

For Faculty: Establishing Effective Partnership with Your TAs



2026



RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK
Institute for Teaching, Innovation,
and Inclusive Pedagogy

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Introduction | 1 |
| Before the Semester | 2 |
| During the Semester | 8 |
| End of the Semester | 11 |
| If You Encounter Challenges with TAs | 12 |
| References | 14 |
| Appendices | 15 |

Introduction

If you have a team of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) for a course that you teach, working effectively with TAs becomes an essential aspect of successful teaching. Clear communication, shared expectations and roles, and a system of accountability help ensure that teaching responsibilities are carried out collaboratively as a team (Buskist et al., 2012; Gehringer, 2009; Marbouti et al., 2013).

Working with TAs is a partnership in which TAs support your teaching and you support their professional growth. As graduate students, TAs often need to balance multiple roles such as completing their own coursework, conducting research, and attending to other departmental duties and events.

It is therefore important to be mindful of their workload and discuss with them in advance what would be a feasible amount of work they can carry out for your course and how you can support their TA work. As their supervisor, you can also play the role of a mentor

that guides their development. In a healthy partnership, all parties mutually benefit each other and grow together.

Read more for practical guidelines on establishing a productive working relationship with your TAs.



Before the Semester

Prior to the start of the semester, prepare relevant course materials and other key documents for your TAs, and hold an initial meeting with the teaching team (either a group or one-on-one meeting, depending on how many TAs you have) to discuss pertinent topics. The following outlines some suggested steps and potential topics of discussion.

Prepare for the initial meeting with TAs

1. Familiarize yourself with the contractual requirements for TAs. For example, TAs who are doctoral students are typically restricted to no more than 15 hours a week for their TAship. If international TAs want to take on additional paid part-time roles on campus, they cannot work for more than 5 hours a week in addition to their 15-hour TA appointment. Also be mindful of the TAs' academic responsibilities as graduate students. Consult your department/program chair or the graduate program director to learn about any existing onboarding norms or procedures that are in place for your program. The following are relevant resources you can refer to:

- [Rutgers AAUP-AFT website](#) for union contract for teaching and graduate assistants
- [School of Graduate Studies Handbook](#) for guidance on administrative processes and policies



2. Create an expectations document that you share with TAs prior to the first meeting. The following includes suggested topics:

- Information about your Canvas site (and add your TAs to the site)
- Expected TA roles
- Course policies
- Communication protocol
- Key deadlines for the course
- Proper conduct on confidentiality

See Appendix A for an example document, provided by [Chaz Ruggieri](#), Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.

3. Create a 1-pager for first-day-specific expectations. This is especially helpful for first-time TAs who are justifiably nervous about their first day of class. Consider including a short guide on the most important expectations that you have for them, a checklist of tasks to remember, and suggestions for first-day leadership. See Appendix B for an example document, provided by [Chaz Ruggieri](#), Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Department of Physics and Astronomy.



Meet your TAs

1. Get to know your TAs. A productive working relationship is built on mutual trust and rapport. Take the time to introduce yourself, and ask your TAs to do the same. Share personal details as relevant and appropriate, such as previous teaching experiences, research background, and other casual information (e.g., hobbies, favorite restaurant in town, etc.).

2. Share your teaching philosophy and learning objectives for the course. How do you approach teaching? What do you value most in building a positive learning environment for your students? What are the big picture goals of the course that your TAs should know about? Sharing your teaching philosophy and course learning objectives helps TAs align their teaching support with your teaching.

3. Discuss TA roles and course policies. Clarify what roles you expect your TAs to play, such as grading, holding office hours, leading recitation or discussion sections, facilitating labs, giving guest lectures, and responding to student emails. Discuss important course policies on topics such as grading, attendance, academic integrity, accommodations, and communication with students. Also gather relevant campus resources that they might need to refer undergraduate students to when students need additional support (e.g., [Learning Centers](#), [Writing Centers](#), [Counseling Services](#), [Office of Disability Services](#), etc.). Below are questions for consideration regarding some of the common TA roles:

- **Grading**
 - What are the key deadlines for grading all major assignments, quizzes, and exams? What is a timeline that the teaching team will agree upon for completing each grading task?

