



Facilitating Office Hours

- Look over the problem set in advance so that you can anticipate common student stumbling blocks.
- Ask students to rephrase the problem/assignment prompt in their own words and tell you where they are stuck.
- Encourage the student to list knowns, unknowns, and draw a diagram (where appropriate).
- Consider whether or not a visual aid would enhance your explanation.
- Ask student to explain and defend intermediate steps and their answer.
- Show empathy. If you struggled with the same concept when you were in the student's shoes, tell them. This will help the student see that with effort, they will come to understand the concept, too.
- Help the student get into the habit of considering limiting cases. This will help to make sure the student understands the problem conceptually and get a sense for the bounds of their solutions.
- Don't solve the problem for the student. While it might be tempting because it seems more efficient, it will most likely not help the student clear up their confusion.
- Don't use phrases like "this is easy." You might be saying it in an encouraging way, but a student might feel disheartened and lose confidence if they don't understand the "easy" stuff.