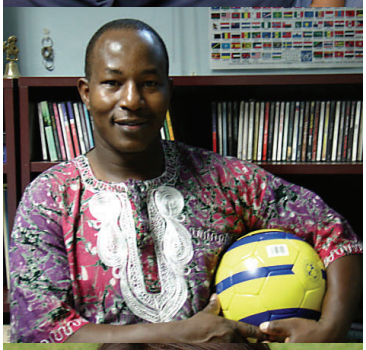
MSU TA

A Handbook for MSU Teaching Assistants
2008 – 2009

Fifth Edition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FOREWORD

Welcome to the profession of teaching. We who have planned and written this Handbook wish you every success in your role as a teaching assistant. For us, teaching is an integral part of our professional identity. Effectiveness in the classroom is, in our experience, among the most satisfying aspects of being a professor. Yet, like many of our colleagues, much of what we know about teaching we learned the hard way—on our own and through painful trial-and-error.

We can recall the mistakes and anxieties of our first weeks as teachers or teaching assistants: the dull lectures; the questions we couldn't answer; the errors on the board; the failed discussion sections; the poorly designed quizzes; the ambiguous exam questions; the insensitivity to student concerns; and so on. However, we persevered. We reflected on our mistakes and tried to eliminate them. We sought advice from those with whom we felt safe in admitting our worries and ignorance. We tracked down what little was written about college teaching and teaching in our respective disciplines. It was slow going, but gradually we improved. We became more competent, which increased our confidence, which (in a *virtuous* circle) further contributed to our competence.

A central aim of this handbook is to spare you from having to take weeks, months, or even years to discover on your own what can be learned from the collective experience and careful research of others. What you find in these pages will enable you to avoid some of our mistakes and accelerate your development as an effective—inspired and inspiring—teacher. Your activities as a teaching assistant will, we hope, become among the most satisfying parts of your graduate education.

Just as hindsight usually suggests ways to improve even the best courses, so too your thoughtful comments and suggestions will allow us to improve subsequent editions of this Handbook. As you are a beginning teacher, we are relative beginners at putting together a Handbook for New Teaching Assistants. Thus, we welcome your ideas about how the Handbook could be better adapted to meet your needs.

Best wishes for a terrific year—both as a student and as a TA.

The MSU Handbook Editorial Committee and
Karen Klomparens, Associate Provost for Graduate Education and Dean of the Graduate School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This, the fifth edition of *MSU TA*, is the result of the efforts of many MSU faculty and staff. The original Handbook Committee, who shaped its direction and concept, and compiled, wrote, and edited *MSU TA,* consisted of Dr. Ann Austin, Dr. Martin Benjamin, Dr. Elaine Cherney, Dr. Jelena Gill, Dr. Karen Klomparens, Dr. Gail Richmond, Dr. Barbara Steidle, Dr. Marilyn Wilson, and Sherry Wynn. I am indebted to my predecessors, Mike George, Steve Chalk, Barry DeCoster, and to Dr. Bill Rittenberg, for their work on previous versions of *MSU TA*.

Several handbooks from other universities were helpful in both the conception of *MSU TA* and its subsequent revisions, including: *Mentor: A Handbook for New Teaching Assistants (6th Edition)*, U of Washington; *Teaching at Ohio State University: A Handbook*, The Ohio State University; A *Handbook for Teaching Assistants*, The University of Tennessee, and *Teaching at North Carolina*, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. I would like to thank the Office of the Provost, the Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education, MSU University Ombudsman, The Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives, The Graduate School, The English Language Center, and The Graduate Employees Union. Thanks too go to Denise Greenhoe, MSU TAP Office Manager, Zeynep Altinsel, ITA Coordinator, and the rest of our staff for providing the support that continue to make *MSU TA* possible.

Finally, MSU TAP is grateful most of all to MSU TAs. Working with them enriches our lives.

Kevin M. Johnston

MSU TA 2008-2009
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INTRODUCTION

This handbook addresses you in your role as a Michigan State University Teaching Assistant (hereafter referred to as TA).[1] Your teaching assistantship is an essential part of your introduction to your profession. Moreover, one of the most important goals of the University is to offer effective instruction to MSU students. Your success as a TA will depend on the ways that you learn to understand the University and its students. To this end, we hope that this handbook will be a useful tool as you begin your career at MSU.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

This manual is full of suggestions, pedagogical models, and resources. There is too much here to digest at one sitting. **For quick reference, however, we have provided you at the end of each section a selective bibliography of works addressing the issues covered in each chapter.** We anticipate that our audience has varied teaching preparation and experience. We also know that assistantship responsibilities vary from department to department. In order for you to best use the handbook, we have therefore tried to provide enough variation to serve your different needs. We suggest that you give the handbook a good general once-over, noting sections that are immediately useful to you based on your responsibilities and needs at this time.

Do not allow the handbook's breadth to overwhelm you. It is a valuable resource; one that you will be able to refer to repeatedly. We suggest that you create your own loose-leaf binder to insert helpful essays, your syllabi, workshop notes, and student evaluations. Perhaps you might consider eventually participating in MSU's Teaching Certification Program, which as part of its requirements for completion has participants create a professional teaching portfolio.[2] The handbook will make a fine addition to your portfolio as it grows with your experience. So please, look at this Handbook only as part of a recording and documentary process. It will better reflect your path to becoming an effective teacher.

Before you begin employing any of the suggestions contained herein, however, please familiarize yourself with your department's procedures. Your department should also have a handbook or similar information resources for you to consult, both for administrative and pedagogical issues. It is essential that you find out just what your department expects concerning all issues of instruction before you begin planning for your assistantship duties.

ASSUMING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF A PROFESSIONAL

As a TA, you face a variety of challenges. Often, the typical new appointee is also a first-time graduate student, facing the challenges of personal study and career goal setting. The newly appointed TA may have no teaching experience, and may be facing that status now only because a TA appointment provides a source of funding. The typical TA may have given very little thought to what it means to be a teacher. Under these circumstances, novice TAs are probably most concerned about mastering and communicating

[1] As of May 2002, MSU teaching assistants voted to select the Graduate Employees Union to represent them in bargaining with the MSU Administration. As part of the bargaining process, the GEU requested that teaching assistants be referred to as "graduate employees." For the purposes of this handbook, we use the terms "teaching assistant." Visit the GEU Website for more information http://www.geuatmsu.org/.

[2] See http://grad.msu.edu/teaching.htm for more information about the Certification in College Teaching Program.

the content of their subjects effectively; however, the position of Teaching Assistant involves another dimension as well, that of professional responsibility, or "professionalism."

Some professional responsibilities may be explicit. There may be weighty formal or informal sanctions for not discharging them. For TAs at MSU, the "Code of Teaching Responsibility" is the formal professional standard which creates a context not only for the behavior of TAs but also for faculty. A segment from the Code follows:

MSU Policies on Teaching

Code of Teaching Responsibility (*Michigan State University Academic Programs, 2004 – 2006. Also located at http://www.hr.msu.edu/HRsite/Documents/Faculty/Handbooks/Faculty/Instruction/v-codeofteaching.htm. See also MSU Academic Programs, http://www.reg.msu.edu/UCC/AcademicPrograms.asp for more information.*)

CODE OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

This policy was approved by the Academic Council on November 4, 1969 and the Academic Senate on November 19, 1969; it was subsequently revised by Academic Council on May 19, 1976, February 27, 1996, and April 19, 2005 (effective Fall semester 2005).