- What are the grading criteria or rubric that should be used for each major assignment, quiz, or exam? How do you make sure that all of the grading is consistent across multiple TAs and multiple sections? (e.g., Conduct a grade-norming session at the beginning of the semester where you and your TAs grade a sample set of student work and calibrate grading practices; you can discuss and give feedback as you and the TAs develop consistent grading practices.)
- What are the recommended practices for grading fairly and efficiently? (e.g., follow the grading rubric, cover/anonymize student names while grading, grade the same question for every student for consistency, work in blocks of time and take breaks in between, etc.)
- Are there tools or platforms that will be used for grading? (e.g., [Gradescope](#), [SpeedGrader](#) in Canvas) What are the recommended practices for using such tools or platforms? (e.g., [Canvas Grades: Best Practices](#))
- How should TAs respond to grading disputes raised by students?
- What is the policy on academic integrity, and how should TAs respond to instances of academic dishonesty in student work? (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized use of genAI tools, etc.)
- **Facilitating labs**
 - What are the proper procedures for preparing the tools or equipment necessary for each lab session?
 - What are the safety protocols that all members of the lab should follow?
 - How should TAs support students who are struggling with carrying out lab work?

- **Leading recitation or discussion sections**
 - How should TAs prepare for recitation/discussion sections? Are there existing materials to use or refer to?
 - What are the expectations for facilitating recitation/discussion sections in a way that engages all students who attend? If there are existing resources that illustrate effective practices of conducting recitation/discussion sections, such as the [Periscope Video Lessons](#) (Physics), share them with your TAs.
- **Holding office/student hours**
 - How can TAs offer office/student hours that are inviting and accessible for all students? (e.g., schedule office/student hours at a time that most students would be available for, offer different meeting modalities such as online and in-person)
 - What content, topics, or questions should be covered by TAs during office/student hours?
- **Responding to student emails**
 - In what situations should TAs direct students to the lead instructor, and in what situations should TAs directly respond to student emails?
 - What is the protocol for addressing student inquiries based on the level of severity?
- **Giving guest lectures**
 - Could TAs give a guest lecture that aligns with their research and the overall learning objectives of your course?
 - How might TAs use their guest lecture experience for their future career preparation such as building their teaching portfolio, CV, and cover letter for job applications?

4. Set up communication protocols for the team. Decide how and how often to check in (e.g., weekly meetings, email updates, shared documents, group chats, etc.). Consider co-creating this protocol together with TAs by asking for their input and suggestions. Schedule regular check-in meetings (e.g., weekly, biweekly, etc.) for the entire semester and arrange calendar events so that everyone has the dates and times marked on their calendars.

5. Share course materials and key deadlines early. This way, TAs can familiarize themselves with course content and major course activities such as quizzes, tests, and other assignments that are graded.

6. Discuss proper conduct as a TA, regarding relevant issues such as maintaining confidentiality of student information and interacting socially with undergraduate students outside of class. Suggested conduct standards for discussion include but are not limited to:

- What counts as confidential student information? (e.g., grades, accommodations, emails, personal disclosures, etc.)
- Adhere to [FERPA guidelines](#) and respect students' private and personal information.
- What guidelines can you give on interacting socially with undergraduate students outside of the course setting?



During the Semester

1. Communicate regularly with TAs. Communication can take place in person, online, or through emails in order to discuss upcoming lessons and ongoing issues. Examples:

- Send weekly emails to all TAs about upcoming tasks for the week.
- At each check-in meeting, share important announcements and course updates. Also build in time for training your TAs on common student struggles with course content. Support the TAs' teaching development through your guidance on effective pedagogical practices specific to your field. As novice educators, TAs benefit greatly from hearing and learning from your teaching experiences and insights.
- Regularly encourage your TAs to raise any issue or challenge they might experience in their TA roles.

2. Keep regular notes and documentation. To ensure clarity and accountability, keep notes during check-in meetings, make sure that meeting notes can be accessed by everyone on the teaching team, and update shared documents as needed.

