



to the 2019 BE TA Training
Workshop!

Overview for Training workshop

Thursday, August 29 in 56-614 [\[edit\]](#)

TIME	TOPIC	MATERIALS	SPEAKER(S)
9:00 - 9:15 am	Pick-up handouts / coffee and breakfast		
9:15 - 9:30 am	TAship in BE		Prof. Angie Belcher
9:30 - 10:00 am	Discussion: Training goals and the TA role	Slides BE TA Responsibilities	Dr. Noreen Lyell
10:00 - 10:45 am	Exercise: Reflect on learning and teaching	Handout	Small groups
10:45 - 11:00 am	Break		
11:00 - 12:00 pm	Discussion: BE REFS resources	Handout	
12:00 - 1:30 pm	Lunch / preparations for teaching practice	Practice problems and solutions Giving and receiving feedback	Group
1:30 - 4:00 pm	Exercise: Teaching practice and feedback	Group assignments	Small groups

Quality teaching is important

- Preparation
- Positive attitude
- Safe environment
- Empathy



Importance of the teaching experience

- Stretching your teaching muscles as a TA is an important part of your education
 - Instills better understanding of our discipline
 - Builds skills required for overall success
 - Oral and written presentation
 - Leadership
 - Teamwork
- Working with faculty other than your advisor broadens your network

Common TAs questions

- Who TAs BE classes?
 - Mostly 2nd year students in BE (Micro/CSB/etc.)
- How are assignments made?
 - Katharina and Paul with faculty input
 - Goal is best fit based on student interest and skills
- What is required?
 - Dependent on the class
 - Expectations to be established with faculty

TA roles in BE

- **UG lecture class TA**
 - Recitation, office hours, grading exams
- **G lecture class TA**
 - Office hours, often some grading
- **In some lecture classes**
 - Run review sessions, pre-take exams, write HWs/solutions, etc.
- **Laboratory class TA**
 - Pilot experiments, some grading, high contact hours
 - Safety is of utmost importance (moral, legal issues)
- **Course development**
 - On more *ad hoc* basis
- **Ultimately, class- and instructor-dependent**
 - Have [expectations-setting meeting](#) before classes begin

