

Sanchlebe4REVIEW

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SPEAKERS

Jenn Tostlebe, Jose Sanchez



Jose Sanchez 00:00

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Jose Sanchez 00:17

Hi everyone. Welcome back to The Criminology Academy where we are criminally academic. My name is Jose Sanchez.



Jenn Tostlebe 00:40

And my name is Jenn Tostlebe.



Jose Sanchez 00:42


And today we are going to not have a guest. Instead, we're going to talk to you about our experiences as TAs and RAs--that teaching assistants and research assistants and sort of what that entails and what we've been asked to do when we're filling those positions.




Jenn Tostlebe 01:00

Well, so we're not doing introductions today. I think everyone has heard enough about us at this point. But as Jose mentioned, we're going to talk about kind of like the three pillars of academia. So we're gonna start off by talking about graduate teaching assistantships, then move into graduate research assistantships. And lastly, talk about service and engaging in


service work as a grad student. Before we jump into that, we thought it would be good to just kind of highlight what our experiences have been as teaching assistants and research assistants. So Jose, I'll let you go first.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 01:38

Okay, so I've done two semesters as a TA, my first semester and my third. I've done four semesters as an RA on an NIJ grant. And I'm currently doing both. So my RAship is my halftime appointment with a five hour overload to be a TA for our graduate Data II class.

 Jenn Tostlebe 02:07

Yeah, and I think it's not uncommon for people to come in and RA their first semester, but I think the most common option is to have people TA their first semester.

 Jenn Tostlebe 02:07

And then, so at CU, at the University of Colorado Boulder. I've been a TA for five semesters now. But unlike Jose, I did come in as a research assistant. So my first semester, I spent as a research assistant, and then my third and fourth semesters. So I've done three total semesters as an RA. And then I had one semester where I was both working on an Arnold funded project called Blueprints. And then I was also the TA for our Data I or our graduate statistics class, the first one.

 Jenn Tostlebe 02:58

Yeah, absolutely.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 02:58

At least I know, in our department, I've only talked to three people that came in as RAs their first semester.

 Jenn Tostlebe 03:07

Yeah, I don't think it's very common.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 03:09

Yeah, no. So it's like not unheard of. But it's not usually what happens. Yeah. So how about we get into talking about what a TA is, and what it is that we're supposed to do, when we're a TA?



Jenn Tostlebe 03:23

You want to start?



Jose Sanchez 03:24

Sure.



Jenn Tostlebe 03:25

You wanna start talking about the reader greater option?



Jose Sanchez 03:29

Yeah, so there's a couple options. The first one is reader/grader. I have done that once. And that's basically you're not leading in the recitations, which we'll get into what those are a little bit later. All you're doing is basically reading people's homework and given them a grade and grading their exams, or whatever it is that the professor has chosen to be the grading system. And that's your only responsibility. You're not, although, for when I did it, David [[Pyrooz] kind of threw me a couple curveballs and had me lead a couple lectures, but that's not actually what is asked of you typically, when you get when you're just a reader/grader.



Jenn Tostlebe 04:09

Yeah, and we both held that role in various capacities. Jose is actually done that as like his full semester gig versus mine has just been kind of a partial load option.



Jose Sanchez 04:24


Although I guess I'm doing that right now, too, with data to like, I'm not actually, I'm not actually, I'm not even attending lectures for this one. I'm simply receiving assignments and grading them as they come.



Jenn Tostlebe 04:36

We have the full spectrum of the reader greater option here. And then I guess the other most common kind of teaching assistantship would be when you have your own recitations. So at least at CU, this means that you are attending lectures that the professor is lecturing on and you also teach your own classes. So for us, it can take on a variety of different looks as far as what you're teaching. So some professors will want you to mostly summarize what they've talked about or go over homework assignments. And some other professors will actually have you provide new information to the students. And then some will have you do both--so

summarize and provide some new information. And typically, at least here [at CU Boulder] in our experiences, you teach three of these recitations a week with about what 100 students total?

 Jose Sanchez 05:37

Between 100-120. Yeah, so I think we should sort of also add that you see this more like the bigger schools where they'll cram 300 to 500 students in a single class. And so there will meet the whole couple 100, or whatever, we'll meet once a week for a lecture from the professor. And then they get split up into smaller 30 to 40 people classes that the TA will then sort of lead and you can't usually just kind of offshoot to whatever it is you want. It's usually like Jenn said sort of umbrella under the bigger class and depending on who the professor is, they'll ask you to do something a little different. But yeah, usually 30 to 40 people per recitation. And then depending on how big the class is, you're either be doing it on your own, so you'll have so like the classes only say 150 to 200 people, you might be the only TA doing recitations.

 Jenn Tostlebe 06:37

That would be a huge class. It's like 100 students, I think.

 Jose Sanchez 06:41

Well, yeah, I guess so. Because if you end up like I say, like around 30 per recitation, what's the... Oh, yeah, that's about 90. Okay, yeah, so not 200. But if it was, so from 200, and up, we usually end up with a team of TAs. My first semester, I was on the team of four, and an older student [further along student] will usually be the lead TA, and they kind of show you the ropes.

 Jenn Tostlebe 07:05

And normally if, I mean, there's positives and negatives to both of these options, at least in my experiences. So I've done both of these, when you're the only TA you have like all of the freedom, right? You get to decide what you want to talk about. I mean, obviously, with the instructor, the professor, you know, under their guidance, but you have a lot more freedom in what you want to talk about versus if you're on a team, you all at least somewhat need to be talking about the same material. So everyone is getting the same information. So sometimes, it'll be like, everyone kind of talks about what we're going to talk about. And then we each come up with our own slides. I've also done it where one person has made the slides for one week, and then everyone just teaches that same information. So yeah, you're a lot more restricted. As far as the information you're going over in a team setting.

 Jose Sanchez 07:59

Yeah, so that's how we did it when I was on the team. We split up the weeks, and each person was responsible for creating the slides for that week, you know, there was some flexibility into how you delivered the information. But the key points were always the same. We had a little bit

of flexibility. And so we had to give out quizzes. And so we were able to sort of design our own quizzes. But some of the challenges that can come up with a team of TAs is--at least in my experience--two of the TAs would butt heads all the time, whenever we had our weekly meetings, while the other TA and myself would kind of just hang back and let them hammer out their issues. The only unfortunate part was the meetings will then start running like super long, while they were trying to hammer it out and the professor was trying to would try to like mediate the meeting to see if we could reach a consensus. And then sometimes the two TAs who would butt heads, would somehow manage to agree with each other. But but their choices would end up being a drag on me and the other TA like our like our workload, like they would decide to somehow take on more work. But because we have to remain consistent, like every TA had to pick had to take up more slack. So it can be cool, especially if we're working with someone that--so for like it was my first semester at CU--so having an older student kind of show us the ropes was nice, but there's certainly... the dynamic can get a little a little funky.



Jenn Tostlebe 09:34

I think it all comes down to like your teaching philosophy too. Right? We all have different opinions or perspectives on how teaching should be done and how much feedback people should get on papers that they turn in and and how tough to be on grading, which we can talk, well, I'm sure we'll talk about grading in a little bit.



