

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA  
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
STUDENT DESCRIPTION OF TEACHING**

**COURSE E77   Teaching Assistant: Kessler, Patrick   Spring 2004**

1. Please give any comments or suggestions about the teaching assistant:

- I LOVE PATCH!
- Makes the assignment very straight forward. Helps a lot in lab and discussion.
- Very helpful during labs. Very patient and lets the student talk through the problem, eventually leading to the answer. If student is struggling (student being me), he will sit down and go through step by step on paper, best way for me to learn.
- We should have 2 discussions a week to cover material better.
- Very good at making me think & answer questions. He makes me actually like doing this stuff, even though it really does not suck sometimes. He teaches & explains VERY, VERY, WELL!
- Which one is he?
- Patch was a very good GSI. When no one is asking questions, he goes around the lab to see how every one is doing so he makes it easier for students to ask questions. He was, however, inaccessible at times simply because a lot of students need help. I would suggest maybe having a few minutes in the beginning of lab answering general questions that most students have so there won't be a long wait to answer a simple question. But other than that, he was great, keep up the good work.
- You're the greatest.
- For next semester
  - Should encourage more use of blackboard.
  - Return HW, lab in a timely way.
  - Make the labs shorter, just a bit. Some labs were too long. Take me 6 hours.
  - Hw's are fine this semester. Make grading HW's easier.
- I think you encourage people to go to discussion session, since that is the only time people will actually learn from GSI or professor other than lecture.
- BEST GSI EVER.
- Very nice, helpful.
- Good overall.
- He tried to help everyone by asking questions like "you guys, OK? And try to get every questions answered. That's really good.

- Well prepared. – Very descriptive about questions. Good background in the class. The lecturers seem as if they are slightly different. The first one seems more relevant w/ the course work in understanding the material. Labs should be due at the end of the week. If possible Matlab w/ midterms & finals b/c if is more of a real application.
- Good overall, but hard to get help from.
- None.
- He is very helpful in understanding the labs.
- Patrick was very organized in terms of presenting materials in class. He was also willing to answer our questions despite of the limitations of only 1 hour discussions. Just, for the class in general, since you are going to be the head GSI, I think that a lot more of math 54 was needed than people in the class had knowledge of. also, another good thing to do would be to make the labs and homework assignments more in terms of what we are asked to do. Also, discussions and lecturers usually didn't correlate much, which usually puts in a gap, so if there could be better correlation between labs, lecturers & discussions.
- Provides a very helpful discussion.
- I thought this class was overall well-organized and effective. Things that could be improved are the number of TA's and how you would appropriate them. It was extremely difficult on Wed, Thus, section with only one TA. Also, the blackboard was helpful, but it wasn't always useful. Sometimes, there were no TA helping for over 2 days and had to ask the TA during the lab period or could not get ahead. Also, the comments were everywhere and sometimes very confusing. I really thought discussion section was helpful, but I heard some TA's were uncertain of an answer, so maybe it is good to know that all the TA's are up-to date with current materials. Overall, it was a great class. Good luck as a head GSI next semester ☺.
- The most helpful part of the discussion is where we are asked to write a code for a function then the TA writes his code. I am abit to find my mistakes in programming easier then the normal "hit & miss" method.
- Not very helpful, but at least lecture material was reviewed not in detail. Teaching style need to be improved (not boring).
- Pointer on lab questions. Post lab & Hw early. Specify what section in the book to read in order to do the lab.
- More TA's in the labs. More feedback on homework errors. Post solutions to labs & hws. Change lab scheduling.
- Very eager to help, seems to understand the material very well, foresees lab problems and clears then up.
- Came well prepared for discussion and was sure to follow up w/ material he didn't understand.
- Patch is a great gsi when he's actually here. Most of the time he's not though. He's extremely important that both gsi's are present. It ws very difficult actually getting help from them during lab because usually there was only one.
- Can be more helpful to students.

labs due at end of  
the week

more math 54 needed  
(provide a basic linear  
algebra book?)

better correlation between  
labs lectures & discussions

more TAs in lab

super  
reaches post lab by TAs  
to blackboard

earlier review of labs  
with notes with TAs  
up to date as current

Good pedagogical technique:  
ask st to write code, then  
go over it step by step.

Be sure labs are!

