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## How can undergraduate learning assistants (LAs) help introductory STEM students learn more?

At over 200 learning assistants (LAs) this quarter, the UCLA implementation of this evidence-based program has tripled in size every year since it started three years ago (co-founded by Dr. Nadia Sellami, Dr. Heather Tienson, and myself). LAs now facilitate learning for instructors of more than 7,500 students across introductory courses in chemistry (Chem 14A-D; Chem 153A+B), physics, computer science, math, and life sciences.

What can LAs do? The program is very flexible, with almost all LAs facilitating learning during discussion or lab, and many facilitating learning during lecture, on discussion boards, or at collaborative learning sessions outside of class.

Education research studies on the nationwide LA program have found the following: increased short- and long-term student learning; decreased failure rates; increased student reasoning; increased implementation of "active learning" in either lecture or discussion; and decreased achievement gaps between dominant and non-dominant groups of students. At UCLA, we've been assessing the effects of LAs, both through student perceptions and student learning. In surveys across the LA-supported courses, 70-100% of students agree or strongly agree that LAs increased their learning. In more controlled studies across life science, physics and chemistry, we've found that LA assistance is associated with increased exam scores, conceptual understanding, and grades.

During this talk, I will give an overview of the current program, what is involved on the part of the instructor, and field questions about which courses are most appropriate for LAs.

More information at <https://ceils.ucla.edu/learningassistants>. If you have any questions you'd like answered at the talk, you can submit them here: <https://goo.gl/forms/v8093SrepaVWP4VY2>

**Tuesday, November 7, 2017**  
**3:00pm**  
**2033 Young Hall**