Jose Sanchez 09:54

Yeah, definitely. I think it's good because it's it starts helping you sort of realize what kind of instructor you want to be. Like, if that's what you're planning on doing in the future. You kind of start, I guess being in like that team setting can kind of start having those ideas start coming. Like if someone says they, let's take late assignments and you're like immediate reaction is like, no, that sounds terrible, then that's kind of a good indicator that you may not want to be a professor that takes late assignments in the future.



Jenn Tostlebe 10:28

Yeah, totally. And then yeah, we mentioned that there's different expectations for attending lecture based off of these. So right now Jose is just doing a grading function and not going to lecture. For my like half and half semester, which was more half and half versus an overload, like what Jose is doing right now. I did go to lecture and I was a grader, but I didn't have recitations. And then normally, if you have recitations you are definitely expected to go to at least the majority of the lectures. But again, that all depends on the instructor.



Jose Sanchez 11:04

Yeah, definitely. So because I am on an overload, I'm only allowed to do five hours on top of my, my 20--my part time 20. The professor and I decided that it'd be a waste of my time to show up to lecture because lectures are like three hours. So there goes three of my five hours a week. So in this, this is something that you need to hammer out with, with the professor at the beginning of the semester.



Jenn Tostlebe 11:30

Yeah. And I think that's a good segue to kind of move into maybe not handling the instructor, but like working with the instructor and being on the same page. I've worked with three, three or four different professors at CU in a teaching capacity. And then I was also a TA when I was at Iowa State and worked with two different professors. And everyone has a different style for how they want to handle their teaching assistants. And so I mean, it's pretty common to at least, maybe not have a sit down, although I think most people like to have a sit down before the semester starts to meet with their TA, but definitely some kind of communication so everyone can get on the same page as far as expectations, what grading should look like, what kind of average they want in the class, how often you should be going to class. Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 12:26

Yeah, no, absolutely. Yeah. So when I was on my team, we met once a week with the instructor. We met actually, like two weeks before the semester started. And we spent for how long? How long? Was it? three, maybe four hours. She wanted to really have us. Well, she had us like really be involved with like the development of the syllabus for the entire class, not just our own. But then the other instructor that I TAed for. It was usually an email or text check in, like anything that we need to discuss? No, not really.



Jenn Tostlebe 13:01

Yeah, yeah. So on top of like, the, the meeting before the semester actually starts. Yeah, some people like Jose was mentioning like to meet pretty regularly. And I feel like that that was a thing for me, like earlier on. I don't know if you notice that change, Jose, but it's like now that I'm farther along in the program, they're like, just let us know if there are issues.



Jose Sanchez 13:25

Yeah, I think it depends on team composition. So I know, I know, some people didn't really matter who the instructor was, they'd always have... Or it didn't matter who the TAs were, like they could have. I think there was a point where some of my people in my cohort were in teams of year two+TAs, and like they always still had to meet on the regular. Yeah, I think I think if you're a solo TA, that's when you might get a little bit more of the "let me know if something comes up."



Jenn Tostlebe 13:53

That's probably fair.



Jose Sanchez 13:54

Yeah, cuz I think with a teams, you kind of have to start coordinating a little bit so that you stay

consistent.



Jenn Tostlebe 14:01

One other thing that I think is really important to point out is that while yes, your job as a TA is to support the instructor, they should also be supporting you. And like, if you don't know like, if you're teaching recitations and you have no idea what to cover that week, don't feel like you have to handle it all on your own, like ask them, but that's also their job. Their job is to be there for you and to help you. And like if you're behind on grading, don't just ignore them. Let them know that you're behind. And you can figure it out together. I mean, it's their job to communicate their expectations of you. It's not your job to have to ask, although you might have to if you are unsure about things.



Jose Sanchez 14:50

Yeah, definitely. And it's also good to keep them in the loop when things come up. So if you're dealing with, I don't want to come problems student, but a student that might be a little difficult to deal with. Don't feel like you have to sort of handle that on your own. Because they're in your recitation, and you're the one that's dealing with them. For the most part. Some professors will tell you, if someone starts getting a little unruly, pass them on to me, I'll step in, or when I was TAing with recitations, she would always tell us, like, if you need to make a tough call, do so, use your own discretion, make the call, and then let me be the bad guy. Tell them, the professor said this, this and this. So if you have an issue with it, take it up with them. And then she tells you send us just send me an email, kind of appraising me of the situation. So if that student does reach out, I kind of know what's happening. And, and I can handle it from there. Like, I need to know what your decision was so that I can have your back.



Jenn Tostlebe 15:58

Yeah. And that's also a really good thing to set ahead of time, like talk about that. So that way, when you do get--because it's inevitable, you're going to run into a student like this, whether it's because of grading or because they're having a tough semester, or whatever it may be, it's going to happen--and so knowing how the professor or the instructor wants you to handle it before it actually happens, is important. Because yeah, you want to know if you have more freedom, or if you need to be more careful with how you handle the situation. Yeah, but I mean, to me, a good instructor is going to have your back. Like what you were talking about Jose.



Jose Sanchez 16:40


Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. Yeah. So I think we can start moving into a recitation versus being on your own.



Jenn Tostlebe 17:01

Oh, wait. There's one more thing I want. It's not necessarily about the instructor. But Jose, I

don't, I don't feel like you've had the pleasure of this experience. Maybe you have. But so my like, first time teaching, it was a lower level undergrad class. And inevitably, I had multiple parents reach out to me about their kids grades, like these are not kids, right? They're adults. And one thing that I think is important to point out, because I didn't know how to handle this situation, at first, like I had to ask the instructor, but like, you can't talk to the parents about the student's grades. They're adults. So you can't do that. So you can politely respond back. And it's always good to let the instructor in.

 Jose Sanchez 17:45

I forget that a HIPAA violation?



Jenn Tostlebe 17:47

Yeah, it is. ***CORRECTION -- IT IS A FERPA VIOLATION***



Jose Sanchez 17:48

Yeah. So the instructor that I TA for, she let us know pretty much on day one, like if someone were like, if anyone but the student reaches out to you, you can't say anything to them. There's like a check with your school, because I don't know if this is like across the board, but with CU, there's like certain things that they can do in order for us to they would release that information to them. But for the most part, most people don't do it. So, just be really careful.



Jenn Tostlebe 18:15

Yeah, you don't want to get in trouble for that kind of stuff. And you know, maybe you wouldn't, but also, yeah, just don't put yourself in that kind of situation.



Jose Sanchez 18:25

Yeah, absolutely. Yeah. And again, that's also again, communicate with the instructor.



Jenn Tostlebe 18:34

Never leave them in the dark about stuff like that. It's just for the best that you let them know. Because I've never had a problem with an instructor. I know other people have, but my experiences have all been positive when it's come to tricky situations like that.



Jose Sanchez 18:49

Mm hmm. Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 18:51

All right. So yeah, let's move into talking about handling recitations and your own class. So let's start with recitations because we've both done that already.



Jose Sanchez 19:03

Yeah. So I haven't taught my own class yet. I'm scheduled to do it in the summer. But one thing that I do feel, I can say, with confidence is recitations offer you a bit of a safety net that you don't have when you're teaching your own class, because you always have that instructor that you can sort of fall back on.



Jenn Tostlebe 19:23

100%, yes.



Jose Sanchez 19:24

With with your own class, you're kind of gonna take the shitstorm that comes with any decision that you make.



