

## Ryan Scolnik

**Sponsor:** Bruce MacMillan

**Course:** Math 113

Without a doubt, I have had many beneficial experiences at the University of Arizona. One of the most valuable of these experiences was being the undergraduate teaching assistant for Math 113, Elements of Calculus. I applied for this position in order to get a behind the scenes look of the job of a professor and to have a good experience before applying to graduate school.

Working with Bruce MacMillan in Elements of Calculus was absolutely amazing. Mr. MacMillan was one of the best professors in and out of the classroom. In the classroom he had a very structured and effective teaching method. From this I learned how much time was put in to setting up lectures and ways to be effective while teaching to over 150 students. Outside the classroom, Mr. MacMillan was always open to help and support both his students and myself. He really showed how much he cared about his job and students.

As a TA, my main responsibilities were to hold office hours each week, attend class and grade exams. Office hours were a great experience for me. Although there were different faces in my office hours each week, I had regular students who came every week and I was able to watch them grow and excel as students as the semester progressed. This was very rewarding as I felt as I had helped people understand and learn. As for grading the exams, the whole week of an exam was always interesting. Before the exams, the amount of versions of the test that needed to be proofread and taken to ensure correct answers was always a mystery. After the exams, I was made aware of all sorts of strange exam situations. If I ever become a teacher, this job definitely prepared me for exam time.

As December came to an end, it was sad to see the end of an awesome job and experience. I am very happy I was allowed this opportunity and would recommend it to anyone interested in teaching, graduate school, or just math in general. The experiences, connections, and friendships I made during my assistantship were priceless.