Satisfaction of teaching responsibilities by instructional staff members (herein referred to as instructors) is essential to the successful functioning of a university. This University conceives these responsibilities to be so important that performance by instructors in meeting the provisions of this Code shall be taken into consideration in determining salary increases, tenure, and promotion.

1. **Course content:** Instructors shall be responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach is consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the Academic Council. Instructors shall direct class activities toward the fulfillment of course objectives and shall evaluate student performance in a manner consistent with these objectives.

2. **Course syllabi:** Instructors shall be responsible for distributing a course syllabus (either in print or electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus shall minimally include:
   (a) instructional objectives;
   (b) instructor contact information and office hours;
   (c) grading criteria and methods used to determine final course grades;
   (d) date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests, if applicable;
   (e) attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades; and
   (f) required and recommended course materials to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies.

3. **Student Assessment and Final Grades:** Instructors shall be responsible for informing students, in a timely manner so as to enhance learning, of the grading criteria and methods used to determine grades on individual assignments. Instructors shall be responsible for assessing a student's performance based on announced criteria and on standards of academic achievement. Instructors shall submit final course grades in accordance with University deadlines.

4. **Testing Documents:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning to students student answers to quizzes, tests, and examinations with such promptness to enhance the learning experience. Instructors shall retain final examination answers for at least one semester to allow students to review or to retrieve them. All testing questions (whether on quizzes, tests, or mid-semester or final examinations) are an integral part of course materials, and the decision whether to allow students to retain them is left to the discretion of the instructor.

5. **Term Papers and Comparable Projects:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning to students student term papers and other comparable projects with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience. Term papers and other comparable projects are the property of students who prepare them. Instructors shall retain such unclaimed course work for at least one semester to allow students to retrieve such work. Instructors have a right to retain a copy of student course work for their own files.

6. **Class Meetings:** Instructors shall be responsible for meeting their classes regularly and at scheduled times. To allow units to take appropriate action, instructors shall notify their units if they are to be absent and have not made suitable arrangements regarding their classes.

7. **Applicability of the Code of Teaching Responsibility to Student Assistants:** Instructors of courses in which assistants are authorized to perform teaching, grading, or other instructional functions shall be responsible for acquainting such individuals with the provisions of this Code and for monitoring their compliance.

8. **Instructor Accessibility to Students:** Instructors shall be responsible for being accessible to students outside of class time and therefore shall schedule and keep office hours for student conferences. Office hours should be scheduled at times convenient to both students and instructors with the additional option of mutually convenient prearranged appointments for students whose schedules conflict with announced office hours. Each teaching unit shall determine the minimum number of office hours for instructors in that unit. Instructors who serve as academic advisors also shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate office hours before and during enrollment periods. In addition to office hours, instructor accessibility through e-mail and other means is encouraged.

9. **Commercialization of Course Notes and Materials:** The University prohibits students from commercializing their notes of lectures and University-provided class materials *without the written consent of the instructor*. Instructors may allow commercialization by including permission in the course syllabus or other written statement distributed to all students in the class.

Hearing Procedures

1. Students may register complaints regarding an instructor's failure to comply with the provisions of the *Code of Teaching Responsibility* directly with that instructor.

2. Students may also take complaints directly to teaching units' chief administrators or their designates. If those persons are unable to resolve matters to the student's satisfaction, they are obligated to transmit written complaints to unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A copy of any complaint transmitted shall be sent to the instructor. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the student and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

3. Complaints coming to the University Ombudsman will be reported, in writing, to chief administrators of the teaching units involved when in the Ombudsman's opinion a hearing appears necessary. It will be the responsibility of chief administrators or their designates to inform the instructor and to refer such unresolved complaints to the unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A written report of the action or

recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the University Ombudsman, to the student, and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

4. Students wishing to appeal a teaching unit action or recommendation may do so as outlined in *Academic Freedom Report for Students at Michigan State University*, *Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities*, *or* *Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities*.

   Such complaints must normally be initiated no later than the middle of the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred. Exceptions shall be made in cases where the involved instructor or student is absent from the University during the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred.

Thinking Professionally

1) Thinking of oneself as a professional does not come automatically to most people. New TAs must consciously strive to think of themselves as professionals, with duties and responsibilities that transcend those of their non-professional, private selves. At first, this behavior may seem strained, but it is the first step toward developing professional awareness. At this stage, the attitudes and behavior of a conscientious faculty supervisor may serve as a good role model.

2) Many new TAs have recently been undergraduates, and all TAs are students. Yet, the TA has an asymmetrical relationship with his or her own students. This is reflected in the TA's power toward the students. TAs may have a variety of feelings toward and relationships with their students, but the one constant is that the TA holds the power in the relationship.

With greater power comes greater responsibility. If a problem occurs between two students, the same moral standards apply to both. If the same problem occurs between a TA and a student, the TA often has a different and larger moral responsibility than the student. Even when a student initiates trouble (cheating, a racial insult, abusive behavior, self-destructive behavior in class, and so on), the TA as a professional is responsible for the student. The TA cannot walk away from the situation with the attitude that, "I didn't do this, so I'm not responsible." Realizing and genuinely accepting such responsibility for dealing with other people's problems might not be pleasant for a new TA, but this is part of what TAs are hired to do.

3) A TA's personal, non-professional preferences, reactions, and inclinations might conflict with his or her professional duties. In that case, the TA must exercise professional restraint and NOT follow personal preferences or reactions. At first, this may require that a TA very consciously separate his or her "private" self from his or her "professional" self. Eventually, as the TA becomes more comfortable with the professional role, the "private" and the "professional" selves can be re-integrated.

4) Developing professionalism involves developing the skill, separate from one's mastery of the content and procedures of one's discipline, to deal with challenging situations that involve professional responsibility. Such skill building takes time and resolve. Though new TAs may not handle every situation perfectly, the desire to learn from mistakes and develop as professionals can turn errors and unpleasant situations into valuable learning experiences.

Acting Professionally

Some specific behaviors on the part of new TAs will demonstrate that they are serious about their desire to develop professional competence. The following list is not exhaustive, but serves to illustrate the type of behavior expected of professionals.

1. Most importantly, learn and take seriously the policies regarding your role.

2. Learn to enforce the policies fairly. Be firm and uphold standards. It may involve making decisions that disappoint others.

3. Be a reliable worker. If a student, a colleague, or a teaching team is depending on your input, get the task done well and on time.

4. Know the context and the limitations within which you work. If you are not authorized to change rules or make decisions, do not act unilaterally. Confer responsibly with professional colleagues and faculty supervisors to determine what you may and may not do.

5. Respect the dignity of all students. Put aside your personal biases.

6. Maintain proper boundaries between professional and personal relationships. In general, avoid personal relationships with non-peers—either your students or your professors.

7. Restrain your responses to student conflicts. Attempt to hear and understand their concerns. Remember the ways in which you bear the greater responsibility in your relationship with students.

8. Deal responsibly with problems of course organization and sensitive relations with co-workers. In large courses served by teams of TAs, it is especially important that you take responsibility and ownership for the course, even if you are not in control of certain approaches or procedures and disagree with them. Make reasonable criticisms in planning meetings, not in class with your students. Deal maturely and ethically with the frustrations and difficulties that attend any large-scale project.