Jenn Tostlebe 19:32

Speaking from experience. Yes.



Jose Sanchez 19:34

You're not gonna make everybody happy. Like, it's just not gonna happen. But at least with the recitation, you can be like, Hey, Professor, here you go.



Jenn Tostlebe 19:45

Here's the student.



Jose Sanchez 19:47


I'm tagging you in.





Jenn Tostlebe 19:49


Yes. But, okay, so there's always the, like whenever I'm talking to incoming PhD students,


there's always the question A) well, I guess we can tie in like first day of class stuff too. But like, when you're teaching your own recitations do you have your own syllabus? Or do you just focus on the like, overall class' syllabus, and then just kind of discuss your expectations? And B) how to dress? I think those things come up a ton, especially amongst maybe the like, younger, incoming PhD students, because you know, it's possible that you might be 21 and coming in and teaching recitations for the first time, and your students might also be 21 or older. And so it's like, how do you deal with those power dynamics?

 Jose Sanchez 20:43
Yeah.

 Jenn Tostlebe 20:44
So I feel like let's start with the syllabus stuff. Have you ever, Jose, have you ever made your own syllabus?

 Jose Sanchez 20:49
So we did, so we did for when I TAed for deviance, when we had recitations, we each had our own syllabus, but we didn't put down any, like week by week breakdowns. So that was like the main core syllabus. Our syllabus was more what is it that we're going to expect from you in recitation, in like my recitation? What you can expect from me? And I guess we can start blending it a little bit. But I said, sort of my classroom expectations. What was the times that you could expect me to email you back if you sent me an email? Let's see what uh, what else? My office hours. So it was like a much shorter, like one page, maybe two page document. So it wasn't as thorough as and you know, you had like all the, we had like the disclaimers that CU wants you to have on there.

 Jenn Tostlebe 21:39
I think my first semester was the only semester that I made a syllabus for recitations. And it included all of the same things that you just mentioned, Jose, in particular, like, I mean, we're teaching, the majority of the people listening to this are probably in criminal justice or criminology. Everyone knows we talk about some kind of possibly sensitive subjects and some like polarizing subjects. And so I think it's really important to like set, you know, that expectation of, we're all adults, it's fine if you want to debate ideas, but we're not debating people. And it needs to be civilized. And if it's not, like, I will kick you out, like I have kicked students out of my classes before. It's okay to do that if they're being disruptive. And they won't stop and you've given them warnings. And yeah, email expectations, what are yours?

 Jose Sanchez 22:37
So, mine has always been my sort of business hours are from 10am to 5pm. Anytime before that, anytime after that. It's up to me if I want to respond to you or not.



Jose Sanchez 22:55

Weekends are never on the table. Never. Sometimes if I don't like usually I might respond outside of hours, if it's an emergency, again, weekends, never on the table. But if it's a real emergency, I might respond. And if not, then you'll get a response sometime within the next set of business hours, business hours, so 10 to five pretty hard on that with a few exceptions, of course. But yeah, I would not suggest leaving that vague. Otherwise you're gonna get, I mean, you're still gonna get emails, at like 1, 2, 3 in the morning...



Jenn Tostlebe 22:55

Weekends?



Jenn Tostlebe 23:18

With them freaking out.



Jose Sanchez 23:30

Absolutely, especially before a test or a paper or whatever. But then you can always sort of lean back on your syllabus and say, Hey, I told you what my business hours were, you'll get a response when you get a response.



Jenn Tostlebe 23:45

Do you also give like a time frame like, I will respond within so and so many hours?



Jose Sanchez 23:53

I put as soon as possible, but guaranteed within 72.



Jenn Tostlebe 23:57

Okay, yeah, so mine are really similar to yours. I, I mean, right out of the gates, I always tell them and I repeat it throughout the semester. I do not work on weekends. Now sometimes I do, we are grad students, you got to work on the weekend sometimes, but that's my time.



Jose Sanchez 24:14

I usually use that for like, my like, either my own like coursework or like my own research. But not for like teaching stuff.



Jenn Tostlebe 24:22

Exactly. And I mean, mine are a little bit longer. So I started like 8am. So I'm like eight to five is when I will be around email. And I say 48 hour window, not including weekends, because that is your 48 hour window and they'll email you like Friday at 5pm and you'll not get back to them before Monday at 8am. And they'll be like Why haven't you responded to me? But yes, be clear about this. We can't. This is something I'm like very passionate about because I just got I mean, I've been like slapped around by students. Not really. But like, it feels like I've been slapped around by students about email. And it's just so frustrating. Because you'll get, I mean, I've gotten, like 10 emails from one student in less than 15 minutes because I wasn't responding one time. And it was at like, 10pm on a Friday. Like, I am not here to just respond to emails all the time.



Jose Sanchez 25:26

Yeah, the one thing I like to do is, like once like I'm quote, unquote, off the clock, I turn off the push notifications on my school email.



Jenn Tostlebe 25:36

Okay.



Jose Sanchez 25:37

Or I'll have it set to sort of refresh like every one or two hours because I you know, just in case, like, my advisor needs to get a hold of me or whatever. But even with him if it's an emergency, I'm like, Well, he'll text me if we really need me right now. Otherwise, he can probably wait for when I'm back on.



Jenn Tostlebe 25:55

That's a good idea. I've never thought about changing email like that.



Jose Sanchez 25:59

I've always wished that they put like, you know, like, on my phone, I can set what hours I want my phone to go on Do Not Disturb.



Jenn Tostlebe 26:05

Right.



Jose Sanchez 26:06

I wish Gmail would let me do that.



Jenn Tostlebe 26:08

Okay, Gmail, get with the program. We need you to update.



Jose Sanchez 26:12

Yeah. The other thing I would probably not recommend a lot. I'm thinking of bringing it back next semester and kind of see how it goes, is phone numbers. I tried it my first semester teaching and it was...



Jenn Tostlebe 26:28

Like your cell phone?



Jose Sanchez 26:31

So my first semester I did my own personal number. And it was an unmitigated disaster. I think at less than maybe all of two weeks before I was like, okay, you know what cell phone is off the table?



Jenn Tostlebe 26:42

You had people calling you?



Jose Sanchez 26:45

No, I didn't. I didn't. I told them. I don't answer calls. Send me a text.



Jenn Tostlebe 26:50

You had undergrads texting your personal phone number!?



Jose Sanchez 26:54

Yeah. So...



Jose Sanchez 26:56

That did not go over well. So what I may try next semester, I'm still debating because it was pretty much a disaster. So that's the other thing always make like, if you do have a syllabus, always make sure that you put in like a disclaimer that it is subject to change so that way, like you can't get nailed to the cross in case you do something. And I made sure to put like in huge red letters like, like, this is a trial run. We're gonna see how this goes. And it is up to me whether we axe it or keep it and like I was like, no, like, do not bother texting me because I'm not answering anything like I will block you immediately.



Jenn Tostlebe 26:56

No...



Jenn Tostlebe 27:34

Man. So wild. No, I've never had an undergrad text me, not for like teaching.



Jose Sanchez 27:41

So for next semester, I'm thinking of maybe using a Google Voice number. But even then, I'm still a little because that at least like you can silent.



