Student's Perceptions of Undergraduate Teaching Assistants as a Function of Time and Interpersonal Interaction

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Students in PSY 235-Child Psychology have access to peer support for their learning in the course vis-a-vis undergraduate teaching assistants (UTAs). How do students perceive UTAs, and do their perceptions change over the course of the semester? At the beginning of the semester, PSY 235 students completed a brief survey measuring their perceptions of the UTAs' knowledge, helpfulness, and availability, and the extent to which they anticipated using the UTAs as a resource to support their learning as the semester progressed. A second survey was administered at mid-semester in order to assess the extent to which changes in perceptions could be assessed. The second survey asked students to indicate the extent to which they had contact or interpersonal interaction with one or more of the UTAs to date (e.g., during class, via e-mail, etc.). A total of 128 students completed both surveys. Students' baseline perceptions of the UTAs will be discussed and compared to their mid-semester perceptions; the results of correlational analyses assessing the relations among students' earlier and later perceptions of the UTAs, the amount and types of contact they have had with the UTAs, and their first two unit exam scores will be presented and discussed.