9. Be cautious and discreet about the use of information. Respect privacy. Know the limits of your authority, and the prerogatives of those requesting information.

Knowledge and skill in one's discipline is the first requisite of being a teacher or a professor. In addition, you must adhere to a professional code of conduct, which demands skill and restraint, as you meet the challenges and difficulties of the profession with dignity and balance. It may take years to develop a sense of oneself as a competent, discerning professional, but it is important for new TAs to take the first steps of that journey.

Acting Collegially

Unlike other professions, teaching occurs at what Parker Palmer calls "the dangerous intersection of personal and public life."[3] Your work as a TA is not like the personal work of a therapist. Your primary duties do not include guiding individual students, one by one, on a personal journey during which intimate confidences are shared. At the same time, your work is not like the work of a lawyer or civil servant who puts aside personal feelings in order to be an advocate for a client who may or may not share your values and goals. The work that you, your students, and your faculty mentor share is work that is motivated by

[3] Parker Palmer, *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998, 17.

deep intellectual passions and performed in a relatively public place, the university. This is what it means to be a colleague.

What makes this path dangerous, of course, is that it is very easy to slip off to one side or the other. You can get too close to your students and lose your objectivity. You can keep them at more than an arm's length and deprive them, as well as yourself, of some of the most satisfying moments a teacher can know. When we forget what it means to be a colleague, we can lose sight of our own passion for the intellectual work we do and begin to fear our students, our own teachers, and eventually our own inadequacies to the point that the work becomes a burden. On the other hand, what makes your work as a TA so gratifying, sometimes a sheer pleasure, are those moments when you do find common ground with colleagues. For example, those moments in class when you and your students are working together to solve a problem, clarify a question, and map out a new research design; those moments in office hours when a misunderstanding gets cleared up and you are both ready to move on; and those moments with a faculty mentor when you feel free to let your imagination speak. Colleagues, of course, can be friends as well. That is hardly forbidden. They can also work strictly by the book. Sometimes that is necessary. What make your work as a teacher distinctive are the opportunities you will have to create this unusual connection as colleague. It is not something you will find elsewhere.

YOU AND YOUR DEPARTMENT / TEACHING ASSISTANT ROLES

The subsequent sections of this handbook have been written so that they will be generally useable by TAs across the campus. MSU employs teaching assistants in almost every department and several program offices. These departments utilize TAs in various ways. Even within departments, TAs may have different levels of responsibility (see below). Even in situations where the TA is the instructor, responsibilities widely vary. Some departments provide a syllabus and determine the course objectives. Other departments expect the TA to set grading polices, write a syllabus, and to construct tests and assignments. There are many variations in between. Below is a list of some of the duties TAs across campus perform. Section numbers that will be of particular interest to TAs are in parentheses, but we stress that for most TA assignments the information presented in this handbook as a whole is applicable.

If you have questions about the handbook, classroom procedures, testing, etc., check with your supervising department or refer to any department-specific orientation materials you may have been given. Though you will find excellent general advice throughout this handbook, your first obligation is to heed the expectations of your department, and in many cases the professor of record (the professor in charge of teaching the course) with whom you work.

"Teaching One's Own Section." The TA is assigned to teach his or her own class. The amount of responsibility will vary from department to department. In some, TAs are responsible for their own syllabi, course requirements, midterms, and final exams. Other departments have standardized syllabi and exams, and the TA is responsible for covering the necessary material. (Chapters 2, 3, 4,)

"Recitation Section." The TA is responsible for a section within a large lecture course. The lecture is usually given by a faculty member (the instructor of record) and may have an enrollment of up to 500 or 600 students. The lecture class is split into small recitation sections of 20 or 30 students who meet twice a week or so to clarify lecture topics or go over homework problems. (Chapters 3, 4)

"Lab Section." The TA is responsible for a section of a laboratory class. The TA assists students with experiments and other hands-on assignments. Common in Chemistry, Computer Science, and other technically oriented courses. (Chapters 3, 4)

"Helproom." The TA is required to spend designated hours in a room with 3 or 4 other TAs answering the questions of students who come for help with the class material. Most common in Mathematics and Chemistry. ("Office Hours," Chapters 3, 4)

"Office Hours." The TA maintains designated times during the week to be available in his or her office to answer students' questions. (Office Hours, Safe Environment, Chapter 4)

"Grading." The TA is assigned to one or more professors to grade papers, midterm examinations, final examinations, and other assignments. (Grading, Assessment, Evaluating Learning, Chapter 4)

THE UNIVERSITY, ITS VALUES, AND YOU

You have joined MSU at a time of change and challenge. We value educational excellence, the scholarly quest for knowledge, academic freedom, intellectual integrity, creativity, fairness, and respect.

As a member of this University, you will be working with a rich variety of individuals who, by virtue of their involvement in education and research, belong to a unique community of scholars and learners. In his "Guiding Principles," former MSU President Peter McPherson stated that in order to accomplish its goals, MSU must: improve ACCESS TO QUALITY education and expert knowledge; achieve more ACTIVE LEARNING; generate new KNOWLEDGE AND SCHOLARSHIP across the mission; promote PROBLEM SOLVING to address society's needs; advance DIVERSITY WITHIN COMMUNITY; and make PEOPLE MATTER.

Diversity (See also for more information, the office of Inclusion and Intercultural Studies, *http://www.msu.edu/~aacm/index.html*)

One of the most positive features of your university experience will be your exposure to a broad range of cultures and ideas different from your own. You will see students who graduated from small rural schools in the upper peninsula of Michigan, large inner city schools in Detroit, Department of Defense schools in Taiwan, private Eastern prep schools, as well as those from local public schools such as East Lansing, Lansing, and Okemos. You will encounter students who will consider Lansing the largest city they have ever visited. You will meet students, faculty, and staff from a broad range of countries. The diversity of our students, faculty, and staff has enabled MSU to become a global multiversity that reaches across the state, the nation, and the world. MSU's plan for building an exemplary multicultural environment originally was outlined in MSU *IDEA II* (1992). The "Executive Summary" of *MSU IDEA II* (1992) states:

“Central to the plan is increasing the presence of under-represented groups within the faculty, administration, staff and student population. *MSU IDEA II* also directs attention to the value of diversity as reflected in individual differences based on religion, ethnicity, national origin, and sexual orientation.”

As a member of the MSU teaching staff you will be expected to embrace these values and exemplify them in your teaching, research and service activities. For only if we are truly a multicultural community will we be able to maintain excellence and provide leadership to the larger state, national, and international communities we serve.

Your Role in the MSU Community

To be a good teacher is a highly complex activity involving more than just the transmission of information to a group of eager students. We would hope that all your students would arrive at each session early stay after with a myriad of questions, and vote you the best teacher they ever had. Reality suggests, however, that some of your students will arrive late, leave early, and be shocked when you announce the first test although the date is in your syllabus. When your students fill out their Student Information Ratings (SIRS), some of the students will say that you were the best teacher they ever had, others will say that you were the worst, and the great mass in the middle will indicate your teaching was okay. Still, you will find teaching challenging and rewarding. You will be able to seek help from a variety of faculty and staff

members who will be eager to assist you. In addition, your college and department might offer seminars and opportunities for professional improvement. We hope that you will take advantage of the great variety of learning opportunities that are available to you at MSU. Finally, teachers engage in cycles of learning during which they try a practice, observe its effects, and decide how and when they will use a similar practice. The best teachers know not only what they are doing but also why it works and why it is likely to work in one kind of environment and not in another. It is our hope that you will use the vast resources of the University and your opportunities as a graduate assistant to become a fine and reflective teacher.