Jenn Tostlebe 27:49

Were they just like, I just can't even imagine getting text messages like we I know how I text and I text like seven messages in a row before anyone responds. Jose knows this. iHe has been the subject of my text messaging. I just can't even imagine that happening from undergrads.



Jose Sanchez 28:08

No, yeah...



Jenn Tostlebe 28:09

My mind is blown that you did this and that you're thinking about doing it again? Don't do it.



Jose Sanchez 28:14

I don't know. I might not. Now that I'm thinking about it? It was a pretty terrible experience. I thought, hmm, let's try let's let's try something new. See how it goes. But no, no, it was an unmitigated failure.



Jose Sanchez 28:28

Office hours?



Jenn Tostlebe 28:29

Well, should be our recitation syllabus syllabi on the website? Do you still have yours?



Jose Sanchez 28:36

Maybe it might be in my, I'll have to check if we can find it. Sure. It might. It might be of use to somebody.



Jenn Tostlebe 28:42

I mean, if you want, like, you want to see what some of them are like, and you don't have access to any of them, we'll try. We'll try and find them and put them on our website.



Jose Sanchez 28:50

Yeah. So let's see what else? Office hours that I think that's. So what is the first I think it's like five hours total of office hours?



Jenn Tostlebe 29:02

Two a week. Yeah. And...



Jose Sanchez 29:05

Why do I feel like mine were longer?



Jenn Tostlebe 29:07

I don't know.



Jose Sanchez 29:08

I might have been.



Jenn Tostlebe 29:09

I feel like now because of the pandemic and how we went online. Now, it's like, I'm finding it hard to get my students to actually come in person. So like, I'll go and do my in person office hours, and everyone will just want to meet with me on Zoom. Which is tricky, kind of to navigate. Because if you have a student who walks in, then it's like, you have to figure out how to deal with that. And so that that could be something for people to think about too. If you want to have like half of your office hours via zoom and half in person. That's like kind of a good idea. Maybe I'll do that next semester.



Jose Sanchez 29:48

Yeah, absolutely. And I don't know if you use it, but I rely pretty heavily on Calendly because I can sync my my calendar with it and especially if you're doing like zoom office hours, like I hate just kind of sitting on Zoom, waiting to see if someone drops in or not. At least that way I can see like, Oh, no one has signed up for office hours. So I don't have to stress about it too much. And I also find that people are a little more reluctant to show up if they have to schedule something as opposed to just drop in. So Calendly, I recommend using something like Calendly.



Jenn Tostlebe 30:29

Yeah, I've used that. Like when I taught my own class over the summer. That's how I scheduled everything. Like if you want to meet with me, then you have to make an appointment. And it works really well. You can put in your Zoom link and all of the password information and stuff if you're using that. So yeah, Calendly Calendly. I've always said it Calendly. I don't know how you say it.



Jose Sanchez 30:51

I don't know. I keep saying Calendly. But that's probably not right. The other thing I like about it too, is it helps prevent, like the student dropping in and then just kind of sitting there for two hours. Because you can schedule it to be whatever chunk of time you want. So I think I have mine set up for 15 minute chunks, right now. Of course, no one's taking me up on them.



Jenn Tostlebe 31:12

Never? And you're even you're doing stats.




Jose Sanchez 31:16

Yeah, I know. I'm like not even like, just as I'm doing like the Data II class.




Jenn Tostlebe 31:21

Yeah, that is one thing. I will say if anyone is teaching statistics, good luck with Office Hours. They well, except Jose's experience. But my first time teaching sets undergrad class was just like 17 students in my office at once. All the time.

 Jose Sanchez 31:48


All right. classroom expectations. I feel like we kind of skipped classroom expectations. How do you handle day one of either recitation or your own class?

 Jenn Tostlebe 31:59

I mean, I kind of mentioned this already, like, I do not tolerate like people being rude to each other. I just don't. Like I... You can disagree all you want about ideas, I think it makes for an interesting discussion. And I like having those challenging debates. But do not put someone down, don't make them feel stupid, or that their ideas are wrong, because maybe you just have different opinions about the world. And that's fine. And so like, that's like one of my main things is like, if you are rude, and you don't stop when I tell you to stop, you're leaving. That's one thing. And then I've also kind of gotten on this kick of no laptops, no cell phones. Which I was not like this until this semester when the professor I'm teaching for does not allow laptops unless you have like...

 Jose Sanchez 32:57

A disability or what is it ? Accommodation. Accommodation? Yeah, there you go,

 Jenn Tostlebe 33:02

where you like need a laptop or some like, I let them use, like the tablets with the writer things on them. So they can write their notes on tablets, but I really kind of like the no laptop, it's like they're much more engaged. They're much more willing to be present in the classroom. They're not distracting each other by looking at Instagram or whatever. So that's also one thing that I like. I mean, their facial expressions, at first were like, Excuse me, I can't use my laptop? But the professor had already said that in lecture. So I felt like, I had that leeway to be like, well, this is your expectations in lecture. Kind of goes back to Jose, what you were mentioning before you kind of have that like crutch. And so we're doing the same thing in recitation. And yeah, the phone thing. Like if you have to answer your phone, like it's 50 minutes, right, a normal class. You can go without your phone for 50 minutes. If you're possibly going to have an emergency. Leave the room. Do not answer your phone in my classroom. Yeah, I mean, those are my main things. What about you?

 Jose Sanchez 34:11

Oh, I love day one, because I...



Jenn Tostlebe 34:15

Do you just scare them all? *laughter*



Jose Sanchez 34:16

I kind of I kind of do. But so next semester is gonna be kind of tricky, because I'd like to do like the no cell phone, no laptop thing, but it's sort of kind of like a hybrid class in like the main lectures online, and all my recitations are in person. So I'm thinking it's fine if I tell them no, no no to the stuff in recitation. It might just be a little odd because they're supposed to use all that stuff for the main lecture, but anyways. So yeah, so my first day high set all my heart boundaries, you know, like hour. Email. I'm usually very much no personal attacks, you know, debates are fine. I always leave them with, you know, being get through before you speak like your opinions fine. But once you throw it out there, it's open for debate, someone else can disagree. And so if you're not ready to engage, you're probably better off not saying anything. And also make it very clear that I'm not going to take any of their shit. Like, what you get is what you get. Like I will be as as fair as possible. If you think that there's an issue with it, bring it up to me, we'll discuss it, but like unless you have a very good case of like, in it's usually my error somewhere. But, and I think CU can be a bit of a unique place. Some people like to throw the perceived entitlement around a little bit. So I like I try to nip that up at the bud if I can. And then, yeah, I try to, it's funny, because I'll kind of follow like what I learned from a couple professors when I was a student, and like, I'm gonna be, I'm gonna kind of put up this front as being a hard ass, like the, towards the beginning of the semester, maybe like the first few weeks, and then it kind of just started softening up as we go along. But you know, always keeping my hard boundaries.



Jenn Tostlebe 36:20

Have you ever use the Socratic method? Is that what it's called? Where you just like randomly call on people?




Jose Sanchez 36:28


I have a couple of times. It's usually only been with my 8am recitations. Because those were like pulling teeth.





