

GRSC 7770: Seminar for Graduate Teaching Assistants An Introduction to Teaching History

Class time and location: Mondays, 5:45-7:45, LeConte Hall, 201
Instructor: Ivy Holliman
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Office hours: By appointment
Office location: LeConte Hall, Rm 126

This course syllabus is a general plan for the course: deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to teaching history as a graduate teaching assistant at the University of Georgia. It is a discipline-specific equivalent to the GRSC 7770-Level 3 course required for all new graduate teaching assistants by the University. The class is designed to prepare teaching assistants for their new role at the University of Georgia as well as for potential careers involving instruction at other institutions.

This course is structured in a front-loaded format so that teaching assistants will have maximum exposure to important topics before they enter the classroom for the first time. This format will also allow the class to better meet your needs throughout the semester as a developing teacher. Our sessions will include:

- Techniques to organize and effectively conduct the first class meeting of a course
- Discussion of range of options for dealing effectively with students and classroom problems
- Practice in planning, organizing, and leading class discussions and lectures
- Discussion of good test design and valid evaluations
- How to evaluate one's own teaching
- Using a variety of teaching methods in the classroom
- Departmental and institutional resources for teaching
- University and departmental instructional policies
- Opportunities to document the graduate teaching experience for future careers in the academy and elsewhere

This course will not only include general practical and pedagogical information that can be useful for a beginning TA in any field, but also offers techniques and activities that are particularly appropriate for teaching history. This material should make teaching not only less daunting for you, but also more rewarding for both you and your students. In addition, you will meet and learn from some of the department's outstanding instructors, both faculty and fellow graduate students. The faculty and your colleagues are your most important source for teaching advice and support; this class is designed as a supplement to that resource.

Grading

This course is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. To earn an S for this course, students are required to attend each of the sessions and to prepare for each session by reading the text, completing the assignments in a timely fashion, and participating in class discussions on teaching. Your written work will receive comments rather than a conventional letter grade, as the main concern is that you complete the work.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend each session. If you have an excused absence, please notify the instructor well before the scheduled class time to arrange a make-up. Unexcused absences on a presentation day will result in

a U for the course. More than two unexcused absences (i.e. without documentary evidence of a medical or family emergency) will result in a U for the course.

Disability or Health Related Issue

Students with a disability or health related issue who need a class accommodation should make an appointment to speak with me as soon as possible.

A Culture of Honesty

All academic work must meet the standards contained in “A Culture of Honesty.” Each student is responsible for becoming informed about those standards before performing any academic work.

Required Texts

1. *The UGA Handbook for Graduate Teaching Assistants* (Distributed by the Office of Instructional Support and Development and also available online). You should have received this handbook during the university-wide GTA orientation. If you do not have a copy, please let me know.
2. Wilbert L. McKeachie, *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, Eleventh edition, 2001. ISBN # 0618116494

You may purchase this at the UGA bookstore, the Off Campus and FTX Bookstores, or online. Seasoned history graduate students have found a number of good, inexpensive online booksellers and would be happy to recommend a couple websites.

Class Requirements

The requirements for this course center primarily on discussing methods for being successful in the classroom. As such, being an active seminar participant will enrich not only your experience in this seminar but also your performance and enjoyment as an instructor.

There will be four written assignments:

1. Classroom Assessment technique

DUE DATE: October 3rd

The first assignment is a grading exercise designed to prepare you for what will likely be your first experience with evaluating student work. These will be handed out in our weekly class meeting the week of September 26th and will be due the following Monday.

2. Lesson Plan

DUE DATE: October 17th

In this assignment, you will design a lesson plan for one class. The format will be of your choosing, but it should detail a particularly interesting or creative approach to teaching history. For example, perhaps you might like to make up a Jeopardy review game for a 2112 survey class. Perhaps you will re-write the lyrics to the Gilligan’s Island theme song to help students remember the steps leading to the Civil War. From this lesson plan, you will present a “mini” five-minute teach. In addition to the copy you will hand in, please bring copies for each student in the seminar.

