



**Facilitating Laboratory Activities Series**  
**PART 2: Supporting Graduate Teaching Assistants in Lab Settings**

TAs for laboratory section can range in terms of their experience with teaching and/or lab facilitation. Therefore, it is important to develop coherent instructions for lab activities for TAs, and to outline clear expectations for their behavior while facilitating lab sections. Additionally, you can help your TAs develop a culture of support by encouraging collaboration between graduate instructors. Below are a few suggestions for how to support your TAs:

Strategies	Teaching Suggestions
Encourage TAs to prepare in advance for facilitating each lab activity	Encourage your TAs to familiarize themselves with the laboratory manuals, assignments, and materials in advance of facilitating a lab activity, and suggest that they create a plan beforehand. This can help ensure that the laboratory session runs smoothly, and that both the students and TAs feel comfortable with the procedures and expectations of the lab activity.
Foster collaboration between TAs from different sections and	Provide a space (such as a discussion forum or an email list) for TAs to share materials, suggestions, and problem-solving strategies with each other, especially between sections of the same class. For example, if a TA in an early section noticed students had trouble with a particular task, they could send out a group email to you and the other TAs, so that students in the next sections can be better supported in that portion of the task.
Encourage more experienced TAs to help mentor those with less experience	Work with your more experienced TAs (including those who have TAed that class before, and those who have more experience teaching in general) to help mentor new or less experienced graduate instructors. This can help limit the amount of stress and anxiety new TAs experience, and can help ensure that each lab section runs as smoothly as possible.
Remind TAs that you're available to help if needed	Make sure your TAs know that you are available to answer questions or provide support if needed.

Adapted from: Stanford Teaching Commons, "[Facilitating Labs](#)" & the "[TA's Guide to Effective Teaching at UC Davis](#)," 2017

**Additional Resources**

CEE provides a variety of teaching development resources on campus for graduate instructors:

- [CEE Workshops for Graduate Instructors](#)
- [Teaching Assistant Consultants](#)
- [Graduate Teaching Community](#)
- [TA's Guide to Effective Teaching at UC Davis](#)

In addition to the TA Guide, both the [Stanford Teaching Commons](#) and the [Center for Research on Learning and Teaching at the University of Michigan](#) have articles aimed at graduate instructors on facilitating a lab section that could be helpful for your TAs.

**Citation**

Center for Educational Effectiveness [CEE]. (2018). Facilitating Laboratory Activities Series. *Just-in-Time Teaching Resources*. Retrieved from <https://cee.ucdavis.edu/JITT>



## References

Center for Educational Effectiveness, UC Davis. (2018). *The TA's guide to effective teaching at UC Davis*. Retrieved from [https://cee.ucdavis.edu/docs/2018/TAGUIDE\\_2018.pdf](https://cee.ucdavis.edu/docs/2018/TAGUIDE_2018.pdf)

Stanford Teaching Commons. (n.d.) *Facilitating labs*. Retrieved from <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/grad-support/grad-teaching-development/facilitating-labs>