- Answers questions.
  - Need discussion, didn't have any. Would've helped.
  - Patch did a good job preparing for the discussions each week. The outline of what was going to be covered during discussion that day was also good. At times, he appears nervous and interrupts his own train of thoughts. However, he's been getting better about this as the semester has progressed. He should make an even better GSI next semester!
  - He always puts a lot of efforts into preparing the discussion. He also tries to make sure that students understand the basic concepts of each new topic. However, sometimes he is slow in explaining to students.
  - Sometimes discussion went too slowly.
  - The discussion sections are almost always helpful in clarifying confusing concepts and emphasizing important ideas for the class.
  - One of the best GSI's I have had for any class.
  - To improve the class, I would recommend that more time be given for labs (a weekend would be nice) to ensure that they are done thoroughly and understood completely.
  - Patch was a very good GSI because he knew what he was talking about and always came prepared to class. With the course E77, itself, I thought we needed more time with the labs, and I liked it when the hw came from the palm book, so I could have some references.
  - Very disorganized. Very nervous, does not possess enough confidence and pressure handling skills to be a GSI let alone head-GSI. His knowledge of the subject matter is lacking. Can not read your own writing. Is biased and favors Papadopoulos over Frenklach. We can't get a break.
  - Can we have more TA's to help us in the lab? Because one TA helping 20 students is ineffectively.
  - You're the bomb, PATCH.
  - Patch is extremely helpful and has always been able to answer my questions. He is awesome.
  - Excellent – will be a great head-TA. In labs, please globally institute list on white board of people with questions so no can continue working in lab instead of raising hand forever.
  - I think he did pretty good job of helping us. He tried hard to communicate ideas effectively to us. Think overall he was a good GSI.
  - Helpful, knowledgeable, section is very understandable at a good pace. During labs, not very accessible. Long waits to have questions answered. However, answers questions effectively.
  - With only 1 hour a week, it's hard to judge him but he knows what he's talking about and answers any questions posed that have definite answers.
  - Patch helps studying so much easier for this class. As long as you attend his discussion section & pay attention, you really don't need to study much outside of class. Very dedicated guy & nice. Pleasant to be in his class.
- Next Year:

- Not make the homework so abstract from material covered.

Many people think that GSI's are hard to their lab  
 only a few more per week are cutting lab...  
 → try to have the new GSI with the old people: Foster relationships that help learning.

- Re-emphasize things covered in lab again in homework.
- Make sure all assignment CAN be completed in the time allotted.
- GOOD LUCK NEXT YEAR!!

- He's a great GSI, but he seems nervous. He should be confident in his teaching abilities.
- I'd say Patch is the best TA I've come across so far at Berkeley. His answers make sense, he knows what he's talking about, and always tries to be as helpful as possible.
- He is really a good TA – best TA for engineering 77!
- He's trying to help us with our problems. He really deserves the HEAD TA position for next semester!
- Great GSI! Very helpful, through, and smart!
- You did good in discussion.
- Good GSI, when present.
- When waiting to have a question answered in lab, the GSI's spend a lot of time with other students. The wait is so long that often it makes more sense to just work out the answer yourself.
- Very nice, approachable, friendly, knows material. Can be a little bit long winded/circuitous in explanations sometimes, though. Very helpful.
- He's generally a good TA, but he tries to make me think of the answer whenever I ask a question, and although this is good teaching strategy usually, sometimes I just don't know enough or am too lost for this and would like the GSI to just tell me how to do it but explaining it at the same time (tell me how to do it to some extent, not all).  
 (One time I went to his office hours, he wasn't there. This other girl and I waited for about 30 minutes).
- He is great GSI, Needs improvement in becoming more accessible during lab, I feel it's not GSI's fault. Great understanding of subject matter. Explains and helps with understanding of subject matter. Really effective in helping me understand.
- Great instructor.
- Helpful in providing overall help to class and good at answering questions pertaining to various aspect of class.
- Great TA.
- A lot of work due on Thurs/Friday. Homework due Monday would be nice.
- Section helped a lot as a preparation for labs. Writing small parts of code in section helped writing larger functions on labs.

For next Year's E77:

- There was not enough information on some problems in the lab – particularly differential equations. Lecture and reader were not enough to do the lab. I needed outside help from my GSI. More details and examples are needed.
- Section should always happen before a person's assigned lab, at least that was it's most helpful for me.
- I like the format of the tests.

HW due weekly? →

Lots of complaints about getting HW returned sooner.

