**Final Reflection**

My overall experience of being a UTA has been very inspiring. I remember my first time becoming a UTA last semester and I was nervous about the new experience and if I would be helpful to students. I was excited to be a UTA because I was seeking new experiences and skills in order to develop as a student and a leader. I think that immersing myself in the scholarship and practice that is different from my primary one allowed me to understand that all students learn differently so it’s important to use different teaching styles and activities to help all students. As a mentor, I was able to guide students in the right direction by offering advice, peer reviewing their work, and meeting with them in person to clarify any issues with their work or problems they were having. As a leader, I had to take initiative in the class that I was TA’ing for by creating lesson plans to teach to my class. This semester, Professor Moses allowed me to oversee the social media infographic project that I taught to my class, which I found beneficial to me practicing leadership skills. My experience as a UTA has informed my approach to future academic/professional endeavors because this experience has allowed me to come out of my comfort zone. I don’t believe that being an introvert is a bad thing, however, I believe it has hindered me from being able to reach my full potential. This experience has taught me to take initiative, be more assertive, and become a leader. Having this opportunity to learn and grow by speaking and teaching in front of the class has made me become more comfortable in my own skin. In terms of higher education, I believe my experience as a UTA has changed my perspective in believing that anyone can be a mentor or a teacher. Last semester I wouldn’t even have imagined of the person I have become today and I’ve found myself wanting to do more public speaking, mentoring, and attending more networking events.

This semester, I was most influenced by Bloom’s Taxonomy (the revised taxonomy (2001)). The action words remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create all represent the different types of knowledge used in cognitive processes. I used Bloom’s Taxonomy to have clear objectives (learning goals) between myself and my students. This semester, I wanted to match tasks with strategies to ensure that the objectives that I created in my lesson plans were aligning with the assignments I was distributing to my students. The second scholarship that influenced me this semester was Donald Murray’s “Teaching Writing as a Process, Not a Product.” I think many teachers should keep in mind that writing is in fact a process and not a product. The three stages of writing: prewriting, writing, and rewriting are essential because 9 times out of 10 a student is not going to have a finished piece of work on their first time writing a paper. For example, in Professor Moses class, students have the opportunity to do a first draft, second draft, peer review, and then a final submission. I find this helpful for students because it gives them a clear direction of what they should change or add so they can fix those errors before submitting their final submission. Also, as I mentioned in previous reflections with the lesson plans, they are a work in progress and a process as well for UTA’s not just for assignments that the students we TA for as well. The third scholarship that influenced me was the Standford Newsletter. This newsletter stood out to me because it mentioned some of the things that I took into consideration this semester to improve effective communication with my students in responding to their writing.

One of the things mentioned in the article was putting down the red pencil. I remember I use to have this problem where I would over-edit everything instead of focusing on the main points. Ever since I’ve became a UTA, I’ve learned that over-editing isn’t necessary and it can come off pretty frightening to students. Also, when meeting with my students this semester in person, I avoided using red pen when I made my corrections on their papers because it can be overwhelming to students. I know from personal experience, it makes me feel discouraged. Scheduling conferences was another useful strategy mentioned in the Standford Newsletter that I found helpful to my students as well. This semester, I had the opportunity to have conferences with many of my students in person. I found this more effective because I was also able to go over their papers with them, show them the exact errors I made, as well as hear any concerns they were having with the assignments. The last scholarship that influenced me this semester was Marianna Richardson’s “Social Media in the Classroom.” I found this to be influential, especially to this semester because I had my students do a social media infographic analysis project in which they had to display the social media presence of their audiences. I think social media is growing as the year’s progress, it’s very popular among college students, and an effective way for students as well as teachers to communicate with one another. I remember last semester, one of my fellow UTA’s mentioned how their professor used Facebook to communicate. Also, this semester when one of my students couldn’t meet with me in person, I decided to introduce her to Google Hangouts where she could still see and hear my voice. Even Google Docs has been a flexible tool to use for group projects because students are able to share the document with the entire group, make changes, and download the document as well.

Overall, I have enjoyed my two semesters being a UTA and honored to have met such great people along my journey. I have now gained the knowledge, skills, and the mindset to do anything I put my mind to. I will miss being a UTA and serving as a mentor to my students, but I know that I have left a lasting impression on my students, which was one of my goals at the beginning of the semester. I believe that all the goals/expectations I set for myself last semester and this semester, I have achieved and I couldn’t be grateful enough for this opportunity. I have to thank Lyra and Professor Moses for welcoming me with open arms and guiding and molding me into being the best UTA and mentor I could be for my students and allowing me to take on this leadership role. Some students say they could never teach or be able to take on such a huge responsibility, but I believe that are things are possible.