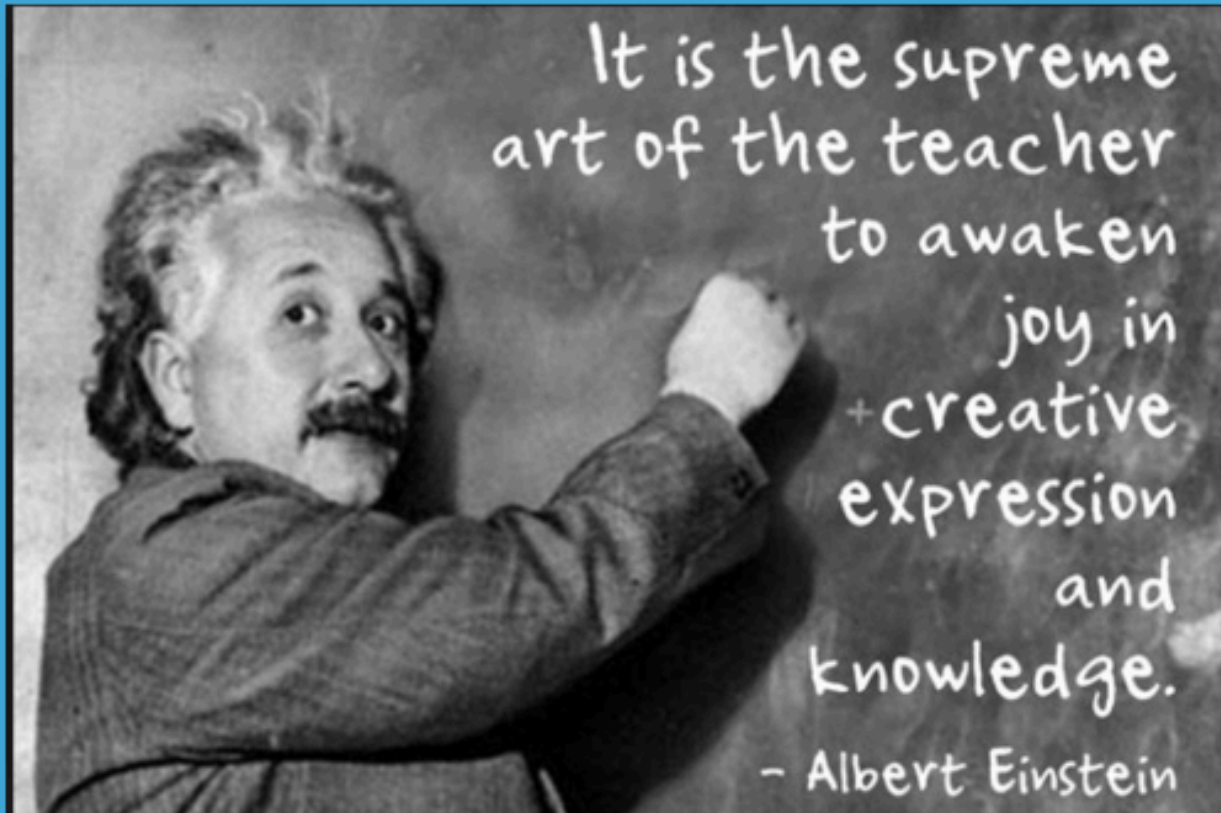


# Welcome to the 2015 BE TA Training Workshop!



# Overview of SoE TA Training

- Friday, Sept 4 from 9-12pm in 3-270
  - Complete online registration form by Sept 2
- Sessions
  - Interactive teaching techniques for TAs
  - Problems and pitfalls in classroom teaching
- BE TA Training workshop is not meant to replace SoE TA Training

# Quality teaching is important

- Teaching PPE
  - Preparation
  - Positive attitude
  - Empathy



# Importance of the teaching experience

- Stretching your teaching muscles as a TA is an important part of your education
  - Instills better understanding of our discipline
  - Builds skills required for overall success
    - Oral and written presentation
    - Leadership
    - Teamwork
- Working with faculty other than your advisor broadens your network

