

## Ryan Kennelly

**Sponsor:** Bruce Macmillan

**Course:** Math 113

This past semester I was once again chosen to be an undergraduate teaching assistant for Math 113 - Applications of Calculus, working under Bruce MacMillan. This course is different than some of the UTA courses because it isn't a course for math majors; thus many students did not have a niche for mathematics, and sometimes motivation was hard to come across. This is a course meant for pharmacy majors, psychology majors and any other students needing to fulfill a general mathematics class. Consequently many of them just wanted to get through the "pain" and never look back. Nevertheless, I thoroughly enjoyed working with these students.

At the beginning of the semester, there were not many at my office hours, unless it was right before a test or before an assignment was due. However, as the semester continued, more and more people started attending, and due to the success of the few who had always come, I had to extend my office hours/hold extra sessions just to give everyone the proper amount of attention. Now some may not like doing the extra work, but holding office hours were some of the highlights of my week. Through the semester I formed bonds with many of the students, and I'm sure that I will continue to be friends with them as our college careers progress. One thing I was somewhat surprised about is how much, as a mentor, I wanted my students to succeed. Sometimes I felt as though I was more excited or depressed than the actual student about his/her successes or failures.

All in all, this was a great experience, and I hope to be able to teach as a graduate student. Now if you find it irritating to explain the same concept over and over (one that you may think is trivial), and lack the patience to slowly and methodically help someone through a problem, then this is not a class you would want to TA for. I would recommend TAing for a higher-level mathematics course. But if you enjoy working with students from other departments, and find it interesting to see how differently orientated minds process the same concepts, then I would highly recommend this class. I would like to thank Emily Ronshausen, Erin R Miltzer, Bruce MacMillan, and Dylan Lesichow (my fellow TA for Math 113) for helping make this a fun and rewarding experience.