

Fuller's theory: instructors move through three stages of concerns:

1. Self (e.g., survival, self-adequacy, and acceptance),
2. Task (e.g., student performance and teacher duties), and
3. Impact (e.g., social and educational impact on the system).

Fuller theorized that teachers could not move to the next stage of concern without first solving concerns of the previous stage.

Our conversation: How can we best support our TAs within each stage and in facilitating their movement from one stage to the next (and to a 4th stage of professional life after being a TA)?

- ## TA Self: Survival... where's the chalk?
- TA orientation - intro to room, preproom, comp. access codes, how to print, lab keys
 - Course and room-specific intro (acid, eye wash)
 - Safety concerns
 - What students struggle with
 - Answer keys
 - Intro ~~to~~ mentor TAs as resources - encourage people to shadow an exp. TA (or at least contact)
 - Weekly mtg - what went well, what didn't
 - Day long training on what to wear, how to engage with students (or not! no dating), FERPA, privacy issues
 - Pair TAs - senior & junior w/ sen. training the person beneath
 - Center for Teaching & Learning workshops
 - How to introduce yourself to students
 - Mock up lesson - walk into room, give intro spiel; scenarios - older students, don't know the answer, attitude problem
 - Review assessments - consider a std. assessment (midterms, exams) or at least format
 - If culture is an issue @ the dept. level, encourage a diff. one of reg. weekly mtgs.
 - Enforce time that you're supposed to be working
 - Review how to grade - with examples, rubrics, specific pt. deductions for common errors
 - "It's OK to be wrong!" You are not a walking textbook.
 - Any common patterns w/ your specific population?
 - How to deal w/ problem students? (Strategies)
 - Who to go to w/ problems, issues? Strategies for diff. scenarios, who to go to if not for me
 - How to read course evals @ end of 1st semester; "I'm looking for patterns - not ind. people who have a pt. to prove."
 - Encourage mid-semester evals. (GIFT)
 - As fac., check in on how it's going regularly
 - Warn about the potential for gender, racial discrimination against you, other students

Fuller, F. F. (1969). Concerns of teachers: A developmental characterization. *American Educational Research Journal*, 6, 207-26.

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TA Task: Improving my teaching

- Information on professional development resources (eg. center for Teaching & Learning)
- Info on resources out there (SERL, Teach the Earth)
- Pull back the curtain! Have TAs observe and ask ?'s of why fac. member does what they do
- Encourage reflection on what they're doing, what works / doesn't work in the lab manual
- Treat feedback as valuable! The lab manual is not set in stone. Recognize past influence of TAs.
- Talk about the "whys" of teaching. Why is an activity there - or why was it removed?
- changes are made collaboratively while mentoring, guiding
- weekly meeting - issues w/ lab students? Then revise and acknowledge adjustments made.
- Encourage a TA peer network
- Treat TAs (esp. experienced TAs) as co-instructors "we co-teach this class."
- Re-assign to some course
- Put learning data in front of TAs and recognize who's had great success
- Buddy system - mentoring w/ successful TAs - or partnering for "ITA courses" like volc., paleo., petrology
- Discourage deficit mentality thinking
- offer 1-on-1 meetings of various appropriate lengths

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TA Impact: Improving my community (lab manual, other TAs)

- Getting co-ownership over a bigger teaching exp., like a guest lecture
- Insights into integrated course - lecture and lab
- Allowing subbing for a topic (vs. "here's the lecture")
- Pedagogical training - professional development
- Mentoring students from previous classes - UGs & grads. (like SGE mentor program)
- Get the (esp. senior) TAs insights from the syllabus on - what do you need on here?
- Eval setting together for the semester