3. Properly introduce your TAs to the undergraduate students. A common concern or fear that TAs have is having their role be undermined or challenged by undergraduate students in class. To help TAs build confidence, clearly communicate to students that TAs are part of the teaching team and will serve as sources of instruction and support for the students.



Also involve TAs in course planning where appropriate so that they gain a deeper understanding of the “why” behind instructional choices (e.g., what learning goal each assignment serves, why the assignments are structured or sequenced in a particular way, how those assignments ultimately achieve student learning, etc.). TAs who understand the pedagogical rationale of the design of your course can explain policies, activities, and assignments more clearly and confidently to students, and they are better able to support student learning in a consistent manner.

4. Offer guidance and mentorship as needed, particularly when TAs are facilitating discussions, guest lecturing, or managing labs or recitation/discussion sections. Examples:

- Check in with TAs to help them plan for their upcoming teaching duties.
- Observe their teaching to provide feedback and support their continuous growth. Your real-time feedback helps TAs course correct immediately, and the observation experience improves their confidence as well as the learning experiences of your students. The following outlines example observation protocols that can be adapted as needed:
 - [Protocol for Advancing Inclusive Teaching Efforts \(PAITE\)](#)
 - [Classroom Observation Protocol for Undergraduate Stem \(COPUS\)](#)
 - [Critical Teaching Behaviors Framework](#)
 - Sample observation framework for Physics and Astronomy (See Appendix C, provided by [Chaz Ruggieri](#), Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Department of Physics and Astronomy)

The Institute for Teaching, Innovation, and Inclusive Pedagogy (TIIP) also offers course observation services to all instructors including TAs. We invite you to reach out to us at TeachingInstitute@rutgers.edu for further discussion.

- Share relevant resources that TAs can consult, such as discussion guidelines, lesson planning tips, lab protocols, and other tips for effectively communicating with students.
- Direct TAs to other support units on campus as needed, such as [Offices of the Dean of Students](#) and [International Student and Scholar Services](#).

5. Solicit input and feedback from TAs about course structure, assignments, and student engagement strategies. Because TAs are often the first line of contact with students, their perspectives can provide valuable insights for improving the course. Keep an open line of communication so that TAs feel comfortable reporting issues that require timely attention, such as student well-being or academic misconduct concerns.

6. Support professional growth by encouraging TAs to participate in teaching development opportunities available on campus. The following lists some existing campus resources:

- [Institute for Teaching, Innovation, and Inclusive Pedagogy](#) (TIIP)
- [Office of Teaching Evaluation and Research](#) (OTEAR)
- [University Online Educational Services](#) (UOES)
- [Learning Centers](#)

Engaging in professional development has shown to improve TAs' self-efficacy and preparedness to teach (Richards et al., 2012).



End of the Semester

- 1. Hold a final debrief or feedback session with TAs to reflect on the semester.** Discuss what worked well and identify areas for improvement in course organization, instructional methods, and communication. Consider using a metacognitive activity to facilitate the TAs' reflection, such as "Start-Stop-Continue" where you and the TAs each share one new thing to start doing, one thing to stop doing, and one current thing to continue doing in the course. In addition, your program/department as a whole might collect feedback for TAs, so check in with your program/department chair to ensure that your TAs receive feedback in a timely manner, which is important for their professional growth.
- 2. Document lessons learned and identify potential adjustments for the next iteration of the course.** Invite your TAs' perspectives and feedback, and incorporate them into future planning.
- 3. Recognize the TAs' contributions and celebrate their accomplishments.** One example activity for consideration is the "Rose-Thorn-Bud" activity where the TAs share one positive accomplishment (rose), a challenge experienced (thorn), and a new idea or opportunity for further growth (bud).



If You Encounter Challenges with TAs

You might run into a situation where communication with TAs becomes difficult or tasks are not being completed as discussed. When this occurs, it is important to respond promptly.

