 - Teaching at Georgia Tech Handbook

