

Developing teachers and learners through the Learning Assistant program

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What are LAs?

Learning Assistants (LAs) are undergraduate students who work 10 hours/week in College of Science courses, to facilitate student learning in a variety of settings.

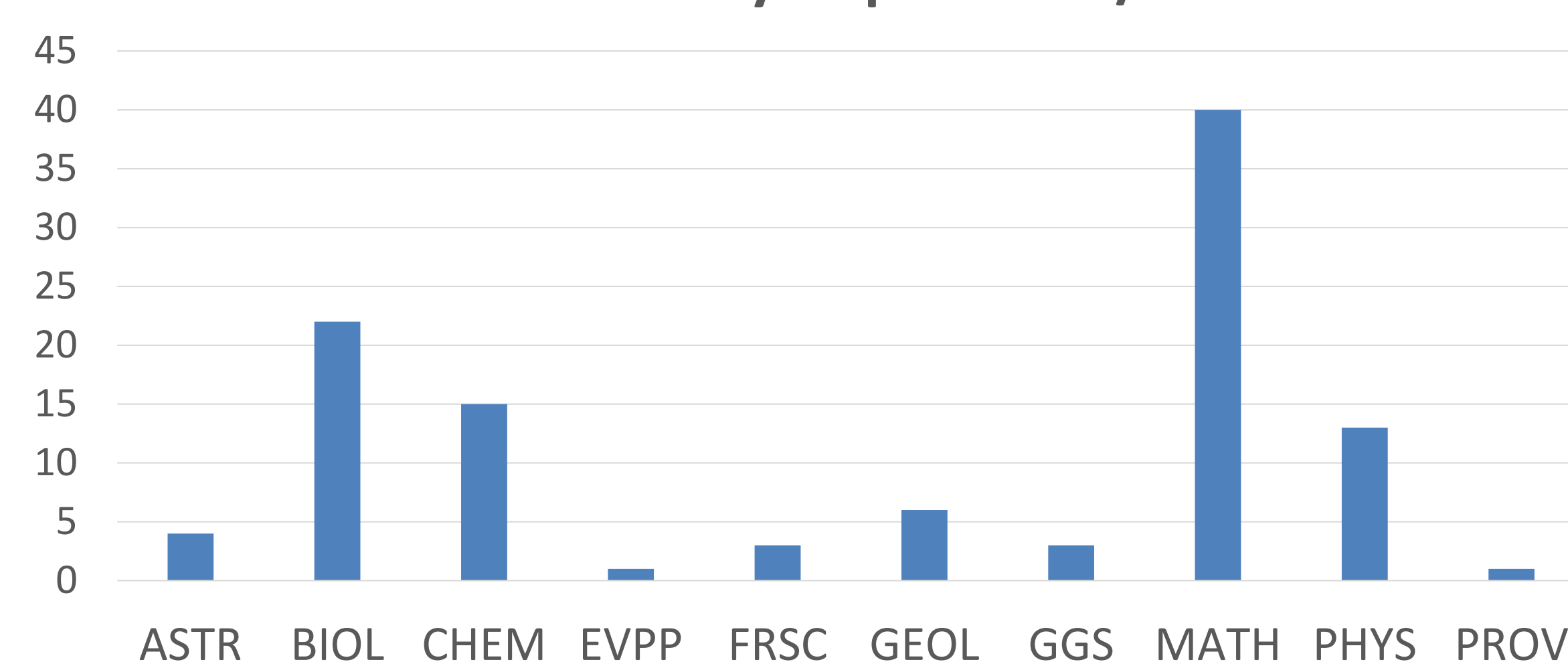


Who are LAs?