- 1. Schedule a private check-in with the TA.** Clarify expectations, revisit the agreed-upon roles and timelines, and identify possible barriers such as workload, time management, and any misunderstandings of given tasks. A helpful framework to use is “Facts-Impact-Context-Actions (FICA)” in which you discuss what was observed (facts), what impact it had on others or the TA, what the context was for the students or TA involved (e.g., is this the first time it happened, are there extenuating circumstances to consider, etc.), and what actions everyone involved should take to move forward.
- 2. Document next steps in writing.** This ensures shared understanding among all parties involved.
- 3. Maintain a professional and supportive tone.** Most issues can be resolved through clear communication and accountability.
- 4. Consult your program/department.** If concerns persist, reach out to the graduate program director or program/department chair for further guidance and support.

Many challenges can be prevented through regular check-ins and ongoing communication throughout the semester. Staying in close contact helps surface questions, misalignments, or concerns early, before they escalate into larger issues. We highly recommend that you schedule periodic check-ins and observe the TAs' teaching when possible to create opportunities to clarify expectations, provide timely feedback, and offer support. These proactive practices not only mitigate potential challenges but also strengthen the overall faculty-TA partnership.

TIIP is here to support your teaching efforts. Don't hesitate to reach out to us at TeachingInstitute@rutgers.edu for a one-on-one consultation or visit <https://teaching.rutgers.edu> to learn more about our programs and services.



References

- Buskist, W., Benassi, V. A., & Meyers, S. A. (2012). Creating Effective Working Relationships Between Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants. In V. A. Benassi & W. F. Buskist (Eds.), *Effective College and University Teaching* (pp. 9–16). SAGE Publications.
- Gehringer, E. (2009, June). Working effectively with teaching assistants. In *2009 Annual Conference & Exposition* (pp. 1-11).
- Marbouti, F., Rodgers, K. J., Jung, H., Moon, A., & Diefes-Dux, H. A. (2013, June). Factors that help and hinder teaching assistants' ability to execute their responsibilities. In *2013 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition* (pp. 1-18).
- Richards, K. A., Velasquez, J. D., & Payne, L. B. (2012, June). The influence of a college teaching workshop series on teaching assistant perceptions of preparedness and self-efficacy. In *2012 ASEE Annual Conference & Exposition* (pp. 1-17).



Appendix A: PHY-123/PHY-124 Instructor Weekly Expectations

*Author: [Chaz Ruggieri](#), Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Department of Physics and Astronomy

Pre-Class Expectations

1. Review content independently (or with teaching team peers) before staff meetings.

- Identify your own struggles and student struggles. *Content mastery is one of the most important aspects of effective teaching. You must know multiple approaches and modes of understanding before teaching.*

2. Prepare for class by attending and engaging with weekly 1-hour staff meetings.

- Be open minded about your own learning and professional development – we’re all here to improve so we can best serve our students’ learning experiences. I don’t expect you to know everything coming in, but I do expect you to try your best and be open to learning new things.

3. What to do if you feel sick:

- Ask the teaching team via the GroupMe (for quick turnaround) if any of those TAs can cover for you. (GroupMe Link or use the QR code: https://groupme.com/join_group/108913377/bl0n2udh)
- If no one can cover for you, email Prof. Chaz Ruggieri as soon as possible (chazr@rutgers.edu) for assistance.



4. What to do if students email you about possible illness:

- Once you’ve been added to the Canvas page, review the “[Absence and Lateness Policies](#)” canvas page to see the steps we ask students to take in such situations. The steps are given below for convenience.
- (1) students have been instructed to email you as soon as possible if they notice they have symptoms of acute and severe illness which may impede their work that day or may impact others’ health.
- (2) advise the student not to come to recitation for the safety of all, and at the end of the recitation week (Wed. evening or Thurs. morning) you should send them the blank version of the group work pdf file for that day, or they can obtain a copy the following week in class. They cannot make up the work for credit except in extreme cases verified by the Dean of Students, but we do drop the two lowest recitation grades to account for such unexpected life happenings and prevent such happenings from harming their course grade, and so you should remind students of that course policy.
- (3) the student should complete the work in their own time and attend your office hours (or any instructor’s office hour) to discuss the work so they can get feedback on their thought process.
- (4) If the student is habitually missing class due to long-term health issues, email Prof. Chaz Ruggieri and he will advise the student to verify their claims through the [Dean of Students](#), and can then consider excusing the work. We will generally not excuse student’s work except for religious observation reasons, or verified long-term health issues, verified deaths of immediate family, etc.