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Chapter I

WHO ARE MSU UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS?[1]

With an undergraduate population of about 35,821 students, and a graduate/professional student population of 9,699, Michigan State University has one of the largest single-campus populations of undergraduate students in the nation. Nearly 7500 students (4242 female, 3243 male) made up our 2005 fall freshman class. As a Teaching Assistant, you will have contact with a broad spectrum of the undergraduate population. Students, especially freshmen, tend not to differentiate very much between teaching assistants and regular faculty. They will rely on you for academic purposes, but they are also likely to raise a number of concerns external to the classroom or to seek sources of advice from you. We need to challenge our students—from their first days at the University—to engage actively in the learning community. Over the past few years, we have initiated a series of ventures to acclimate freshmen more effectively into the life of the University and to emphasize the connections among the academic, the co-curricular, and the residential aspects of their daily lives. To introduce them to the culture of the University, they have been greeted with a book of letters by faculty, addressing what they value in the University and their aspirations for their students. The freshmen, in turn, are charged with writing a "history of their future" at MSU, which they will later revise to reflect their actual experience. These essays are intended to get the students thoughtfully engaged in their education and may serve to launch their portfolios or to generate discussions about issues that excite, puzzle, or trouble them. Faculty, advisors, or teaching assistants may become sounding boards for such discussions. We hope that, having mastered the secrets of succeeding at the University, you will be generous in sharing your own adventures with your students.

Who Are Our Graduate Students?

Karen L. Klomparens, Dean, MSU Graduate School

The national and international reputation of every great research extensive and Land-grant University is established through the research and graduate education enterprise. It is that scholarly and academic reputation that attracts the best faculty, who, in turn, contribute to the ongoing reputation. The strong and excellent faculty base is the foundation for quality outreach/engagement and undergraduate programs. Graduate students bring a richness of intellectual and cultural diversity to MSU and excellent graduate programs help attract and retain the highest quality faculty. Graduate students and the graduate education enterprise form the serious intellectual core of any University, and in doing so, help establish a serious academic environment in which excellent undergraduate education can thrive.

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[1] For the most recent figures on MSU students, visit MSU's Office of Planning and Budget website at http://opbweb.opb.msu.edu .See also, Dr. Nancy Lange's revealing series, *Spotlight*, http://www.reslife.msu.edu/assessment/data/2005_2006/FTF05/FTF05.pdf , for detailed survey information of MSU students, particularly freshman.

Graduate students completing their programs have an in-depth content knowledge in a disciplinary field or sub-field, knowledge and skills required by licensing or accrediting bodies to become a practitioner, and/or, in the case of the Ph.D. student, the training for and completion of independent research/scholarship that is an original contribution to the body of knowledge in a disciplinary or interdisciplinary field. Graduate students not only have a commitment to life-long learning, they embody that characteristic.

Michigan State University enrolls approximately 3000 doctoral students and 4000 Master's degree students in a typical year. (Fall 04 there were 2977 doctoral students and 3934 Master's degree students). In addition, in a typical year, there are approximately 1400 graduate/professional students. (Fall 03 there were 427 Human Medicine, 534 Osteopathic Medicine, and 419 Veterinary Medicine students). MSU enrolls approximately 12 National Science Foundation Pre-doctoral fellows each year, as well as NIH Fellows, NIMH Fellows, EPA Star Fellows, USDA National Needs Fellows, and others. And, there are more than 3000 teaching and research assistants at MSU who contribute to the University's multiple missions and have a considerable positive impact on our research, undergraduate education, and outreach/engagement.

Graduate programs are offered by 14 colleges: Agriculture and Natural Resources, Arts and Letters, Broad Graduate School of Management, Communication Arts and Sciences, Education, Engineering, Human Ecology, Human Medicine, Law, Natural Science, Nursing, Osteopathic Medicine, Social Science, and Veterinary Medicine.

Master's degrees consist of coursework-based programs and coursework plus thesis-based programs. The Ph.D. degree is a research-based program that requires a dissertation, as an original contribution to the knowledge of the discipline, and both a broad and deep understanding of the cutting edge of the disciplinary knowledge base. The Graduate School processes approximately 420 dissertations and 300 Master's degree theses in a typical year. During the last academic year (03-04), MSU granted 2091 Master's degrees and 441 doctoral degrees (245 more degrees than the previous year).

There is no "typical" graduate student profile (at MSU or elsewhere). At MSU, currently enrolled graduate students range in age from 21 to 65. Our graduate students come from every state in the United States and from 130 other countries. Just less than half are Michigan residents.

Demographically, 53% of doctoral students are male, 62% of Master's degree students are female. In the total graduate student population, 30% are international students and 17% are ALANA students.

Along with the Master of Arts, Master of Science, and Doctor of Philosophy degrees, there are 10 additional graduate degree types (for example, Doctor of Musical Arts, Master of Fine Arts, Master of Arts for Teachers, Master of Public Administration), plus the Educational Specialist degree. The medical schools grant the Doctor of Human Medicine, Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine, and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degrees.

What Do We Know about Our Undergraduates?

We have been interested in studying the transition of students from their entry to the University through their college careers to derive a better understanding of the student experience and needs. The information that follows provides a perspective on the characteristics of MSU students, especially the freshmen. It incorporates information on the Michigan State student population gleaned from studies undertaken by MSU faculty researchers, along with some comparisons from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program (CIRP), a nationwide study conducted by the

Higher Education Research Institute at UCLA.[2] While looking at the norms, keep in mind that student behaviors and characteristics range widely and that the over 35,000 MSU undergraduates span the entire spectrum.

Surveys of MSU freshmen and their parents indicate that they bring similar concerns to the University.[3] Both groups rated academic success and an existential concern over the meaning, value, and purpose of their education at the top of their lists. Parents were more concerned than their children about institutional size. For students, finances ranked third among their concerns. This is consistent with the national CIRP data reflecting a rising concern among students about their ability to pay for college and the availability of financial aid.[4] The marked rise in the number of hours MSU students worked for pay over the past decade seems to be a logical response. 25 % of incoming freshman expect to work while in school and across the entire student population, MSU students tend to work more hours per week than students in peer institutions. A recent study reveals they will work an average of 13.4 hours per week, while seniors average 20.6 hours per week.[5] Freshmen are more likely to be employed on campus, which, according to the literature, generally has a positive impact on student persistence and satisfaction. After the first year, students gravitate to off-campus jobs, and often to multiple jobs. As work-for-pay has increased, student credit hour loads per semester have declined. The average semester class credit load for freshmen was 14.2 credits, dropping to 13.0 for seniors. About one-third of the students enrolled for 15 credits or more per semester, the number needed to complete most degrees in four years.