Jenn Tostlebe 36:39


I love doing that. It terrifies the absolute shit out of them, though. But I think it keeps them paying attention. And it's also a good way to do like attendance. I just thought of this because one of the professors I really liked in undergrad like you're mentioning, she did this. And it was like, she would tell them in advance. Like next week, I'm going to call on people whose last name start with A through C, be prepared. And then it was like, if she were to call on you and you weren't there, or you couldn't answer it, you do not get attendance for the day, you do not get a checkmark next to your name.


 Jose Sanchez 37:20
Ooh, that's intense.

 Jenn Tostlebe 37:22
And it was like at the end of this semester, she'd go through and figure out how many checkmarks you had, or like, how many total there could have been. And that's how your attendance was based on like, how many did you get out of how many were available?


 Jose Sanchez 37:34
Dang that's wild.


 Jenn Tostlebe 37:36
It like, it scared me so much at first, and then I was like, I just can't get enough of your classes. Because, I mean, she was a great professor anyway. But,

 Jose Sanchez 37:45
I might do that. That's wild. I like that. I'd hate it as a student, but...

 Jenn Tostlebe 37:50
Oh, yeah, totally.

 Jose Sanchez 37:52
So I do have some advice for like that first day of class.

 Jenn Tostlebe 37:57
Hit us with it

 Jose Sanchez 37:58
Especially for the early PhD students like first/second years, especially if you're coming into a program that will take you straight from undergrad without a master's. You're not that much older than these students. You could be but you know, the average undergraduate is what, like graduates are like 22/23?



Jenn Tostlebe 38:20

21/22? I don't know.



Jose Sanchez 38:23

Say between 21 and 23. That's when you're usually graduating with an undergrad with a bachelor's, you go into a Ph. D program, you're gonna be 23/24, if you're just going straight through, so you're not gonna be that much older than these people. So if you're in that situation, or regardless of whether you have a master's or not, I wouldn't, don't state what year in the program yet. Don't tell them, "I'm a first year PhD student" don't tell them "I'm a second year PhD student." All you have to tell them is that you're in the program. That's one of those times where vagueness is your friend.



Jenn Tostlebe 38:57

That's great advice.



Jose Sanchez 38:59

If you have a Master's, I like to flaunt my masters, because it puts another sort of another step of separation between me and my students and establishes my authority a little bit more. But if you don't have one, that's all right. Just don't tell them where in the program you're at. Keep it vague. Just tell them I'm a PhD student.



Jenn Tostlebe 39:20

Yeah, and now, I think, yeah, I do that with my masters, too, actually, I always tell them that I have a master's in whatever. And now that we're a little bit farther into the program, I always drop the, you know, I'm in the final year or two of my program. I'm a candidate, and blah, blah, blah. Which they don't know what that means.



Jose Sanchez 39:42

Along those lines don't give them the years you graduated.



Jenn Tostlebe 39:45

From undergrad?



Jose Sanchez 39:46



JOSE SANCHEZ 39:40

Yeah, cuz if you say I got my bachelor's in 2020.



Jenn Tostlebe 39:51

They're gonna know. Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 39:52

You might as well tell them I was on my very first semester of the Ph.D. program.



Jenn Tostlebe 39:56

Yeah. I thought you're Yeah. Guess how long ago I graduated with my undergrad is shining through because I was like, oh, what? Because they're gonna call you old?



Jose Sanchez 40:09

Shit. When did I get my undergrad? 2016? I think



Jenn Tostlebe 40:12

2012.



Jose Sanchez 40:20

I got my 2016 a master's in 2018. Yeah. But I'm not as young as people might think. I have gaps in places.



Jenn Tostlebe 40:33

I cut you off. Other tips?



Jose Sanchez 40:36

Oh, that's fine. I think I cut you off too. So we're one for one.



Jose Sanchez 40:40

You didn't, but, I guess the other thing is like the dress code?



Jenn Tostlebe 40:46

I have a lot of thoughts about dress code.



Jose Sanchez 40:48

I think it's very dependent. So oh, so well. So when I was in LA, like, I would dress pretty nice like, or not nicely, but pretty formal. That's probably the better word. I did that here and I was like, way out dressing my students to the point where I started to feel a little uncomfortable. Yeah. And so I started to sort of calm down, but still maintain a certain level of formality. So instead of coming in, say, and like a suit, I'd come in with like a jeans, a button down. And some dress shoes.



Jose Sanchez 40:48

A suit? If you're not wearing Birkenstocks with your suit, you are severely overdressed in Boulder.



Jose Sanchez 41:37

Yeah. So I think it's I think dress code is going to be pretty location dependent, because Boulder is a really laid back place. Like, like, I don't think I've ever had a student not showed up in athleisure. However you say that.



Jenn Tostlebe 41:51

Yeah, I feel like I am a little bit different when it comes to the dress code part. Like even given the fact that Boulder is very laid back. I try and kind of Jose, what you were talking about is like, establish myself as a professional who has more knowledge and information. And I do kind of try and set myself up as a hard ass that like you said, you know, not I'm not going to take your crap. And so maybe the first day, I'll like dress a little bit nicer. And then I'm like, all of a sudden wearing jeans with holes in a sweatshirt. And then some days I'm like, full like, what did we call it hipster vibes were like dress pants on with like, some chucks and like a T shirt with like a blazer or a bomber jacket. I'm all over the place. And but some people will say like, you should always be dressing professionally for the setting, whatever that may be. There are definitely days where some of my undergrads out dress me. It's not very common, but it does happen.



Jose Sanchez 42:58

I've never had that. Yeah, I don't ever dropped down below business casual. And like, I'm not saying that, you know, my way is better than yours.





Jenn Tostlebe 43:09

No, it's fine.



Jose Sanchez 43:10

But, um, it's just one and I think it also, it's also what do you like to wear? Because to me, like, I love wearing that stuff. You know, back when it fit. But, I mean, if you? I don't know, I'm kind of starting to do like the business casual kind of hipstery look. Like if people look at our Twitter and look at my photos on that last day of ASC. Like I might start rocking that I was like my normal teaching outfit.



Jenn Tostlebe 43:37

You liked my look that day, too.



Jose Sanchez 43:39

Yeah, I did. Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 43:42

But I mean, all of this to say that I think it probably depends on your department, and then the location that you're in. But I also don't... I think some people will try and give you a hard time about what you're wearing. But I think the most important thing is for you to feel comfortable. And like you can teach, and whatever that means for you. Yeah.



Jose Sanchez 44:03


Yeah. If you feel like, whatever you're wearing, you're gonna have you're gonna stand there thinking like, Am I dressed well enough? Am I dressed well enough? Then maybe, you know take, take that next step to where you won't be having those thoughts. Like dress up into where you feel comfortable. And like it's not going to be a distraction. Because actually, so that's what happened to me my first couple of times teaching like my very first semester. I was actually way too overdressed and so I kept thinking like, well, I'm like, way overdressed. I'm like, way overdressed. And I kind of had to find like a little bill that comfort level to where there was no longer an issue.



Jenn Tostlebe 44:46

Alright, we want to talk about our own class at all. I mean, I don't know if we need, I mean, there's like a lot of similarities. The main thing that I would say so I've only taught my own class once. It was a undergrad, Introduction to Statistics class. And the main thing here for me was plan your syllabus ahead of time and try and use, like things from professors that you liked in the past. So I had, I think, four different people's syllabi for that class. And I chose what I liked.


