CS@UCSB
Teaching Assistant Orientation

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http://cs.ucsb.edu/~leadta
Who are we?

Lucas Bang (bang@cs)
• Second Year Ph.D. Student (Software Verification)
• Current Lead TA
• BS Math, BA and MS Computer Science at UNLV

Professor Tim Sherwood (sherwood@cs)
• Associate Professor, ArchLab
• Ph.D. from UCSD
Outline

- My role as the lead TA
- Teaching assistant roles / expectations
- Teaching assistants’ rights
- Your first discussion / lab section
My role as the Lead TA

- Prepare and review midterm TA evaluations
- Review end of quarter TA evaluations
- Be available for TA consultations
- Representative on CS Grad Affairs Committee
- Train new TA's in the department via CS501
My role as the Lead TA

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CS501

- 10 week **mandatory** seminar for TAs
- Meets at 5PM (and 6PM ?) on Wednesdays
- Covers a variety of topics closely following the UCSB TA Handbook
  
  http://oic.id.ucsb.edu/ta-handbook
Teaching Assistant Roles

• Discussion Section vs. Lab
• Other Responsibilities
Discussion sections

• 50 minute period lead by a single TA
• Topics
  • Additional lecture material
  • Current course project overview / discussion
• Used primarily in upper division courses
• Requires coordination with professor on what to cover
Labs

• 50 minute period lead by one or more TAs
• Students complete lab (usually with partners) in the allotted time
• TAs efficiently field students’ questions
• Used in lower division courses (<100 level)
• Requires coordination with professor on what the lab requirements are
So, what's the difference?

Discussion:
- 50 minutes of “lecture”
- You present material, answer questions or review lecture
- Group attention

Labs:
- 5-10 minutes of explanation
- You help students with a structured assignment
- More individual attention

Both require communication with instructor.
Office Hours

• Time periods in which you must be available to the students
• Typically 2-4 hours a week
• Be on time
• Don’t leave early
Other Possible TA Responsibilities

• Answering emails
• Attending lecture
• Holding review sessions
• Providing feedback to instructor
• Being available until grades are submitted
Teaching Contract

• Agreement between you and professor on your responsibilities
• Review to ensure you won’t be overworked
• Revise if necessary
• Make sure you remind your busy professor to go over and sign your contract!
Teaching Assistant Rights

• 50% TA Cannot be asked to work more than
  • 8 hours per day
  • 20 hours per week (on average)
  • 40 hours in any one week
  • 220 hours per quarter

• Time includes:
  • All TA responsibilities including attending lecture, preparation time, and TA training (CS 501)
TA Union – UAW Local 2865

• [www.uaw2865.org](http://www.uaw2865.org)
• Negotiates contract for wages and benefits
  • All TAs paid the same minimum across the university
  • GASHIP provides some vision and dental
• Fees
  • All TAs pay 0.89% fair share fee
  • Members pay 1.15% for dues
Your first day

• Preparation
• The first day tips
• Content
Preparation

• Find the room
• Does it have a projector?
• What keys do you need?
  - Room key? Media Key?
• Allot ~2 hours for preparation of material
The first discussion tips

• Be confident, you’re awesome
• Introduce yourself
• State your expectations
• Write outline on board / slide, if appropriate
• Make eye contact and engage students
Content

• Coordinate with professor on content
• Prepare notes in advance
• Outline objectives
  - for yourself
  - for the students
CS501 To do list

• Enroll in CS501
• Check website / email for Wednesday’s Assignment
  www.cs.ucsb.edu/~leadta
• Look for email reminders
• Be at Phelps 2510 next Wednesday
TA to do

- Physically meet with class instructor
- Establish a good communication pattern
- Schedule a weekly meeting
- Inform them up front of any time off you’ll need
- Go over the Teaching Assistant contract and ensure that the instructor signs it
- Prepare for your first discussion section / lab section
Incentives to be an awesome TA

- Personal satisfaction
- Student appreciation
- TA awards
- Lead TA position
- Department Evaluation – future TA selection
- It is your job, take pride in doing it well.
Questions?