

Ruth Oni

AY 2018-19 All-S.T.A.R. Fellow

College of Agriculture and Natural Resources

Department Nutrition and Food Science

4th year Graduate Student, RA



I have served both as a Teaching and Research Assistant ever since my graduate education began in 2010. Over the years, I have come to appreciate how much these opportunities have helped improve my academic knowledge-base, sharpen my confidence as a food scientist, and hone my communication, leadership and professional skills.

The opportunities I have had to conduct research alongside my pedagogical responsibilities, has increased my confidence in my ability to multitask effectively. Specifically, the projects I have participated in as an RA have broadened my interests beyond the scope of my own studies. I have had multiple opportunities to collaborate with scholars and representatives from government and industry within the Food Science profession, all of which have been greatly enriching to my career. Additionally, in my role as a TA, the interactions I have been privileged to have with undergrads have helped me embody compassion for students who struggle with challenging class materials or traditional learning environments. After considerable encouragement and gentle nudges in the right direction, it is always heartwarming to see these students blossom after initial struggles. Retrospectively, my experience as a TA was the biggest influence in my decision to consider a career as a teaching faculty.

Graduate school continues to be both an exhilarating and fulfilling experience - the highs and lows, the successes as well as the failures - all have shaped me into the individual I am today. Unquestionably, this would have been impossible without the privilege to serve as a Graduate Assistant.