5. Printing requirements (no printing needed from you!):

- **You don't need to print group work packets or equation sheets. Group work packets are the same across all sections and a stack will be provided in each classroom, as will stacks of equation sheets.** If you notice any issues with the packets, contact Prof. Chaz Ruggieri (chazr@rutgers.edu) and alert your fellow instructors in the GroupMe. **Groups can take more than 1 packet so that everyone can see the work; but groups must submit just 1 packet with all of the present group member's names written on it (beware, some students may try to write names of absent members for credit).**

In-Class Expectations

- **Student phones must be put away**** - we have a policy that students must not use phones during class. **Tablets and/or laptops are okay.** They should do **computations using their scientific or graphing calculators**, because that is all they will have to do computations on their exams and they need the practice.
- Arrive 10-15 minutes before class, write important information on the board including the day's content outline.** Such important information might be relevant concepts and/or equations, logistical updates, or reporting out common struggles you observed from the prior week's grading.
- COVID-19 and masking:** We follow all current University guidelines for the safety of the Rutgers community. At the time of writing, there are no requirements for masking of instructors or students. You will be updated if these policies change to meet the needs of the community.
- Come to class prepared to facilitate learning:**
 - Review material, prepare probing questions, predict student struggles. Learn and use students' names over time (actively study your roster which I will supply to you before your recitations begin).
 - Keep track of timing: start with a brief introduction to the day's work (no more than 5 to 10 minutes) followed by 70 to 75 minutes of group work. During group work, let students work uninterrupted for 5 minutes or so, then you should start to roam around, ask open questions to guide their learning and probing questions to explore the limits of their understanding. Be sure they alternate writers either every week or they can alternate worksheets (one person shouldn't always control the packet, all group members should have control at some point; resource sharing is important in group dynamics).
 - **Photo rosters of your sections will be sent before your first recitation so you can learn your students' names more easily.** Be aware that photo rosters must only be used for instruction purposes and under no circumstances can they be viewed by or sent to others outside of the instruction team.
- Facilitate workshop via active roaming and questioning:**
 - **Actively roam and sit with groups in rotations.** Start with a different group each week for balance. Enact a rotation, go clockwise or counterclockwise around the room, and stick to it. Once you let the students start their group work, give them about 5 minutes to process the first tasks. Then, try to sit with every group once during the first few worksheets. Limit each group interaction to 1-2 questions/clarifications or 1-2 minutes of interaction, then move on to the next group. In this way, you'll interact with each group several times throughout the day. Position yourself to be roughly opposite the LA in the classroom to distribute your interactions with the students (the LA will be instructed to do the same).
 \Active.roaming.tip.and.insights; Do not wait for students to raise hands; if you wait for hands to be

raised, you'll find that only the most confident groups summon you, whereas the groups who need the most help tend to not want to bother you and will continue to be confused (which is not what we want to happen). Instead, if you are at their table during group discussions and appear to be observing their efforts, they will always find questions to ask you, and over time they will become more comfortable with you and ask more questions of you especially while you're present in their group space.

Advanced.active.roaming.- »Equal«.to»Equitable«.roaming.(week.9.and.beyond); we want to progress from an "equal" roaming scheme, where you spend roughly the same time with every group, to an "equitable" roaming scheme, where you adapt your time per group such that the groups who are the weakest get a bit more of your time and feedback, whereas the stronger groups get a bit less time. It takes a week or two to determine the stronger and weaker groups, so start this transition in week 3.

- **Watch and listen first – question second – comment or explain last:** sit with groups and do your best to be a silent presence when first interacting with groups; look at their work, listen to what they are discussing, and generate questions based on that information, and give follow-up questions or direct feedback based on their responses. The process of watching and listening should take around 30 seconds or so. For example, maybe they're missing a force in the force diagram, or a force vector points in an incorrect direction, or they're missing a minus sign, etc.
- **Regularly update the whole class on timing** (e.g., "you have XX minutes left before the end of class")

11. Collect all group packets at the end of class, check that their names are clearly written on the front page, thank them for their efforts, encourage students to ask you questions as you begin to pack up for the day.