Faculty anecdotes often echo the CIRP conclusions regarding growing academic disengagement, as indicated by an increase in the number of students who report feeling bored in classes and the number of those who sleep through classes. In addition, the national survey found that the percentage of students who reported studying 6 or more hours per week remained nearly constant from 1997, at 34%. About 41% of MSU students (33% of freshmen, 50% of sophomores, and 40% of juniors and seniors) reported studying 10 hours or less per week. The proportion of MSU students who study 15 or more hours per week is around 53%, with 20% studying more than 21 hours per week. Nevertheless, only 10% to 13% of the students in each class met the two-hour per class hour studying standard traditionally advised by faculty. The data and the measures of engagement raise further questions. In focus group discussions, we discovered some revealing definitional differences of studying between students and faculty that lead to questions about the numbers reported in the survey. For many students, studying was reading, reviewing, or preparing for exams; it excluded writing assignments, searching for data, homework such as math problems, all of which seemed obvious forms of studying to faculty. We have also learned from students that they consciously optimize the use of their time in relation to the expected "pay-off." Students tend to study as much as they need to produce the desired grade. Thus, they invest more effort in courses in their major or that contribute toward entry into the major.

How students employ their learning time is perhaps more instructive than the number of hours they spend. We know that, even as they acknowledge concern about academic success at entry, students consistently underrate the difficulty of the transition from high school to college. Relying on old habits that have worked for them, they now find reading loads overwhelming and are uncomfortable or unaccustomed to higher levels of intellectual engagement. Using Bloom's taxonomy (memorizing, interpreting, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating), Gardner found that MSU students allocate their learning time primarily to memorizing and interpreting, with sophomores and juniors even more likely than freshmen to prefer these modes. Students eventually invest more effort in applying and analyzing but seem to avoid the synthesis stage and

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[2] See http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/heri/cirp.php for the most recent CIRP Data.

[3] Aronoff, Joel and Stollak, Gary. Orientation Surveys of MSU Freshmen and Freshmen Parents, (September, 2002).

[4] Cooperative Institutional Research Program. The American Freshman: National Norms for January 2004.

[5] Gardner, Philip. Survey of MSU Students Who Completed Success Skills 2000 Assessment.

move to some evaluation. A question that invites further analysis is whether there is something about the content and structure of the current curriculum that re-enforces these tendencies. Freshmen, who report more hours of study time, also report having a higher average number of assigned books and a greater number of paper assignments than students at other levels. All three measures show a decrease in the sophomore and junior years before rising a bit in the senior year, where capstone courses and senior projects may require greater investment of time and more challenging intellectual tasks. The number of essay exams increases from the freshman to the senior year, which may reflect class size, as well as content differences.

Consciousness about differences in learning styles is important in adapting teaching methods to the needs of students or in helping students learn to adjust to teaching styles that don't fit their learning styles. Utilizing "True Colors," an instrument that identifies learning styles and clusters students in color sets, Gardner found that the largest group of MSU students in the survey set fall within the orange and gold clusters. Students in these categories prefer a hands-on, tell-me-why-it's-important-now approach (orange) and traditional types of instruction, practical use of ideas and, technical tasks (gold). Only about 10% to 15% of the students fall in the blue (preference for performance/experience and sensitivity to the individual) and the green (preferences for abstract ideas and critical thinking) clusters. It is instructive that the green cluster students most resemble the faculty, and, most likely, the TAs. But it is also useful to keep in mind that graduates and their employers find their practical and technical skills a great asset in the workplace and believe that MSU does very well in developing these skills.

What do we expect of our students and how well do they perform? We need to address these questions more explicitly, and faculty must answer the first before we can respond adequately to the second. The results from the administration of Success Skills 2000, a criterion-referenced, performance-based instrument that asks students to respond to a variety of workplace situations, give us some insight into the strengths of our current population and some indications of areas for improvement. MSU students performed best on the set of academic skills measured by the instrument, which speaks positively for their academic development. In the domain of applied critical thinking, they were good at gathering information and understanding relationships; they were less adept at evaluation, which is consistent with the dominant learning strategies they identified in the survey. Similarly, in the arena of problem solving, they were more facile at choosing strategies, which has a practical dimension to it, than at considering alternatives, which involves questioning assumptions and dealing with ambiguities. In the domain of interpersonal communication, MSU students performed best on items relating to influencing others. They showed greater competence in communicating for agreement and in justifying their positions than at persuasion. On measures of teamwork, they were more inclined to ask for help and less effective in contributing to the group effort. The third domain evaluated by Success Skills 2000 is accountability. Here, MSU students scored fairly well on measures of initiative but need to improve their self-management skills. Within that category, time management stood out as a particular problem. It may well be that the lack of structure in college life re-enforces these behaviors and affects both their University performance and their transition to the workplace. Overall, MSU students did well on this assessment, which is compared to a group of new employees who performed in the top 10% of their peers.

Local studies mirror nationally based research in testifying to the importance of peer relationships in students' lives. Gardner finds that peers have much more impact than faculty on students' general satisfaction with Michigan State University and on their personal development. The most popular activity identified by students was "hanging out" with friends. One of the positive aspects of this is reflected in a strikingly higher percentage of MSU students (80% to 90%) than in the national CIRP sample who report occasional to continuing discussion on politics. With the exception of international students, MSU students report that they interact fairly often or constantly with students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. Here as elsewhere, socializing at parties and bars appears to assume a disproportionate importance. Fifty-two percent of the freshmen report doing this fairly often or constantly; the proportion rises to 61% of the

sophomores and then declines to a threshold below that of freshmen in the junior and senior years. The decline probably reflects attrition among the younger students as well as a change of habits among the older ones. It is instructive to view these figures in relation to the CIRP data, which indicate that about 60% of incoming students nationally report patterns of drinking before they enter college.

Interpersonal relationships of all kinds are very important to student maturation and their satisfaction with the University. Students generally express positive views about faculty, advisors, and peers. Faculty are credited with having an impact on students' academic achievements. Faculty contacts are increasing through technology, e.g., email, as opposed to more traditional venues. Students' expectations of faculty are quite reasonable: they want their instructors to know their names and to be supportive; parenthetically, freshmen and sophomores report getting little praise or re-enforcement from their instructors. Students do not have a clear idea as to the purpose of their classes, individually, or their education as a whole (the existential concern noted above). Instructors can help students find connections by modeling strong academic values and being explicit about the relationship between curricular materials and their later lives. Aronoff and Stollak find strong evidence that engagement in tasks that are interesting, integrative, and doable will capture the imagination of the students and contribute positively to their level of achievement.[6] Teaching assistants are critical links in this web of relationships. You are often more connected to students, by virtue of age and experiences. You are their first lines of contact and will quickly gain insights that might be missed by others. We invite you, as teaching colleagues, to share what you learn and to let us know what else you would like to know about MSU undergraduates.

General Enrollment and Representative FRESHMAN CLASS PROFILE

This information from the MSU Office of Planning and Budget Data digest, http://opbweb.opb.msu.edu . See also, Residence Life – Assessment of Student Populations http://www.reslife.msu.edu/assessment/data/2005_2006/FTF05/FTF05.pdf and MSU Facts in Brief, http://newsroom.msu.edu/snav/184/page.htm.