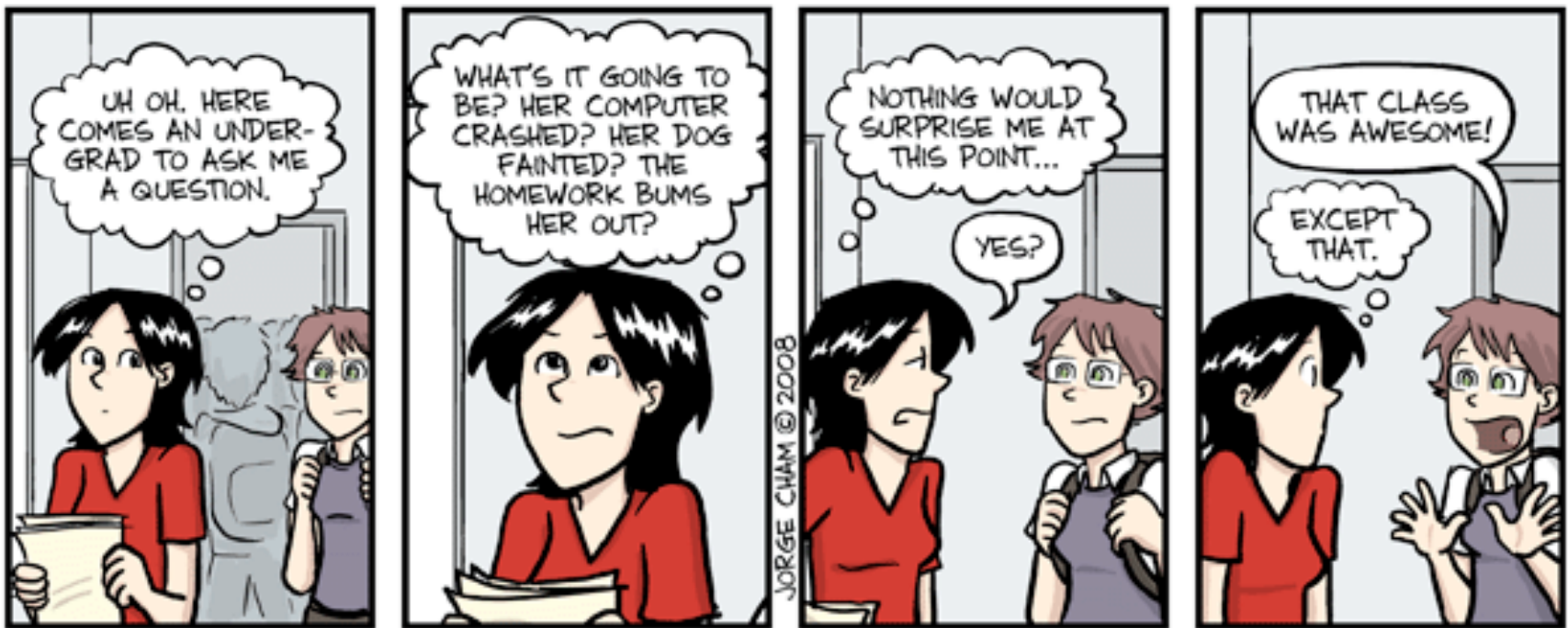
General duties for all TAs

- Know your students
 - Pictures are on Stellar/WebSIS
- Know the material
 - Attend lectures and meetings
 - Ask questions
- Administrative help within reason
 - Help maintain course web page
 - Track student grades
 - Make photocopies, clean blackboards, etc.
- Contribute in assigning final grades
 - You are the **student advocate!**

Specifics on TA role

- Summary of TA responsibilities
 - Average of 20 hr / wk
 - Prepare materials, complete and proctor exams, write problems and / or quizzes, grading, etc.
 - You must register for TAship to receive credit!
- Faculty responsibilities
 - Meet with TAs to establish expectations
- If issues arise
 - Contact BE REFS, BE Graduate Program Chair, Department Head

Resources for your TAsip



Tools for your success

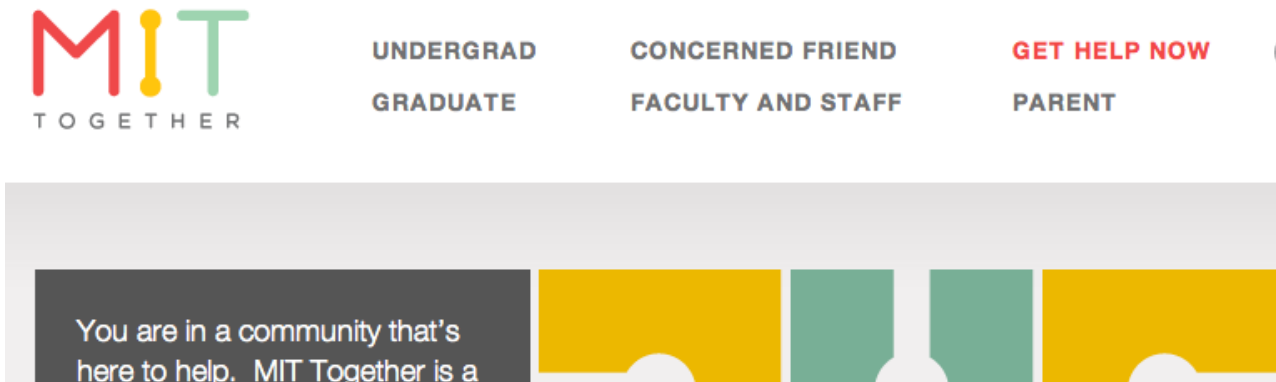
- **SoE TA Resources**
 - Summary tips and reading list
- **Teaching & Learning Laboratory**
 - Guidelines for recitations
- **TAs / Instructors from previous semesters**
 - Ask directly about past challenges and successes
 - Examine past course materials and evaluations
- **Current semester colleagues**
 - Get feedback from instructor, other TAs, or students
- **Course management resources**
 - Stellar (course management system)
 - MIT libraries: can set up class resource pages
 - OpenWetWare: alternative course management – wiki