Post-Class Expectations

12. Grade the work promptly (before the next week's class) using the grade rubric found at the end of this document (the rubric is also found on Canvas in the Recitation Group Work assignments)

- **The rubric is a guide for general point values to assign;** you may assign point values between rubric scores if you feel it's necessary, as long as you're globally aligned with the rubric descriptions it's okay.
- **Give students written feedback on worksheets (point out where they went wrong and/or what they did well).** Students will have full solutions for group work so you don't need to go very much in-depth for feedback. Mark where they went wrong, provide a brief phrase or comment about the mistaken thinking or process, and advise them to see the solutions for details. Point out the positives too!
- **Group work is for a group grade,** all members get the same score (except in cases where one student in the group is very late to class – then individual deductions can apply). **All students must have written their names on the submitted group work to earn credit. Under no circumstances will students earn credit if their name is not on the submitted packet, nor may students earn credit who weren't in class.**

13. Upload students' grades to the Canvas Grades by visiting the [Grades page](#) and typing grades directly into the Grades table under the recitation column associated with that day's work. You can type in the Assignment name in the search bar to quickly find the appropriate grade column.

14. Office hours for 1 hour per week, [sign up at this google sheet link](#) → if you have low or no attendance during any given office hour session, you may do your own work. Otherwise, you're free to do your own work if no student shows up and if there are no Discussion posts to address.

| Score → | Rubric Items ↓ | 0 | 3 | 5 | 7 | 9 | 10 |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|--|---|--|----|
| Problem Solving Approach | Student did not hand in assignment <u>OR</u> student's name was not indicated in the Group Member Names list. | Student attended class, but... The solution does not indicate an approach <u>OR</u> no evidence of math procedures <u>OR</u> no final solution given <u>OR</u> no response given. | Most or all chosen physics concepts or principles are inappropriate <u>OR</u> all mathematical procedures are inappropriate and/or contain errors <u>OR</u> the entire solution is unclear, unfocused, and/or inconsistent. | Three or more unique physics concepts or principles of their approach are missing and/or inappropriate <u>OR</u> most of the mathematical procedures are missing and/or contain errors <u>OR</u> most of the solution parts are unclear, unfocused, and/or inconsistent. | One or two unique physics concepts or principles of their approach are missing and/or inappropriate <u>OR</u> parts of the mathematical procedures are missing and/or contain errors <u>OR</u> parts of the solution are unclear, unfocused, and/or inconsistent. | The physics approach is entirely accurate, without errors <u>AND</u> appropriate mathematical procedures are used with only minor omissions or errors (e.g., calculation error but consistent logic and progression) <u>AND</u> the solution is clear and focused with only minor inconsistencies (e.g., minor +/- sign omissions in reported answer, sig figs, missing units) | |
| Supporting Math | | | | | | | |
| Final Solution | | | | | | | |

Appendix B: PHY-123/PHY-124 Recitation Day 1 Instructor Expectations

*Author: [Chaz Ruggieri](#), Associate Professor of Professional Practice in the Department of Physics and Astronomy

1. Arrive 10-15 minutes before class, expect the following materials on the Instructor's desk:

- Worksheets (1 per group, or they can take 2 to help everyone in the group see the questions, but must only write and submit 1), Recitation expectations sheet and Absence Policy sheet (for reference, not enough for everyone to take one, these exist on the Canvas page)