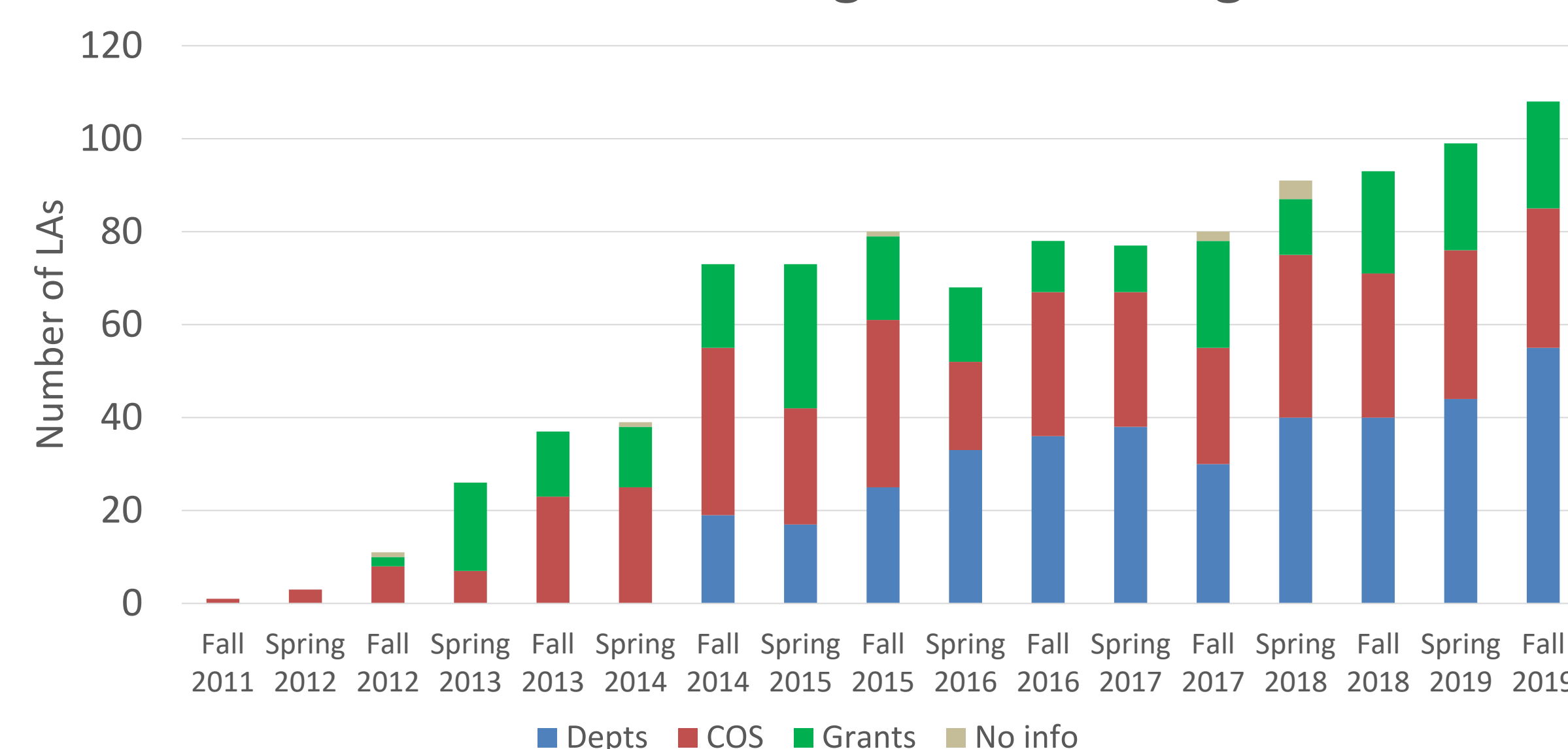
Fall 2019 LAs by the numbers:

- **108 LAs** → 67 new LAs, 41 returning LAs
- **39 courses** with LAs
- **45 lead faculty** working with LAs

Fall 2019 LAs by Department/Field



Growth of the Learning Assistant Program



What do LAs do?

Examples of courses with LAs:

Chemistry upper-level course

- Flipped class
- LAs facilitate group activities during class

Math intro course

- LAs facilitate group problem solving in recitation sections

Geology intro course

- LAs facilitate labs

Astronomy online course

- LAs interact with students online
- LAs hold optional sessions for in-person interaction