Assistance for your students

- **S³ (student support services)**
 - One-stop advising / referral for UGs
- **MIT Mental Health and Counseling**
- **Academic advisors (ask faculty)**
- **Academic**
 - BE tutors
 - BE Communications Lab

Assistance for you

- **BE REFS**
- **ODGE advising**
 - Essentially S³ for G students
 - Office of the Dean for Graduate Education
- **If a serious conflict arises**
 - Department Head
 - MIT Ombudsman



Also, see the TA brochure



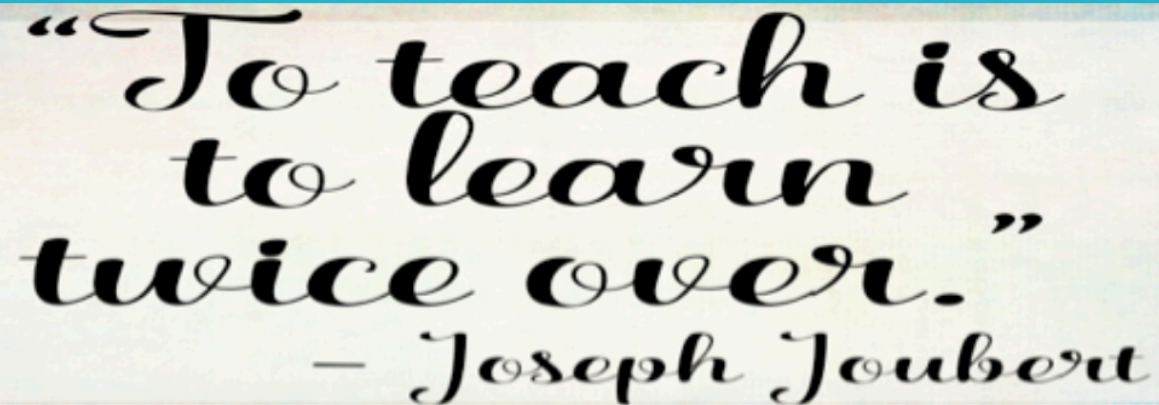
The image shows a graphic for a TA brochure. On the left, there is a vertical strip with a photograph of a person's arm and the word "ants" in purple. The main graphic features the text "TA@MIT" in a large, bold, purple font. To the right of this text is a vertical line with small circles at the top and bottom. To the right of the line, the following text is listed, each item underlined with a thin green line:

- rights
- responsibilities
- rewards
- resources

At the bottom right of the graphic, the following text is displayed:

Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (ODGE)
Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE)

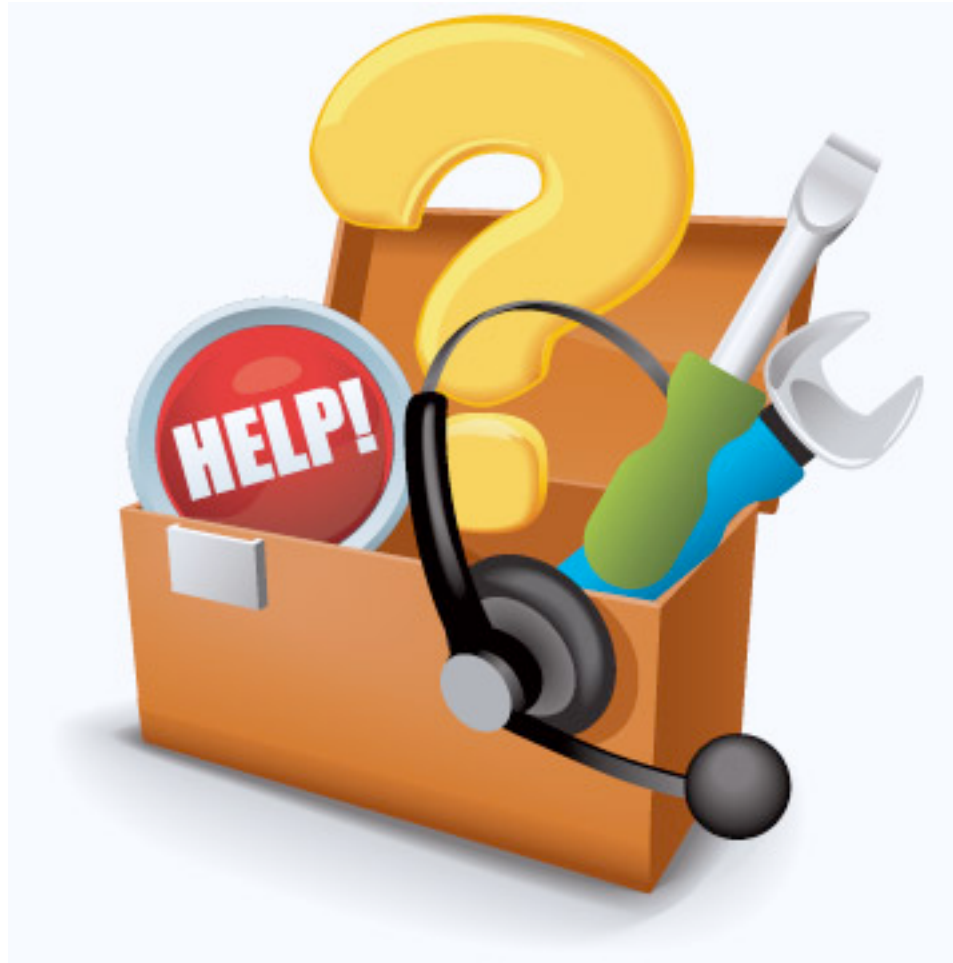
BE TA Training 2019 page!



