

UTA Reflections  
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The UTA program was a great opportunity to think more deeply about mathematics. Often while I'm taking a class, I don't absorb every piece of information or fully understand every part of the material and there's rarely enough time to go back and revisit it. Being able to TA for Data 363 not only gave me an opportunity to review what I'd learned while taking the class, but also to understand it more deeply through the lenses of other statistics and probability classes I was taking. Having that additional perspective allowed me to better think through and explain similar concepts to the students while TA'ing.

It was really interesting to see all of the other UTA's presentations at the end of the semester. While I tend to focus on a certain area of mathematics, there are so many other ways math can be applied that I don't normally think about. Having the opportunity to see how other people think about and use math was a very enlightening experience.

Being a UTA was a fantastic resume building opportunity. Prior to this experience, I didn't have very much work experience, and certainly not in anything academic. Having a job that's directly related to my field of study on my resume makes a huge difference to me. It was also a great opportunity to build a connection with a mentor, who's much better equipped to write recommendation letters for me in the future than a random professor who may not remember me out of 30 students. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 situation, there weren't a lot of opportunities to get to know the other TAs, but I imagine in more favorable circumstances it would be a wonderful chance to get to know and network with each other.

The UTA program really got thinking about how discussions of mathematics should be tailored towards their intended audience. This was something that I tried to keep in mind and apply when putting together presentations for some of my other classes this semester. Being able to explain mathematical concepts to people is definitely a skill worth developing especially as someone who wants to pursue a research career.

It could be a little bit daunting to try and teach other people about a subject that I'm not an expert in. There were definitely times when I didn't

immediately know the answer to people's questions. I had to get more comfortable with figuring things out on the fly and sometimes admitting that I didn't know the answer. Fortunately, my mentor was aware of these types of issues and was able to help prepare me and step in when I was out of my depth. The students also tended to be pretty understanding and even helped out sometimes when I wasn't sure what I was doing.

I would recommend the UTA program to students who are looking for an opportunity to think more deeply about math, gain experience with STEM communication, or build their resume. Participating in the UTA program takes time and effort that not everyone will be able to contribute, but it's also a unique opportunity that provides students skills and experiences that they can use in future academic and career endeavors, while also helping others and getting paid a little bit at the same time.