

Juggling Manapua:

Being a Teacher and a Student at the Same Time

Orientation for International Teaching Assistants

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In groups of 4-5...

Write 2-5 things for each of these questions:

- What things are you most **looking forward to** about being a TA?
- What things about being a TA do you feel a bit of **anxiety** about?

Three major areas of concern:

- Dealing with a different academic **culture**
- Concerns about **language**
- Concerns related to **teaching**

Culture

- What is culture? (useful metaphors)
 - Roots vs. routes
 - The iceberg concept
 - Others?

Culture

- What is meant by “*acculturation into the academic community*”?
- Diversity and how it affects teaching, learning, and campus life?
- Getting advice and answers

Language

- Accent
- UH population - students & teachers

Language

- Good communication
 - Hints
 - Pronunciation
 - Rephrase
 - Visuals
 - Check understanding

Language

- Observe model teachers/ communicators
- Pay attention to students

Language

- And finally. . .
 - Be realistic - not too hard on yourself

Teaching

- If it's your first time to teach, or first time as a TA:
 - Nervousness
 - Being a TA, not a “professor”
 - Can I teach well?

Answer: Emphasize your strengths!

Teaching

- Good teaching is good teaching
 - Be explicit and clear
 - Develop a comfortable learning atmosphere
 - Be organized, prepare well
 - Visual support
 - Leave time at the end for questions
 - Try to understand who your students are, and their level of ability in your field

Teaching

- Good teaching is good teaching
 - Use a variety of ways of getting student feedback
 - Do a mid-semester evaluation (e.g., CTE)

Teaching

- “Getting around” on the job
 - Talk to other TAs
 - Talk to your advisor (or other professors)
 - Get prior semesters’ syllabi and materials
 - **Be kind to the department secretary!**

Teaching

One last piece of advice...

Set aside time for yourself