- Total: 45,4520
- 35,821 Undergraduates/9699 Graduate and Professional
- Size of entering freshman class: (55% Female/44% Male/1% transgender) 7488
- International Students 3371
- Transfer Students 1682
- Honors Enrollment (Fall 2003) 2398
- Percentage of freshman from the state of Michigan: 90%
- Test Scores for Fall 2003 Freshman:
- Mean High School GPA: 3.58
- Mean ACT Score: 24.5
- Mean SAT Score: 1141
- Percentage of Freshman 19 years old or younger: 97.6%
- Average Credit Hours: 14.2
- Average Study Hours: 16.8/week
- Institutional 6-year Graduation Rate: 65.6%

Caucasian/White	79%
African-American/Black	9%
Asian/Pacific Amer.	5%
Hispanic/Chicano	3%
Native American	1%
Other (Including Non-Resident Aliens)	3%

[6] Aronoff, Joel and Stollak, Gary. "The Effect of Student Coping Capacities and MSU Academic Climate on Student Performance and Retention," July 1998.

Chapter II

THE SYLLABUS AS A LEARNING TOOL[1]

STUDENTS' WAYS OF KNOWING

In addition to the demographic portrait of the MSU undergraduate population, you need to be aware of how students are likely to differ in the ways in which they learn. One of the most widely known earlier works on the cognitive development of college students is *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical Development in the College Years* by William Perry (1970). Although Perry's study is somewhat dated and has been replaced by Kolb and Chickering's early 1980's work, and more recently, Lee Schulman's provocative approach challenging developmental stages of learning (2002), it remains a powerful theory on cognitive development. The scheme of development he describes has proven helpful in understanding students in many different settings. Perry concludes that students move through stages of cognitive development, each of which is qualitatively different and more complex than the previous stage. As students move through these stages, the ways in which they perceive, organize, and evaluate experiences and events in their lives change. In this study, Perry suggests that new or intellectually insecure students are often committed to a sense that information is right or wrong, factual or subjective. Uncertainty leads to discomfort and is often assumed to be the result of an error. In order to get students to move out of either/or dilemmas, instructors can:

1. Provide students with opportunities to choose positions and defend their choices.
2. Ask students to narrow choices and weigh pros and cons of alternative arguments or choices.
3. Draw upon course material that stimulates thinking about personal philosophy and life choices.
4. Set learning tasks that call for students to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate from personal perspectives and then progressively from more abstract or experiential perspectives, and call for students to apply learning from one context to problems in a different context.
5. Pose activities that ask students to generate new questions or evaluate assumptions inherent in how points of view are constructed.

LEARNING STYLES

In the Executive Summary of *Learning Styles: Implications for Improving Educational Practices*, Claxton and Murrell (1987) state that information about style can help instructors become more sensitive to the differences students bring to the classroom. As teachers it is important to keep in mind that the concept of style is one variable that may help you look at the complex issues involved in teaching and learning (Claxton and Murrell, P. 1).

Perhaps one very easy technique to get an overview of your students' style is to ask them to write a paragraph on "How I Learn Best". Another relatively simple way to look at style is to focus on learning modalities. Several researchers have focused on the extent to which sensory receptors

[1] For a short and thorough guide to creating a syllabus, see MSU Teaching Thoughts #13, *The Complete Syllabus, located at* http://tap.msu.edu/PDF/thoughts/tt13.pdf .

influence learning. As you will find, some students respond better to hands-on learning as opposed to reading or listening to a lecture. In general, researchers have distinguished the following types of learners:

Auditory learners prefer to learn by listening. Lecturing is the teaching approach that works best for them.

Visual learners prefer print material. They learn best by reading or responding to visual cues, such as the chalkboard or overhead projector.

Tactile learners like to manipulate objects. Laboratory or hands-on methods of learning are most appropriate for them.

Kinesthetic, or whole body learners, like to learn through experiential activities. They prefer simulations, exploratory activities and problem solving.

If you are interested in furthering your understanding of style and how to use the construct in your teaching, the Claxton and Murrell book gives an excellent overview.

THE SYLLABUS

Learning is a highly intricate process. It is easily hindered, especially when the teacher fails to make clear what it is that one is expected to learn and how it will be determined that the learning goal has been achieved. The more complicated the material to be learned, the more important it is to organize it and present it in a way that both enhances the process of learning and clarifies the teacher's expectations. The syllabus is the tool used to achieve this.

You might want to consider the syllabus as a contract between you and your students. The syllabus will make clear to your students which textbooks and other reading materials they must acquire, what your teaching objectives will be and how you will go about finding out whether they have been met, what kind of testing you will use, what the grading scale will look like, whether you will assign homework and at what intervals, whether class participation and/or attendance will influence grades, and even what material you intend to cover during each of the class meetings or weeks. Some departments ask new teaching assistants and young instructors to use existing syllabi (approved by the department) for the courses they are assigned to teach. However, once you become more experienced in teaching, you will be expected to prepare your own syllabi. This is why it is important to learn the characteristics of a good syllabus.

This section will point out some important aspects of a well-written syllabus and present several good syllabi that were used in actual MSU courses. Each of them represents well certain aspects of a competent syllabus. Jim Lucas' syllabus, in particular, is one of the most comprehensive college-level syllabi I have seen (See page 2.6). However, this alone might not prepare you adequately for the job of creating your own syllabus. Prior to attempting the job, you should read sections IV and V as well.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SYLLABUS

Having a well-developed syllabus will require the instructor to organize his or her teaching early. It will help students know what is expected from the start of the course and will allow them to plan their semester efficiently. The opportunity for inconsistent grading changes will be diminished, and a positive image will be presented to the students (a well-prepared syllabus is evidence that the instructor takes teaching seriously). A syllabus also provides the departmental office, supervisor, and/or colleagues with pertinent information about the course.

The Ombudsman's Office has noted that a large number of complaints it deals with have at their root a lack of understanding of the requirements and expectations for performance in a course. A syllabus can consolidate into a single document all of the routine matters that surround teaching a course: reading schedules, grading, due dates, class topics, etc.

Simply put, the syllabus is a formal statement of what the course is about, what students will be asked to do, and how student performance will be evaluated. Unlike the comments an instructor makes in class, it is a lasting statement to which students can refer again and again throughout the course. Careful construction of the syllabus reduces ambiguity and is the first step toward producing an environment in which students can flourish.

The syllabus is an agreement that you should follow as much as possible. If you make any changes to it during the semester, be certain that all your students are aware of them. You do not want to have to deal with an irate student at the end of the semester who would say to you something like, "Hey, I didn't know that you changed the course grading system, and I'm going to the departmental chair to get this straightened out!"

PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE COURSE SYLLABUS

You can begin by studying syllabi from other instructors or those that have been used previously in the course being taught. You might also check with your department for specific guidelines about a syllabus format. However, the following should be included in every syllabus:

1. **Relevant information about the course and instructor** . A syllabus should include the current year and semester, the name and number of the course and the meeting time (with days of the week and meeting times), and location. It should also include the instructor's name, phone number, the location of the instructor's office, and the times of his or her office hours. These facts are normally placed at the beginning of the syllabus.

2. **A list of the resources to be obtained by the students**. Most important here are the required text(s) and reading assignments. Their role in the class and where they are available for purchase or loan should be included. (It is important to check that the bookstore or library will have the materials on the shelves before students are sent to find them!) It might also explain what, if any, materials other than text(s) are required of students. Any supplemental materials (such as lecture tapes, sample projects, or past tests) that are available can appropriately be mentioned.

