

Bennett Tolar

UTA Reflection Essay

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Participating in the UTA program this semester for the class of MATH323, which is an introduction to proofs and higher level mathematical writing, was an enriching and helpful experience in my mathematics education. Through this program I was able to guide students in one of the first rigorous courses of their careers, and assist in understanding the most important skill in all of math: logical thinking. My experience as a UTA has strengthened my own understanding in the subject of proofs and greatly aided me in both of my classes I took this semester, as both were entirely proof based.

As a UTA, I mostly held office hours, tutored in several math subjects other than proofs, and graded homework assigned to students. In particular, I enjoyed grading homework as the professor I TA'ed for gave me the freedom to make my own decisions on how homework was graded, i.e. how many points each assignment was out of, how to assign points to each problem, the criteria on which a problem was deemed successful, etc. This was very helpful as it gave me a glimpse as to how I were to assign grades to assignments if I were to go further into mathematics teaching.

My experience as a UTA has definitely improved my confidence in my abilities to write proofs, aid others understanding of complex logic chains, and help students with multifaceted problems that might seem far more difficult than they actually are. Being a UTA has

strengthened my communication skills tenfold as I've had to learn to articulate exactly what I'm thinking when writing a proof and not skip any steps in the process so that those watching me may learn. I would recommend this UTA program to any math student interested in strengthening their own grasp of the material taught, learning to communicate with other students, and anyone interested in the dynamics of working professionally with an educator, as an educator.