

Observation of your peer's teaching

Next week, attend a lab or discussion session of another first-year physics TA and record what you thought about the teaching and how it affects your own teaching. (Please talk to the TA before you go to observe them, and make sure it is OK.) The primary intent of this activity is to help you reflect on your own teaching practices by observing others teach, and what, if anything, you could do to improve your teaching. If you prefer, you can observe an experienced TA. As a suggestion, we include a list of TAs who are already informed about this assignment. **Please note that you still need to let the TA know beforehand that you are going to observe them.**

Assignment: Due December 8, 2006 (at seminar)

Write a summary of what you learned from the peer observation. You can use any format, but include your name, and the course number being observed (1101, 1201, 1301, etc.). The major questions to be considered for this assignment are:

- How are their teaching methods and yours similar or different?
- Which parts worked well? Did you learn something that you can incorporate into your teaching?
- Which parts did not work well and what would you do differently?

If you feel comfortable talking with your peer about the observation, feel free to share some of your thoughts with them. While doing this assignment you may be interested to think about the following aspects of teaching:

- How was the lab or discussion session started?
- If you observed a lab, were students given time to discuss their prediction/warm-up questions in their groups? If so, what did the TA do during this time? Did students put their group consensus on the board? Was this discussed as a class?
- What did students do during lab or discussion to make the lab/discussion more or less effective for their learning? Did they read the directions? Did they function as good groups, share tasks, discuss difficulties, or discuss results?
- How did the TA intervene (or not) with groups to make them function better?
- How did the class session end? Was there a discussion about the results or physics solution? Do you think students left with a sense of closure and understanding of the physics of the problem?
- Did the time for the discussion and/or lab meet the learning needs of the students?