Traits of an Acceptable Syllabus

Name of Instructor
Where Instructor can be reached/office hours
Course Number; Section Number; Days, times, and Classroom where the class meets
Required Text(s) and other class materials
Course Objectives
Grading Procedure, including Attendance Policy, Class Participation, and the like
Course Outline, by weeks at least

3. **A clear statement of course objectives**. The course objectives should be as clear as possible and should describe what the students will be expected to know—and at what level of competency—at the end of the semester, rather than what the instructor plans to do. Note that the use of vague terminology (such as "students will develop a clear understanding") can result in arguments over degrees of understanding. It is generally better to use specific, measurable behaviors as objectives.

4. **A description of the means (or activities) by which the course objectives will be met**. Possible items include field trips, guest lecturers, discussions with active participation,

problem-solving groups, assignments, use of audiovisual materials, etc. The amount of student time required for each activity may be estimated.

5. **A statement of grading criteria**. This will explain the grading criteria, the components of the final grade, the weighing of various components, the impact of class participation and attendance to the final grade, and other relevant information. The number of tests each semester should be included, along with a brief description of what each test will cover. The numerical equivalent of letter grades or the "range" for each grade can be provided.

6. **A statement of course policies**. This is best expressed in a clear, non-threatening form. Policies should be set for such events as missing an exam, turning in a late assignment, missing class, requesting an extension for an assignment, and reporting illness. It is a good idea to go on record with a fairly stringent policy that can be informally softened at a later date if, and where, circumstances so warrant. The Ombudsman's Office recommends avoiding absolutes on the grounds that they are always more trouble than they are worth.

7. **A schedule**. If each class hour is mapped out in detail, this will become the longest and most time-consuming segment of the syllabus to prepare, although it will be a good investment in a well-organized class. The syllabus should, at a minimum, contain dates and corresponding lecture or lab topics, the preparations that are required or suggested, and due dates for projects, papers, and major assignments.

USING THE SYLLABUS IN CLASS

First, check over the final typed copy for mistakes and typos. If the instructor does not spot them, it is certain that the students will. It is good policy to hand out the syllabus on the first day of class. That lets the students know that their teacher is well prepared and it provides an easy way to begin the interaction with students and to reduce some of the uncertainty and anxiety of the first class meeting.

The instructor will need to review and discuss the syllabus with the students, to answer any questions that they may have and to provide appropriate amplification where necessary. The instructor will probably find that most student feedback will be generated by the section on grading.

It is vital to have enough copies of the syllabus; one should allow for the need to replace lost copies and to accommodate students who have registered for the class but do not appear on the initial roster.

If changes are made in the syllabus subsequently, it is a good idea to give them to students in writing. Much ambiguity and confusion can result from half-remembered, spoken promises.

THE SYLLABUS AND ORGANIZING THE COURSE

In order to prepare a meaningful syllabus, one that you will be able to follow throughout the entire semester, you must first examine closely the entire course with a goal of organizing it in a way that will enable you to accomplish the objectives you will state.

Good organization is important to all phases of instruction, from curriculum development to determining presentation format. From the syllabus to the final examination, every aspect of the course should be focused on defined educational goals, the most important of which is the level of learning you expect students to achieve.

Your first step in organizing a course should be to establish the level of performance you expect from your students. This may necessitate your administering a simple questionnaire or using an

in-class essay to determine what students already know and what they need to learn. If you are teaching a lab, quiz section, or studio that is an extension of a larger class, it is important to coordinate your expectations with the professor of the larger class and with other TAs who are teaching similar sections, labs or studios.

Your next step is to choose the means of instruction that will enable students to perform at the level you expect. If you need to cover 50 years of research in 15 weeks, you will probably lecture. If students must be capable of applying course material, you will not only have to present factual information through texts and lectures but also show them how to develop generalizations from the background knowledge (discussion, study problems, assignments), and provide them with opportunities to apply newly learned principles in novel situations (laboratory experiments, papers, examinations, projects, speeches).

Your third step will be to determine through evaluation procedures whether students have learned what you intended. Ideally, procedures for evaluation should be consistent with course goals and teaching strategies. The mode of instruction, the course content, assignments, and examinations should all focus students' attention in a single direction.

Examples of Well-Written Syllabi

Following the bibliography, you will find four syllabi that at one time or another were used by MSU faculty. Notice that, although they do not follow the same format, each provides relevant information concerning the course in question. Pay in particular to Jim Lucas' syllabus, which begins this section. Upon reading a specific syllabus, try to think of a question concerning the course that the syllabus does not address; if you can come up with such a question, find a place in the syllabus where it could be easily incorporated. Also, analyze whether, as the semester would progress, the existing syllabus would answer all questions you might come up with. While doing this, keep in mind that it is only by planning your teaching well in advance that you will be able to anticipate everything your students will need and to put it all together in a syllabus.

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[1] For McKeachie, Lambert, and Nilson, look for syllabi construction in the appropriate chapters.

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AEE 110:
Foundations of ANR Communications, Learning & Leadership - Fall 2004

Meeting time

Section 001
48 Agriculture Hall
Tuesday and Thursday, 10:20 – 11:40 a.m.

Instructor & assistant

Jim Lucas
408 Agriculture Hall
517/355-6580 (ext. 233)
lucasjam@msu.edu

Glenn Sterner
sternerg@msu.edu

Course description

AEE 110 introduces students to communication, learning and leadership philosophies in the context of agriculture and natural resources. The course provides a collaborative learning experience that promotes reflective and critical thinking to enhance writing, presentation, and interpersonal skills needed at Michigan State University and beyond.

Course philosophy

The faculty designed AEE courses to help student connect information from their technical science courses (e.g., animal science, ecology, forestry, horticulture, etc.) and their professional courses (e.g., teacher education, communication, journalism, etc.) to working with people in formal and informal settings. As such, this class will help you to integrate your knowledge and understanding of ANR issues into techniques that facilitate the development of others' ability to understand these issues.

This course is designed as an interactive and developmental experience; students share the responsibility for learning with the instructor. Hence, they are encouraged to provide feedback and opinions on operation and policies within the course.

Course goals

AEE 110 seeks to provide students with:

1. The ability to succeed during their time at MSU;
2. The ability to engage in the world as a self-aware individual;
3. The ability to understand values and ethics in relationship to decision-making;
4. The ability to understand, analyze and respond to information concerning agriculture and natural resources.
5. The ability to communicate logically, expressively and concisely using written, oral and visual forms of communication;
6. The ability to apply research and thinking skills to develop and deliver information to diverse audiences; and
7. The ability to understand and apply learning theory to effectively lead, communicate and manage.

Class Resources

Students should purchase the required materials at a campus bookstore (or on-line, it's probably cheaper!):

- *Perks of Being a Wallflower*
- *A Portrait of a Burger as a Young Cow*
- *Recommended: AP Publication Manual (5th edition or higher)*

Attendance

Attendance for the course is mandatory. Students will receive two excused absences regardless of cause. ***All absences beyond two will count as unexcused***. Students will receive –15 participation points for each unexcused absence. Students who fail to use their two excused days will receive 10 points extra credit per day (for up to a total of 20 points). Attendance bonuses and deductions will be maintained on Angel.

The instructor will work with students on a case-by-case basis for excessive absences due to official MSU activities, illness or other serious emergencies. In these cases, instructors will require documentation of the event, illness, etc. ***Students missing class for a planned MSU field trip (e.g. FFA conference, judging event, class trip, etc.) must submit a written request or permission slip to the teaching assistant <u>one-week before</u> missing class.***

Students are responsible for obtaining any information or materials missed due to an absence and should contact the instructor or teaching assistant within 24-hours of missing class. Please see the late assignments section for more information.