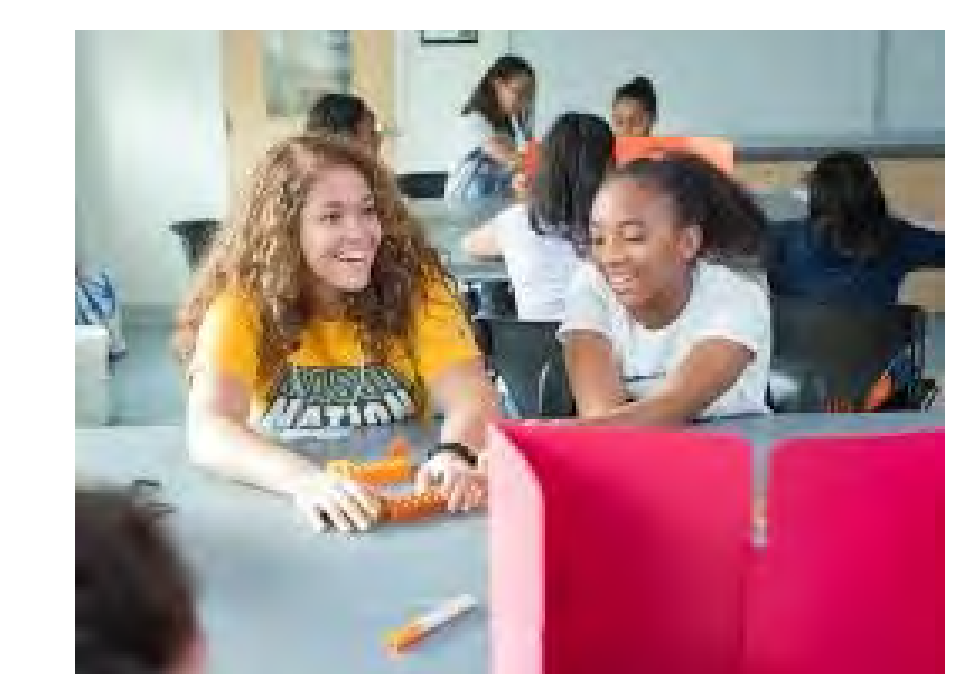
Biology upper-level course

- Traditional lecture structure
- LAs hold office hours outside class time



Physics for life sciences

- Large lecture with active-learning methods
- LAs facilitate discussions around clicker questions

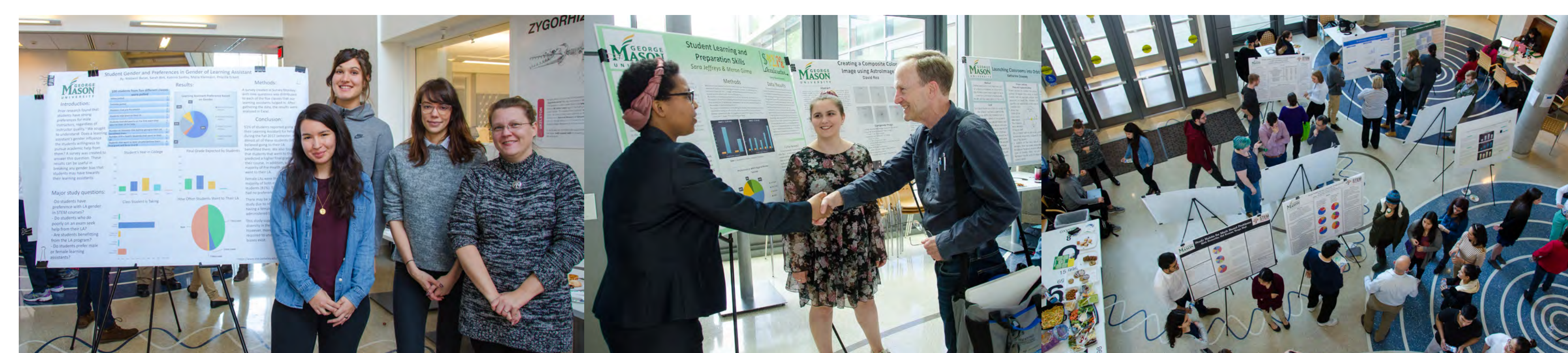


LA seminar

All first-time LAs participate in a weekly pedagogy seminar (UNIV391).

The seminar includes:

- Reflection on successes and challenges
- Applying the results of education research to our teaching
- Techniques for asking questions
- Understanding students' thinking
- A project where LAs develop, implement, evaluate, and present an active-learning activity



LAs in their own words

- "I am still incredibly grateful for this program. Without it, I wouldn't have realized I wanted to pursue a career in education."
- "Because of my experience with the LA program and the people I've met in my department, I feel confident translating these skills I've acquired in my time as a Learning Assistant into the professional world and beyond."
- "Being an LA has changed the way I look at problems, and has helped me to be able to reflect on my own learning process. It has enabled me to improve the way I learn new information, and has made me more organized as a student."
- "I find myself talking with other students in my classes and talking out concepts to make sure we both understand the material, which I may have picked up from being an LA."
- "My greatest joy came from students who, at the start of the semester, struggled with certain concepts in biology or chemistry, but, by the end of the semester, nailed all their exams and got an A in class!"
- "I find myself trying to find ways to ask myself questions about the material I'm learning, kind of like I would ask my students."

