

# What Your Graduate Students Want You to Know

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## Stages of TA Development

### Stage One: Senior Learners

(Nyquist & Wulff, 1998)

- Have no teaching experience
- Need to know supervisors' expectations and expectations for supervisors
- Need to understand the alignment between SLOs, assignments/activities, and assessments
- Need clarity on level of autonomy and discretion
- Need understanding of how performance is evaluated
- Need procedures for addressing student issues and/or complaints

### Stage Two: Colleagues-in-Training/Junior Colleagues

(Nyquist & Sprague, 1998)

- Have prior teaching experience
- Need to examine the ideas behind the course's creation and organization
- Need to consider different pedagogies and teaching strategies
- Need opportunities to experiment with different approaches to teaching and learning
- Need exposure to professional development opportunities
- Need to develop own teaching philosophy

Nyquist, J. D. & Sprague, J. (1998). Thinking developmentally about TAs. In M. Marincovich, J. Prostko, & F. Stout (Eds.), *The professional development of graduate teaching assistants* (pp. 61-88). Bolton, MA: Anker.

Nyquist, J. D. & Wulff, D. H. (1996) *Working effectively with graduate assistants*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

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\*Keep in mind that individual differences and the context for the assistantships may call for different approaches and considerations.

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## Navigating Communication

### From Students

- Position of authority
- Expertise gap
- Potential concerns of positionality
- Classroom management

### From Faculty Supervisors

- Simultaneous collegiality and interdependency
  - Experience gap
  - Shifting relationships
  - Varying expectations
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## Checklist

- Provide an orientation
  - Get acquainted
  - Develop a mentoring plan
  - Clarify goals and expectations from both parties (including communication, grading, policies, deadlines, etc.)
  - Meet at regular intervals
  - Observe and provide frequent feedback
  - Maintain a unified front publicly
  - "Pull back the curtain" on teaching and scholarship
  - Incorporate individual strengths
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