HW returned sooner

- More GSI's in Tues and Thurs labs.
- All labs due at same time – Friday.
- Takes the time to go over difficult concepts or codes and is very knowledgeable about the material.
- I like the format of E77 (OH, discussion, HW, labs are good). The only improvement might be to have HS/labs returned sooner since I still haven't received HW or labs I have done 5 or 4 weeks ago. Getting back work will help me study for the midterms or final.
- GREAT GSI. Suggestions for next year:
  - Get graded labs back more quickly.
  - If Tues & Thur labs get 2 GSI's each day. The Mon & Wed labs should, too.
  - Have labs due on the same day for Everyone.
  - Clearer wording on lab instructions.
- He's done a good job teaching this section overall. Two things I'd suggest for the course in general are to read through lab directions carefully before assigning them to make sure they say what they should and to teach classes before things & like linked lists so that you can use the more transparent notation of a pointer actually saying the name of the next data piece rather than an index.
- Discussions are organized well and have clear goals, like a mini-lecture since people in the discussion may have completed the labs already, the time spent going over the lab could be used to discuss more material from lecture, although it is a nice way to recap each lab. Encourages some class participation by asking students to attempt practice exercises in discussion also. Also delves into the mathematics underlying the class. This additional information was very helpful.
- I think Patch was very good teacher. I felt comfortable asking questions. I wish he had more office hours, longer discussion & more discussion to fully understand the material. Patch sometimes went too fast and maybe bring a computer so we can see stuff run & graphs when necessary. Patch should get the outstanding GSI award, because without him we would be lost in the class. More midterm review with GSI outside discussion time. Patch rocks my socks! I'm forever indebt with you.
- Patch was wonderful. He was my GSI both for section and lab. He always had material prepared to teach us during section that pertained very much to the homework and labs. My notes from section were very helpful when I needed to refer to them while working on an assignment. He tried very hard to make sure everyone understood the material and had plenty of examples to show us. His only flaw is that he seems nervous. He should be very confident in his teaching skills as he has a lot to teach to his students and knows how to do it effectively.
- I really feel that he was a great GSI who thoroughly understood the subject matter and could explain it in an organized and clear manner. In all my experience at Cal so far I strongly feel that he was the best GSI that I have had because of his dedication, enthusiasm, and knowledge.

- Your concern with the difficulties of students is greatly appreciated and should continue next semester. I get the feeling that people who have a discussion session earlier in the week have a slight advantage over those who have one later in the week, you should find a way to equalize that. Also, the discussion sessions at the beginning of the semester pertained to labs due the previous week. That should be longer so that the topic of discussion is the current lab.
- Patch is the MAN! Patch ALWAYS leads a very structured discussion answering (& elaborating) on any questions that a student might have. Patch is extremely concerned for our general knowledge & goes to extreme lengths to show us the power & simplicity of MATLAB. Patch brought a computer to class just to show us how simply operations can do very interesting things! Patch offer illustrates much concern for how well we understand the topics. Overall, I am left, with one thing in my mind "Patch F... Rocks!" He will be an excellent Head GSI. Next year is very lucky.

**DEPARTMENT OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERING**  
Teaching Evaluations  
**TEACHING ASSISTANTS (GSI's) EVALUATIONS**  
**SPRING 2004**

E 77-1	KESSLER,P (ta)	86 RESPONDENTS										SPRING 2004			
		FREQUENCIES													
		[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]	[6]	[7]	[N/A]	Omit	Average	Std. Dev.	Median		
1.	Helpful in understanding material		2	7	22	54				1	4.50	0.70	5.00		
2.	Is well prepared		3	4	23	53			2	1	4.50	0.80	5.00		
3.	Communicates ideas effectively		3	10	20	52				1	4.40	0.80	5.00		
4.	Appears to have a good knowledge of the subject matter			3	15	67				1	4.80	0.50	5.00		
5.	Answers questions accurately			9	22	54				1	4.50	0.70	5.00		
6.	Encourages questions and/or class discussion	1	2	11	23	43			5	1	4.30	0.90	5.00		
7.	Is aware when students are having difficulty		4	15	23	38			5	1	4.20	0.90	4.00		
8.	Is accessible during office hours	1	1	5	11	21			45	2	4.30	1.00	5.00		
9.	Rate the T.A.'s overall teaching effectiveness			8	22	54			1	1	4.50	0.70	5.00		
1 is a low rating; 5[7] is a high rating.		NA = not applicable. Omit = zero or multiple answers.													
Data processed: 04 June 2004															