

UTA Reflection - John Partington

As a student pursuing a path into secondary math education, any teaching experience in which I can be involved is invaluable. There is a tricky transition that needs to be made when switching roles from student to teacher - one must engage with mathematics in a drastically different manner. Through the UTA program, I have been shown the differences in thought processes that create effective teaching methods, and I have been able to apply these in the math course for which I TA, Math 129. I think that seeing these methods in action has also helped me in my academic career as a student; sometimes it can be helpful to see the other side of the equation. From my experiences as a UTA, I now have a better understanding of what professors are looking for in assignment submissions, exams, etc., because I now have had to look for those things. Not only has the program helped me as a student, but also as an individual. Having to work at communication via Zoom throughout the semester has helped me to become much more comfortable with not only the interface, but also with communicating effectively in a virtual workspace. This has helped me to be a more valuable team member in group projects in other classes, as well as a more active participant in classes, now that I do not get anxious about using Zoom features. In this way, I have become a much more confident learner in virtual spaces - I have always been confident in the classroom, but have had to adjust to the new normal, as we all have. Thanks to this program, I have much more confidence in my abilities when engaging with students and professors alike over virtual platforms. Because of the tremendous impact this program has had on my college experience so far, I would absolutely recommend the UTA program to any undergraduate student who is interested.