2. Write on the board the following:

- Your name or how you prefer to be addressed
- Course name ("Physics 123"), section number, and current room location (Serin 227 or 232) so that they know they are in the right place (we run both rooms at the same time, so this is important)
- The weekly course structure as-intended by its design (items in quotes and arrows only, you don't need to write what's given in parentheses):
 - **"Pre-Lecture Videos+Quizzes"** (to introduce concepts) →
 - "Tutorial"** (practice applying introductory concepts) →
 - "Lecture"** (deeper knowledge construction and practice) →
 - "Recitations"** (construction of knowledge, address struggles, gain mastery) →
 - "Homework"** (apply knowledge, tackle struggles, improve mastery)
- **"Sit in groups of 3 people, groups of 4 or more are not allowed"** → groups are organically generated by students sitting with whoever they like. We reserve the option to move group members around as-needed based on group performance or on student concerns.
- **"Outline for the first day:"**
 - **"10 min – Introductions and reiterating workshop expectations"** (you may do or optional ice-breaker activity of your choosing such as give groups 2-3 minutes to chat about "what's your favorite fruit", or any other ice-breaker style question. You might also consider an optional 5-minutes to take students' questions about recitation expectations and logistics)
 - **"70 min – group worksheets"**

3. Start your class on-time by doing the following:

- Welcoming everyone and introducing yourself (your name, what they should call you by, your major / program / teaching role [that is, why are you in front of them])
- Walk through recitation expectations, then answer any questions they have, and perhaps then start your chosen ice-breaker activity to warm everyone up to their groups and to you if you have one chosen (e.g., "what's the best fruit" is usually contentious)
- Move on with the rest of the outline for the day, being vigilant of the timing. **Timing Pro Tip – wear a watch to check time or use the wall-clock, I would not recommend using your phone to check time** because (i) it has a ripple effect of others checking their phones if they see you do it, and (ii) students also assume you looking at your phone means you're distracted from teaching or that you don't value their time and engagement, which has been reported by past students and teachers on my teams and in the end-of-semester surveys of instructors who use phones for time checks.

4. End your class on a strong, positive note:

Thank everyone for their work that day, let them know to ask you any remaining questions they have as they leave, and end on time. This shows that you respect students' time and that you are there to support the students' questions and needs.

Appendix C: Rutgers Physics and Astronomy Part Time Lecturer Review Framework

*For questions about this form and its implementation, please contact Chaz Ruggieri (chazr@rutgers.edu, SRN-301W)

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Instructor: | |
| Course: | |
| Date and Location of Observation: | |
| Topic: | |
| Class type (select best option): | Lecture Recitation Lab |
| Observer: | |

Summary

1. Please list the overall strengths of the Instructor's teaching style.
 -
 -
 -
2. Please list any overall areas of improvement for the Instructor's teaching style.
 -
 -
 -
3. Please list any overall areas of improvement for the course design.
 -
 -
 -

Form 2 – To be filled out by the observer during the in-class observation

Note that not every question needs answering, they are just suggestions. You may wish to give feedback on things you observed that are not represented on this form.

| Aspect of Teaching and Possible Topics for Comment | Comments |
|---|-----------------|
| <p>Preparation: Was the instructor prepared to teach?</p> <p>Were presentation materials and class activities organized?</p> <p>Did the instructor seem knowledgeable?</p> | |
| <p>Clarity: Was the instructor easy to understand?</p> <p>Did information and activities flow in a logical way?</p> <p>Do students have opportunities to process new information and ask questions?</p> | |
| <p>Rapport and Engagement: How did the instructor interact with students?</p> <p>Do students seem engaged with what the instructor is saying or the activities provided?</p> <p>What kinds of questions are being asked of students?</p> <p>What kinds of questions are students asking the instructor?</p> <p>How does the instructor handle questions from students?</p> | |
| <p>Instructional Methods: In general, what seems to be the nature of how the instructor interacts with students and introduces new material?</p> | |

| Aspect of Teaching and Possible Topics for Comment | Comments |
|--|-----------------|
| <p>Instructional Methods:</p> <p>How long does the instructor speak in between activities and student questions?</p> <p>What kinds of activities were there?</p> | |
| <p>Caring:</p> <p>Does the instructor show empathy towards students?</p> <p>How does the instructor react to difficulties students are having?</p> <p>In what ways does the instructor attempt to understand the students' perspective on material?</p> | |
| <p>Other</p> | |
| <p>Overall</p> <p>Please provide some brief takeaway comments from your observation. What was strong about this class? What could the instructor improve upon?</p> | |