3. Peer Observation

DUE DATE: October 31st

For your third assignment, you will observe two of your peers while they lead discussion sections. As an important part of this assessment, you will need to provide a one-page written review. You will be given an evaluation sheet to help guide you in this process. Please provide two copies of the evaluation.

4. Revised Statement of your teaching philosophy **DUE DATE: November 14th**

The final assignment will be to revise your teaching philosophy. No stressing here, this is not going to be submitted for the Pulitzer Prize. You will have plenty of opportunities to revise this as you continue in

your graduate career—this is just an exercise in putting down on paper a couple of your thoughts about teaching history. What life experience(s) have you had that caused you to decide on history as a field, or teaching as a profession? What teachers/professors have you admired and why? What do you want your students to “get out” of your classroom? How might you help students achieve your classroom goals? Again, this is a heavy thought assignment, but one you will be able to revise over and over again throughout your graduate and professional life. So do not worry over it too much. I will provide you with a handout with some suggestions for writing your teaching philosophy a month before this assignment is due.

GRSC SCHEDULE (Note: first 2 sessions take place before regular Monday class begins)

Monday, August 15 th 2:30-4:30, LeConte 102	Introduction: So you're going to teach history? Departmental expectations for HIST 2111/2112 t.a.s Administrative basics and insider tips on teaching 2111/2112 Overview of GRSC course & university resources for t.a.s Writing your preliminary teaching philosophy	
Tuesday, August 16 th 2-4, LeConte 102	Preparing to Teach Who are your students? Should I write a discussion section syllabus? Strategies for the first day of class Creating a positive classroom climate	READ: TT, 2 & 3
Monday, August 22 nd 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	The Basics: Discussion and Lecture Facilitating discussion: posing problems, questioning, and learning Lecturing effectively	READ: TT, 4 & 5
Monday, August 29 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Testing and Grading/Time Management How to grade fairly, efficiently, and consistently Writing and administering reliable tests Academic dishonesty issues Office hours/EMail And responses to, “If I don’t get a B, I’ll lose my HOPE scholarship...”	READ: TT, 6-8
Monday, September 5 th	NO CLASS, LABOR DAY	
Monday, September 12 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Learning How Students Learn/Dealing with Diversity Responding to different learning styles Finding your own teaching style Ethical Considerations	READ: TT, 10, 26
Monday, September 19 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Early reactions to your Teaching Experience and how award-winning history t.a.s handle problem students Guest Speakers: fellow history graduate students Advice from the veterans	READ: TT, 11 & 12

** (Please bring to class a one-page list of questions, problems, and/or concerns that you have come across so far as a teaching assistant to share with the rest of the class—we’ll try to resolve some of them.)

Monday, September 26 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Getting your discussion section to read & write READ: TT 13 & 14 Developing alternative classroom assessment techniques Incorporating low-stakes, informal writing assignments How to critique student writing effectively
Monday, October 3 rd 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Interactive Teaching (Classroom Assessment Techniques due) READ: TT, 15, 23 Anticipating and responding to student questions Student-led review sessions Small groups, team work, and peer learning
Monday, October 10 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Active Learning pedagogies READ: TT, 16, 18, 20 Problem-based learning, service learning Encouraging active learning in the large survey class
Monday, October 17 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Lesson Plans: Building your Repertoire (Lesson Plans due) READ: TBA Lesson Plans distributed to all GRSC students Five-minute teach
Monday, October 24 th 5:45-7:45, <u>SLC, 372</u>	Teaching With Technology How to use WebCT Technological resources at UGA for your classroom Using other media as teaching tools Guest Speaker: Sherry Clouser, Office of Instructional Support and Development
Monday, October 31 st 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Getting student feedback (Peer Observations due) READ: TT, pp.323-331 Creating a mid-term informal course evaluation Identifying weaknesses in your own teaching
Monday, November 7 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte 102	Steps to Developing your own course Writing your teaching philosophy Planning a syllabus Constructing assignments, tests, and exams
Monday, November 14 th 5:45-7:45, LeConte <u>101</u>	Documenting your Teaching (Teaching Philosophy due) How to create a teaching portfolio Guest Speaker: Paul Quick, Office of Instructional Support and Development