# Common TAs questions

- Who TAs BE classes?
  - Mostly 2<sup>nd</sup> year students in BE (Micro/CSB/etc.)
- How are assignments made?
  - Doug and Forest with faculty input
  - Goal is best fit based on student interest and skills
- What is required?
  - Dependent on the class
  - Expectations to be established with faculty

# TA roles in BE

- UG lecture class TA
  - Recitation, office hours, grading exams
- G lecture class TA
  - Office hours, often some grading
- In some lecture classes
  - Run review sessions, pre-take exams, write HWs/solutions, etc.
- Lab class TA
  - Pilot experiments, some grading, high contact hours
  - Safety is of utmost importance (moral, legal issues)
- Course development
  - On more *ad hoc* basis
- Ultimately, class- and instructor-dependent
  - Have **expectations-setting meeting** before classes begin

# General duties for all TAs

- Know your students
  - Pictures are on Stellar/WebSIS
- Know the material
  - Attend lectures and meetings
- Administrative help within reason
  - Help maintain course web page
  - Track student grades
  - Make photocopies, clean blackboards, etc.
- Help assign final grades
  - You are the **student advocate!**

# Specifics on TA responsibilities

- Summary of TA responsibilities
  - Average of 20 hr/wk
  - Prepare materials, complete and proctor exams, write problems and/or quizzes, grading, etc.
- Faculty responsibilities
  - Meet with TAs to establish expectations
- When issues arise
  - Contact BE REFS, BE Graduate Program Chair, Head of Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, Department Head



# Resources for success



# Teaching tools

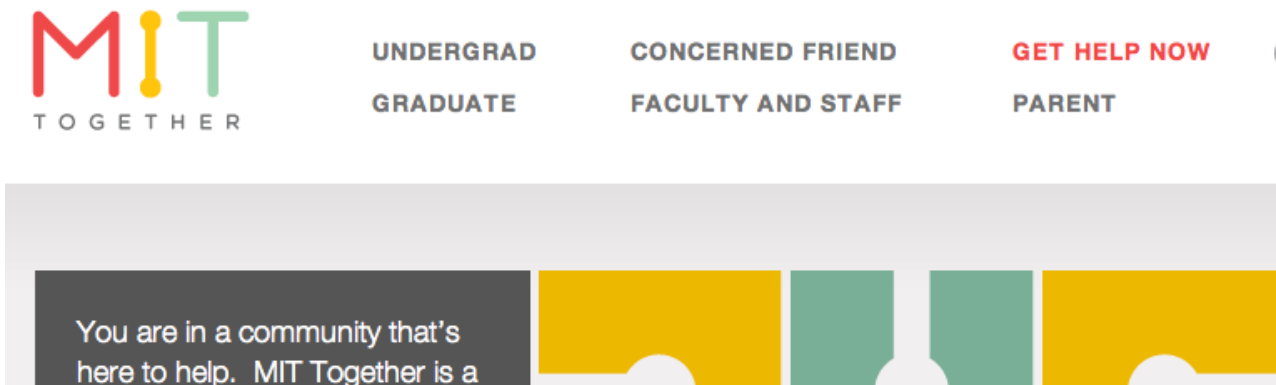
- SoE TA Resources
  - Summary tips and reading list
  - [http://engineering.mit.edu/education/education\\_resources/ta](http://engineering.mit.edu/education/education_resources/ta)
- Teaching & Learning Laboratory
  - Guidelines for recitations
  - <http://tll.mit.edu>
- TAs / Instructors from previous semesters
  - Ask directly about past challenges and successes
  - Examine past course materials and evaluations
- Current semester colleagues
  - Get feedback from instructor, other TAs, or anonymous students
- Course management resources
  - Stellar (course management system): <http://stellar.mit.edu>
  - MIT libraries: can set up class resource pages
  - OpenWetWare: alternative course management – wiki

# Assisting your students

- Bookmark the BE TA Training 2015 page!
  - Links to resources at the bottom
  - Includes all slides and handouts from the workshop
- MIT together website
  - Support overview and lots of links!
- **S<sup>3</sup> (student support services)**
  - **One-stop advising/referral for UGs**
- MIT mental health
- Academic advisors (ask faculty)
- Academic
  - BE tutors
  - BE Communications Lab
  - OME