And I left out what I didn't. And I added some of my own stuff in there. But you want to make your syllabus incredibly clear, like deadlines, late assignments, what you're willing to take, how much you're taking off, email, all of that. You want everything to be super clear, and you don't want to be vague. A lot of people have started to do like syllabus quizzes, where like, they'll give a point or a couple of points for people, like have extra credit, to fill this out to like, ensure that you've read it. I did that. I don't know that I would do it again.

 Jose Sanchez 45:59


Yeah, I never liked those.

 Jenn Tostlebe 46:01

Yeah. And then like, the last thing is just to stay on top of stuff. It's really easy to fall behind on, like lecture planning. And so I always, I was trying to stay like two weeks in advance. And then I would just quickly review whatever I was going to talk about before I actually did it. And I did record my lectures, which I'm not entirely sure how much I loved doing that either. But it's a learning experience. And I did a lot of it on my own. I didn't ask for a lot of help or a lot of advice, which I think was good and bad. And now Jose and I are actually teaching the same class in the summer just at different times. So that'll be fun. And it is a crime, like a criminal justice class instead of stats.

 Jose Sanchez 46:46

Yeah, I'm looking forward to it should be alright. We'll see.

 Jenn Tostlebe 46:51

Anything else on teaching that we should touch on?

 Jose Sanchez 46:54

I think we can. Very briefly touch on on grading. Again, whether you're teeing for somebody, or teaching our class, like your syllabus is going to sort of dictate what that's gonna look like. More so of your TAing, that professor might have certain expectations of you when you're grading. Rubrics are awesome when grading, especially if you make it clear to them that that's a criteria you're going to be using. Because then there's, I think there's like a study somewhere that says that students will bitch less when there's a rubric involved, because it sort of dissipates this thinking of that your grading is subjective.

 Jenn Tostlebe 47:36

As far as how much feedback to give them, I'm pretty heavy handed when it comes to feedback, which some students love. Some students hate.



Jose Sanchez 47:47
Are talking about papers?



Jenn Tostlebe 47:49
Yeah, with papers and exams, too.



Jose Sanchez 47:51
I never give feedback on exams. On papers, I usually do like a weaning off method. So like your first paper will mark to Kingdom Come. And then every paper after that, I mark less and less until usually like the paper before your final paper, I will kind of just give you a grade and give you some overall thoughts. Because the expectation is you'll be incorporating my feedback and your papers will get better and closer to what it is that I'm looking for. I also don't also don't really have the time to be kind of giving you feedback.



Jenn Tostlebe 48:26
Oh, it takes so long.



Jose Sanchez 48:27
Like you know, to hell and back on every paper.



Jenn Tostlebe 48:31
I don't think they realize how long it takes like it takes a long time to do that.



Jose Sanchez 48:35
Yeah, I think a good thing. Also, one thing that I do do is I will if they want more detailed feedback, I tell them to come to office hours, and then I'll re-read their paper and give them more feedback that way, but it won't be like an automatic thing. Also be ready for people to no matter how much you tell them to do something to never do it. Like I have people who I kept telling from the first paper that they needed to format their papers in ASA, and still to their very final paper gave it to me in Chicago.




Jenn Tostlebe 49:09
Yep. That Yep, absolutely. But that's just how it goes. And I mean, always remember that no


matter what level you're at, whether it's your first year in a Ph.D program, or your last, you know, more than your undergraduates do, no matter what. Like you are in a program you got here on your own merit and even if you're so nervous, like my first semester teaching, I think for like the first three weeks I couldn't eat before I taught because I was so nervous. And it gets better. I don't know if you were nervous Jose, you seem you know, tougher than me, but

 Jose Sanchez 49:56


Yeah, no, I didn't. I think I got nervous my first day and then I kind of got it over it. And yeah, I think my last piece of advice would be deliver your material with conviction. Like, if it sounds like you're second guessing yourself, they're gonna second guess you too, even if you're not 100% Sure, deliver it with conviction, go home, look it up, verify the information. And if you need to come back the next time and say, Hey, sorry, I looked further into it. And turns out, this is actually what it is. That's perfectly okay too.

 Jenn Tostlebe 50:24

Oh, I guess I have at least one more thing. On that note, if someone asks you a question, and you don't know the answer, I personally think it's perfectly fine to say that you are not sure. And that you can look into it if they're interested. And to send you an email to remind you to look into it. Like anytime any student wants me to do something, I'm always like, email me. And that, like if they don't email me, and then that's it. So yeah, deliver with conviction. But also, don't be afraid to say that you don't know. Because I kind of think it's refreshing when you hear professors say that in a way because they're establishing that. Yeah, they're really smart. But like, they don't know everything, but they're willing to figure it out for you.

 Jose Sanchez 51:08

Yeah. Yeah. So I guess I should amend my statement a little bit don't bullshit them either. Like, No, I'm saying like, like, if you're not 100% Sure, but you think what you're saying is correct. still deliver it with conviction. And then if you need to fact check it, that's okay. Like, don't worry about too much. You know, don't be bullshitting your students either, though. Like, yeah, if you straight up don't know, just yeah, just tell them you don't know. But it's, I mean, it's happened to me, where someone asked me a question. It was like, some proportion of whatever. And I said, I forgot I gave him a range was like, say, like 30 to 40%. Said it, they took it, it was like, Cool. We moved on. Then I looked it up later than I and it's actually closer to like, 15 20%. So I just gave them like, the updated statistic the next time I saw them, but you know, it's like a minor thing. If it's something that's like pivotal to what you're saying, then that might build a difference. All right, we should probably move into research.

 Jenn Tostlebe 52:12

Let's do it. Alright, so research assistantships are I don't know, do you like them better than teaching?



Jose Sanchez 52:23

I want to say yes. Mostly, because that's sort of where I like to be for the most part. Don't get me wrong. I like teaching. But research, especially applied research. And program eval is sort of where I really want it to be. So I like it a little bit more.



Jenn Tostlebe 52:44

These are basically a professor will basically hire you out of a grant or whatever, that they have to come and work on a project with them. And that can be all sorts of things. Most of what Jose and I've worked on have been primary data collection projects. But you could also be hired on to do secondary data collection, or I don't know...



Jose Sanchez 53:07

Clean up an analysis.



Jenn Tostlebe 53:08

Yeah, clean up data.



Jose Sanchez 53:11

And I've even seen someone get hired as an RA to update a website.



Jenn Tostlebe 53:16

Okay. Yeah. So all all sorts of things fit under here. And there are so there are research assistantships where that is like all you're doing that semester, like you're not teaching too. And there's also which I've done this every single semester, even ones that I haven't been an official RA, where you're teaching, but you're also working on projects with professors. And I think a lot of people do that anyway, just based off of the fact that we're in grad school. So we're typically working on 1000 things all at once. But they're kind of cool, cool opportunities a lot of the times. I mean, we've done Jose and I like listed off everything that we've done, I'm just gonna read it quick. And then we can dive into some of this, but we've done all sorts of things. So we've helped develop our IRB's--institutional review board--documents. We have helped with establishing the research design for projects. We've done open science framework pre-registration, or OSF. We've done Qualtrics survey programming; survey development; fieldwork, including ride alongs; interviewing all sorts of people, both juveniles and adults; done contact management with participants over long term projects; cleaning, merging, and coding data; bi-annual updates to funders; and worked on sending data to ICPSR, which is kind of like a data consortium. So we've done all sorts of things. High five to that.