*“To teach is
to learn
twice over.”
– Joseph Joubert*

[http://engineerbiology.org/wiki/BE_TA_Training_\(Su19\)](http://engineerbiology.org/wiki/BE_TA_Training_(Su19))

Resources for student issues



Student issues may lead to stress and effect performance / well-being

- **Health concerns**
 - Physical
 - Mental
 - Acute or chronic
- **Personal concerns**
 - Serious illness or death of family member or close friend
 - Traumatic events
- **Academic concerns**
 - Missed work due to health / family issues
 - Missed work due to being overextended and / or oversleeping
 - General struggle with class material
 - Academic dishonesty

More about academic dishonesty

- **What might happen?**
 - Unequivocal copying or cheating (exams, reports)
 - Ambiguous overstepping of resource or collaboration policy
- **Ambiguity is awful for everyone involved**
 - Want to believe the best of our students
 - Reluctant to damage their future prospects
 - Harder to evaluate person (intent, etc.) than actions
 - Likely result: inconsistent and unfair outcomes
- **So, what should you do... *before* anything happens?**
 - Encourage faculty to establish **clear and concise standards**
 - Convey standards both electronically and orally
 - Ask former TAs what to emphasize and of what to be mindful

If you suspect academic dishonesty

- What you should do?
 - Do not confront student by e-mail
 - Several paths, but the following is typical:
TA > Instructor > Department Head > DUE/DSL
> Triage > Committee on Discipline
 - Consider submitting a ‘letter on file’ to document repeated questionable practices
 - For more info, see *Policies and Procedures* <http://web.mit.edu/policies/10.2.html>
- Medical issues may come up when the student is confronted – advise student to seek help
 - Again involve instructor, academic advisor
 - <http://studentlife.mit.edu/citizenship/resources>
- MIT guidelines regarding appropriate citation
 - <http://libguides.mit.edu/content.php?pid=37801>

Be familiar with the rules

- **MIT Policies and Procedures**
 - <http://web.mit.edu/policies/>
- **MIT Chair of the Faculty Guidelines**
 - <http://web.mit.edu/faculty/teaching/termregs.pdf>
- **No *required* academic exercises 5-7 pm**
- **No *required* academic exercises Monday > 7 pm**
 - must offer comparable OH for optional review session
- **FERPA (privacy)**
 - <http://web.mit.edu/registrar/general/csip/> (see FAQ)

What to do after TA training

- Learn more, practice, and set personal goals
- Have conversations with former TAs
- Meet with your teaching team to discuss expectations
- If you enjoy teaching, consider MITES, SEED, STEM, etc.

And always feel free to reach out with
questions / comments / concerns

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