# Assisting you

- Again, MIT together <http://together.mit.edu>
- ODGE advising
  - Essentially S<sup>3</sup> for G students
  - Office of the Dean for Graduate Education
  - <http://odge.mit.edu/development/advising/>
- If a serious conflict arises
  - Department Head
  - MIT Ombudsman: <http://web.mit.edu/ombud/>



# Also, see the TA brochure



The image shows a graphic for a TA brochure. On the left, there is a vertical strip with a photograph of a person's arm and the word "ants" in purple. The main graphic features the text "TA@MIT" in large, bold, purple letters, with the "@" symbol in orange. To the right of the logo, a vertical line with circular endpoints connects a list of four items to the text below. The items are: "rights", "responsibilities", "rewards", and "resources", each followed by a horizontal line. At the bottom right, the text reads: "Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (ODGE)" and "Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE)".

**TA@MIT**

- rights
- responsibilities
- rewards
- resources

Office of the Dean for Graduate Education (ODGE)  
Office of the Dean for Undergraduate Education (DUE)

[http://odg.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TAs\\_2010RandR.pdf](http://odg.mit.edu/wp-content/uploads/2011/09/TAs_2010RandR.pdf)

# Potential student issues

- Health concerns
  - Physical
  - Mental
  - Prolonged
- Personal concerns
  - Serious illness or death of family member or close friend
  - Traumatic events
- Academic concerns
  - Missed work due to health/family issues
  - Missed work due to being overextended and/or oversleeping
  - General struggle with class material
  - Academic dishonesty
- All issues may lead to stress → “typical” or extreme

# More about academic dishonesty

- **A top concern** for past and prospective TAs
  - Emotionally exhausting
- What might happen?
  - Unequivocal copying or cheating (exams, reports)
  - Ambiguous overstepping of resource or collaboration policy
- **Ambiguity is awful** for everyone involved
  - Want to believe the best of our students
  - Reluctant to damage their future prospects
  - Harder to evaluate person (intent, etc.) than actions
  - Likely result: inconsistent and unfair outcomes
- So, what should you do... *before* anything happens?
  - Encourage faculty to establish **clear and concise standards**
  - Convey standards both electronically and orally
  - Ask former TAs what to emphasize and look out for

# If you suspect academic dishonesty

- How is academic dishonesty dealt with?
  - **Do not confront student by e-mail**
  - Several paths, but the following is typical:  
TA > Instructor > Department Head > DUE/DSL  
> Triage > Committee on Discipline
  - Consider submitting a 'letter on file' to document repeated questionable practices
  - For more info, see *Policies and Procedures*  
<http://web.mit.edu/policies/10.2.html>
- Medical issues may come up when the student is confronted – advise student to seek help
  - Again involve instructor, academic advisor
  - <http://studentlife.mit.edu/citizenship/resources>
- MIT guidelines regarding appropriate citation
  - <http://libguides.mit.edu/content.php?pid=37801>



# Learning the rules

- MIT Policies and Procedures
  - <http://web.mit.edu/policies/>
- MIT Chair of the Faculty Guidelines
  - <http://web.mit.edu/faculty/teaching/termregs.pdf>
- No *required* academic exercises b/w 5-7 PM
- No *required* academic exercises Monday > 7PM
  - must offer comparable OH for optional review session
- FERPA (privacy)
  - <http://web.mit.edu/registrar/general/csip/> (see FAQ)

# Overview of BE TA Training

- Day 1 – tools and resources
  - Sessions with Bevin Engelward (BE Faculty) and Diana Chien (BE Communications Lab)
  - Discussions with TA mentors
  - Group exercises
- Day 2 – practice teaching
  - Session with Gerardo Garcia-Rios (S<sup>3</sup>)
  - Flex your teaching muscles!

# What to do after TA training

- Learn more, practice, and set personal goals
- Continue conversations with former TAs
- Meet with your teaching team to discuss expectations
- If you enjoy teaching, consider MITES, SEED, STEM, etc.