Jose Sanchez 54:47

So yeah, so being an RA doesn't just have to do with, you know, working with data and doing like straight up like just pure unadulterated research. It's also a lot of the nitty gritty stuff that has to happen behind the scenes, the administrator stuff. Like going through like the IRB, and we have an episode on IRB, so listen to that to get kind of some of the challenges that might come up with having to work with IRB. You know, like the fieldwork stuff. Like that's, you know, gathering data. That's fun. That's what we like to do. But,



Jenn Tostlebe 55:23

Let's talk about fieldwork real quick, because that's the fun part. So, Jose, what kind of fieldwork do you do?



Jose Sanchez 55:30

Yeah, so I'm pretty sure I've mentioned it a couple of times. So I'm working on this NIJ grant with David Pyrooz we're evaluating the gang reduction initiative of Denver, their gang intervention program. And what I get to do is, at least once a week, I go to where GRID has their team meetings. I observe how they sort of talk about the program, talk about the job they do, I get to do ride alongs with the outreach workers, so I get to sort of shadow them for a day, see how they interact with clients. And I get to sit in on the multidisciplinary team meetings, see how partners from different agencies interact with each other. And, you know, I kind of have certain things that I'm on the lookout for, but also trying to see if anything new comes up that we hadn't sort of planned for. Yeah, it gets to just I wouldn't say it's easy work, because it's not, it's actually a real pain in the ass to do.



Jenn Tostlebe 56:28

It's exhausting.



Jose Sanchez 56:29

But it's also really fun. I get to just kind of hang out with the average worker sometimes have lunch and kind of shoot the breeze a little bit. And I get and, you know, I still with my researcher cap on, as we're having like, sort of these informal conversations. So kind of probing for, for information a little bit. So even when they don't think we're really kind of doing work. I kind of still am. So yeah, so field work, that's the fun part. Yeah. And then I know, and you and I have done interviews. I've done both qual and quant interviews. And you've done both two, I believe.



Jenn Tostlebe 57:07

Yeah, kind of I mean, so I've...



Jose Sanchez 57:10

You've had your open ended questions, right?



Jenn Tostlebe 57:12

I've worked on it. Yeah, I've worked on a ton of different projects. I mean, the two main ones, the LoneStar Texas prisoner reentry project. I came in on the tail end of that. So I helped with the like longer term, follow up interviews, contact management, trying to get people to talk to us to do their interviews. I did go to a prison in Texas to do a re-incarceration interview, which that was actually the summer before I even started at the program here. It was like on my birthday basically or right before my birthday. And I was in the car with another grad student who I had barely met for 18 hours. That was an experience. We really bonded over that. Shout out to Kendra, who has done an episode for the podcast as well. And then my other like main one is the Oregon solitary confinement step up reentry program or step down, which they're more commonly known. I was involved in that from like the get go. I helped with developing the randomized controlled trial, I helped kind of in more of a student, obviously see it helped kind of help them develop the unit, and then started working on the program evaluation. I've done, you know, 13/14 interviews with people in solitary confinement, restrictive housing, I guess, is what they would want us to call it. I've been to the prison, I've been to the unit. I've been into the restrictive housing cells. And yeah, then I've also done an interview with like a prison administrator, which was much more open ended and qualitative. So yeah, like getting to go into prisons as a corrections scholar is really cool, getting to meet administrators and talk to them and figure out how they feel about these programs, which I could go on forever about how difficult it is to implement programming and present or to create change. But it's a really cool opportunity when you actually get to do that and you have people who are on board wanting to do it and getting to talk to people who have been, you know, in prison, possibly for 40/50 years, or even some people that are a lot younger, they have a lot of experiences. And yeah, that is I mean, that is the fun part. It's so like, if you I mean, like the days that we would go into the prisons, they're so long, they're such long days, you get there like as soon as they'll possibly let you in, and you stay until it's dinner time. And like maybe you might leave to get lunch. But at the end of the day, you're like I just want to go to sleep. But then of course you have to do like the debriefing. Right with your team. You got to go through what happened, how the day went. What you can do better, but yeah, that's the I mean, that's the fun part. But there there is all that nitty gritty stuff though. Which is the majority of what we do.



Jose Sanchez 1:00:02

Yeah. Another fun part. But that is like is part of the nitty gritty is like survey development. So you and I both have have been part of survey development. So one of the great things that can come out of RAships is the data that you collect could then turn into your dissertation. And so if you have the opportunity to be on a project from the beginning, yeah I know, so we both have suffered setbacks because of COVID. But anyway, so in an ideal were ideal world, it would turn into sort of the basis for a dissertation. But then if you have the opportunity to be part of the survey development, it can be a real neat experience, because you can kind of see how it is that these things sort of come into fruition and how you decide what is going to be asked, and what's going to be included.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:00:50

How you're going to ask it, because that's really important.



Jose Sanchez 1:00:52

Yeah, how you're going to ask it. So like for us, we had to tweak questions to sort of compensate for the sort of average, like education level of the participants. You know, you can't throw out some fancy schmancy academic word. Sometimes you gotta use layman terms.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:01:11

Well, it depends on your age too. I have been involved in a survey development for a new project, or a new program evaluation, and some of our people could be 10. And you got to ask a 10 year old, a different, like, you can't word it the same as you would for an 18 year old.



Jose Sanchez 1:01:28

Yeah. But you also, so at least for me, I don't know if this is the same for you. But I get to sort of fight for some of the stuff that would be included. So if there were some measures that I wanted to have included, I had the chance to push for them and sort of make my case as to why they should be included. And also sort of promise that they wouldn't just go unused if we did collect them. Because you know, survey space is precious. So that was fun and interesting and a really good experience.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:02:00

Oh, yeah, I love survey development. I've helped. I don't even know how many surveys I've helped develop now at this way. And I just, it's so much fun. And they're all different. I mean, some of them have like similarities, but you have to think about your research questions and the goal of the project and what you're trying to get out of it. And learning, like the kinds of questions that you might originally think are like fantastic ideas, and then piloting your survey with people, which is important to do. And they're like, I don't even know what that means. And you have to figure out how to change your question. Because yeah, it has to be understood correctly by everyone. Yeah. But I mean, there's some of the nitty gritty stuff. That's not as superduper fun.



Jose Sanchez 1:02:47

Yeah, yeah, let's see what else. So I think with RAships, that can be a little bit more flexibility, which can be challenging. So like, I'm in charge of setting up my own ride alongs my own, like when I'm going to go out into the field and do whatever. So the onus is really on me, it's not like, when you're a TA, they tell you, you're going to have classes on these days at these hours.

So it's really on me to work with the participants to get that all set up and get it done. And, you know, make sure that I'm pulling my own weight in the project. So there's a level of double edged sword stuff with being an RA.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:03:30

And I mean, there are like with a TA ship, I mean, the typical hours is what 20 here? Some weeks, it's gonna be less, some weeks, it's gonna be a little bit more. But like sometimes with research assistantships, you are, you're working a lot. And you know, you want to do the work, because it's cool stuff. Not all the nitty gritty, but you're getting to the cool stuff. And so I mean, there are positives and negatives.



Jose Sanchez 1:04:00

Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:04:02

I mean, just like with a teaching assistantship with RAships, set the expectations at the beginning. Figure out if there's going to be publications that come out of it, and if so, what are the expectations for that? So on and so forth?



Jose Sanchez 1:04:16

Yeah, absolutely.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:04:18

Do you have any advice for RAships?



Jose Sanchez 1:04:21

Let's see. Stay super organized. Your calendars your best friend. It's gonna be really easy to forget things. So yeah, your calendar is crucial for keeping everything in order.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:04:35

And a lot of times, they're also like team meetings when you have an RAship. So that way everyone's on the same board, especially when you're like in the midst of collecting data.



Jose Sanchez 1:04:48

Yeah. Absolutely.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:04:49

There's so much to say about it, but I just... Yeah. If anyone wants to talk to us about research assistantships, we are more than welcome and happy to share our experiences and more details.



Jose Sanchez 1:05:03

Yeah, absolutely.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:05:05

Okay, let's move into the third subject just briefly, which is service and doing service work in grad school. There's really like three things that I kind of thought of, one of which is manuscript reviewing. The second one is like professional service, like a lot of grad students end up being panel chairs at conferences. And then the third one is engaging with your department or your university in service positions, which can entail all sorts of things. So let's just super quickly, let's start with the department service and work backward.



Jose Sanchez 1:05:40

Yeah, so for me, that's usually taken the role of serving on a committee. I've served on a couple, not too many. I try to do, I think I've done one every year. I think 2020, I might not have done one, mostly because of like, COVID stuff. And, you know, my kid and trying to get my, you know, my life kind of back on track. But I think I've tried to serve on at least one committee, every year that I've been here.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:06:11

I think it's pretty common for people to do most of their department service at the beginning of the Ph.D. program, and then kind of wean off of it as you move through. I've also done at least one every year, except last year, too. Yeah, 2020 was I didn't do anything last year. But



Jose Sanchez 1:06:31

Yeah, we're not counting that year.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:06:33

Yeah. But I mean, sometimes these service positions require a lot of commitment, like every other week or every week that you have to go and do something. Others, it's like, there's a lot

of commitments, but it's really grouped in like one month, like Jose and I both served on our graduate student Open House committee, where we've really kind of helped take the prospective students around and helped plan and go out to eat with them. But that's like all in March. Yeah. And some of them are even for shorter than that, where you're just like asked to be on a panel to talk about surviving the first year or thriving not surviving your first year.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 1:07:16

I will also point out that, I don't know that if it's a coincidence. But Jenn and I were on the open house committee the year that we had a gigantic cohort. Like 20 people accepted their offer to CU after Jenn and I threw what is apparently an amazing open house.

 **J** Jenn Tostlebe 1:07:38

And we're doing it this year, too. So come apply to CU.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 1:07:41


Well, we probably shouldn't take all the credit. There were like two other people on that committee.

 **J** Jenn Tostlebe 1:07:45

I know. But still. Come apply to CU, come hang out with us.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 1:07:51

So professional service, I've never been a panel chair, I don't think I'd have too much professional service to talk about.

 **J** Jenn Tostlebe 1:07:58

I've only done I've only been a panel chair once. And I was like thrown into it, which I think is pretty common. But if you've been to a conference, you've probably seen what a panel chair does. It's really just keeping track of time and introducing people. And that is a line that can go on your CV. So if you've done that, make sure you acknowledge it. I really don't know what else really fits under there. I mean, I have like the podcast on there.

 **J** Jose Sanchez 1:08:25

You can also like, you can also serve, so like for ASC, there's committees for ASC. There's like the ASC divisions and they also have committees that you can serve on. So yeah, is basically what you would do for your department just for a professional association, I think for the most

part.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:08:46

Alright. And then last but not least, manuscript reviewing. I got into reviewing manuscripts, I think I was in my second year of the program, and I did two of them with my main advisor, like, the first one we both did, and then we compared and the second one I wrote, and then he looked at it and we talked about it. And since then, I have just been doing them on my own. And you can get on the like, you can go and set yourself up to be a reviewer on different websites, like on different journal websites, if you've never done this before, you can kind of throw yourself into the mix. Otherwise, it's all about connections. Meeting people. Submitting manuscripts for publication.



Jose Sanchez 1:09:29

Yeah. You could also ask whoever your advisor is that if they ever come across a request for review, and they think that you might be good for it, to send it your way, especially right now that journals are hurting for reviewers. Yeah.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:09:46

Maybe we should do something on actually like reviewing a manuscript. That could be a good episode. We've We've kind of touched on that with our episode with Chris Sullivan.



Jose Sanchez 1:09:56

But he kind of gave us like the tips and tricks from an editor standpoint.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:00

Yeah. So maybe you'll see that coming out soon. Yeah,



Jose Sanchez 1:10:05

I like manuscript reviewing.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:06

I do too.



Jose Sanchez 1:10:07

It can be fun. You can kind of get exposed to what's kind of being submitted out there.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:13

If you're doing these and it feels like it's taking forever, that's okay. Apparently you get better at it and it goes quicker. I don't feel like I've reached that point yet. It still takes me like a full day to do a review.



Jose Sanchez 1:10:26

Yeah, I can crank them out in about four hours.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:29

Oh, that's good. It like takes me that long to figure out what I want to say. Cool. Service. It's good to do. Some of it isn't always the most thrilling, but I feel like I've learned a lot by doing all three different things. In particular, I mean, the majority that I've done is department service and manuscript reviewing.



Jose Sanchez 1:10:53

Same.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:10:53

And I always feel like I learned a lot by doing all of them. And it's good to get your feet wet in that stuff. So don't be scared to do it. You can do it.



Jose Sanchez 1:11:01

Yeah, yep. Absolutely. All right. Well, thank you, Jenn. Any final comments, discussion things you'd like to say?



Jenn Tostlebe 1:11:12


I don't think so. I mean, the main thing is just Jose and I actually have, I mean, going through this, I think both of us have a good amount of experience in all of these things at this point. So if you ever have any questions, yeah, feel free to reach out to us.





Jose Sanchez 1:11:29

I will agree with that. Anything that you'd like to plug?


I will agree with that. Anything that you'd like to plug?


 Jose Sanchez 1:11:34
Nope. What about you?


 Jose Sanchez 1:11:36
I don't think so, either. I mean, I have some stuff in the works, but I don't know when that's gonna come out. Hopefully soon. And you can find us on Twitter. I'm @JSanchez318.


 Jenn Tostlebe 1:11:51
I'm @JennTostlebe.

 Jose Sanchez 1:11:52
And @TheCrimAcademy.

 Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:00
Cool! Thanks, Jose!

 Jose Sanchez 1:12:02
Thanks, Jenn! Bye.

 Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:04
Bye.

 Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:05
Hey, thanks for listening.

 Jose Sanchez 1:12:07
Don't forget to leave us a review on Apple podcasts or iTunes. Or let us know what you think of the episode by leaving us a comment on our website, thecriminologyacademy.com.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:17

You can also follow us on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook @TheCrimAcademy. That's T-H-E-C-R-I-M-A-C-A-D-E-M-Y.



Jose Sanchez 1:12:29

Or email us at thecrimacademy AT gmail DOT com.



Jenn Tostlebe 1:12:33

See you next time.



Jose Sanchez 1:12:34

See you next time!