Participation

Throughout the semester, the instructor will expect active participation in all class discussions and activities. Active participation includes, but is not limited to, the following behaviors:

1. Asking and answering questions in class;
2. Questioning information presented and discussed;
3. Engaging in on-line discussions with your team;
4. Participating in peer critiques with your base group; and
5. Grappling with course content on a personal-level.

The instructor will also expect that students complete any homework or reading activities assigned. The instructor or a teaching assistant will periodically update participation points on Angel.

Assignments

Specific guidelines for all assignments and activities are provided following the syllabus. All assignments are due by 5:00 p.m. on the specified date, unless otherwise noted in class. Assignments should be turned in during class, via Angel drop-box, or in the instructor's departmental mailbox.

Homework/Participation	300 points
ANR Interviews and paper	150 points
Reading reflections	150 points
Issue papers	100 points (2 @ 50 each)
Issue presentation	150 points
Reflective responses	150 points (3 @ 50 each)

Assessment

AEE 110 students will receive a numeric grade according to the point scale below. The instructor will take into consideration those students within two or three points of a higher grade on a case-by-case basis. When making this determination, factors such as class attendance, participation and effort will be important.

Points	*Grade*
930 – 1000	4.0
875 – 929	3.5
825 – 874	3.0
775 – 824	2.5
725 – 774	2.0
675 – 724	1.5
625 – 674	1.0
under 624	0.0

Base groups

The instructor has organized students into base groups. Base groups will provide a foundation for many class discussions and activities. Also, the base group will specifically:

1. Keep its members informed of class information or policy in case of an absence.
2. Support its members' writing by providing peer critique.
3. Identify common questions or areas of concern as related to class or life at MSU.

Formatting your work

Unless otherwise noted, students should type all assignments using a 10- or 12-point font size, standard typeface (Arial, Times, etc.), double-spacing and one inch margins. All papers should include page numbers. ***Assignments without a name or not matching the formatting guidelines will not be graded.*** For citations, students should follow standard AP format guidelines (4th or 5th Edition).

Students who plagiarize others' work will receive no credit for the assignment. The instructor will enforce MSU policy on plagiarism as detailed in the Spartan Life handbook.

Late work

All assignments are due by 5:00 p.m. on the specified date unless otherwise noted in class. Instructors will accept late assignments for up to five working days (days on which classes are held) past the due date with a 20 percent deduction from the total possible points.

Students who will miss class due to official MSU trips or events should make arrangements with their instructor to turn in any assignments they will miss. Students who miss class for illness or other emergency should work the instructor to arrange an appropriate turn-in date.

Redoing your work	Students have the opportunity to rewrite papers that have earned less than a 3.0 (83%). Students who are concerned about their performance are encouraged to talk with the instructor before the final week of the semester. Students wanting to redo an assignment must complete the revisions within one week of receiving the graded work. *All students should meet with the instructor about the rewrite before completion to ensure that they return a quality product.*
Schedule	The following is a general overview of each week's topics, readings and assignments. For more details on the assignments, refer to the pages following the syllabus.
WEEK 1	
Tuesday, August 26	-Introductions -Overview of syllabus and the course -Overview of Angel system -Community needs and expectations *Assignment: Read Jim's Teaching Philosophy Essay; complete on-line reflection by Thursday*
Thursday, August 28	-Team builders and icebreakers -Discussion of essay *Assignment: Bring values worksheet back to class for discussion on 9/2; Start ANR Interviews assignment (due October 2)*
Week 2	
Tuesday, September 2	-Introduction to values and ethical frameworks -Discussion of class values and ethics *Assignment: Using the ethical frameworks discussed in class, work through the ethical dilemma presented for discussion on 9/4*
Thursday, September 4	-Using values and ethics in daily life -Decision-making and professional behavior -Time for group work *Reminder: Be reading Perks of Being a Wallflower, working on your interviews and your presentations.*

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ISS 310, Section #2

Mon., Tues., Wed, & Fri., 11:30-12:20
Room 116 Natural Science Bldg.

Professor Whitsell
Office: 310 Natural Science (353-7197)
Office Hours: 2-3 Mon., Tues. & Wed.
or by appointment

PEOPLE AND THE ENVIRONMENT
SYLLABUS

I. Course Objectives and Content

As described in the catalogue of courses, ISS 310 deals with "contemporary issues related to the interaction of socio-cultural and ecological systems. Global, regional, national and local environmental problems and responses." Different ISS sections of the same course are taught from the various perspectives of the instructors. This section is premised on the assumption that, if students are to understand the interaction of socio-cultural and ecological systems, they must be familiar with some of the basic principles of both the social sciences (to understand the "socio-cultural" side of the equation) and the natural sciences (to understand the "ecological" side). This course is designed to do that, drawing from biology, geography, sociology, philosophy, political science, economics and related disciplines, to provide a holistic perspective on people and the environment.

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be sufficiently familiar with important contemporary environmental problems to be able to understand how the environment is being affected, why these environmental impacts are deemed problematic, and what can be done to solve these problems. Solutions will be approached from the perspective that conservation is politics and that, even through inaction, we all inevitably end up taking sides on questions about how much the environment is degraded and how that degradation is distributed between different social groups, generations and geographical regions. It is hoped that this course will serve as a guide for students to make responsible choices on such matters.

II. Readings

There are two required text books:
1. *Understanding Our Environment: an introduction*, by William P. Cunningham (Wm. C. Brown, 1994).
2. *People, Penguins and Plastic Trees: basic issues in environmental ethics*, edited by Christine Pierce and Donald VanDeVeer (Wadsworth, 1995, second edition).

There is a student study guide that accompanies *Understanding Our Environment*, which is available in the bookstores as an optional purchase.

A few additional readings may occasionally be assigned from handouts or items placed on reserve in the main library, at the assigned readings desk. (Reserved library books and articles may be checked out for two hours, if during the day, or overnight, if checked out after 9:00 PM.)

III. Discussion Sections

One of the distinctive features of this section of ISS 310 is its emphasis on active learning in weekly discussion sections. Instead of being limited to four lectures per week in a large lecture hall with 150 students, the professor (with the financial support of the College of Social Science

and the Geography Department) has modified the printed schedule as follows: There will be only three lectures (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday) plus one discussion section, to be held in place of the Friday lecture (*i.e.* from 11:30 to 12:20). All students will participate in one of four discussion sections, which will be conducted simultaneously each Friday by four teaching assistants, in four different rooms (116, 140 & 304 Natural Science Building plus 100 Berkey Hall). Activities within the discussion sections will include clarification of materials in assigned readings and lectures, reviews in preparation for the midterm and final examinations, small group projects and presentations, debates and quizzes. During the first week of class, students will be divided into discussion sections in which they will remain for the duration of the semester. The teaching assistants responsible for discussion sections, the locations of their offices, and their office phone numbers are as follows (office hours to be announced):

Steve Cameron
124 Natural Science
355-7718

Linda Erickson
144 Natural Science
353-9940

Beth Myers
144 Natural Science
353-9940

Jennifer Maxwell Stefanacci
144 Natural Science
353-9940

Participation in discussions is a very important dimension of this course. It is well known that learning is significantly enhanced when the student takes an active part in her or his own education. (This is not to mention the sad fact that large lecture courses are notoriously impersonal and often quite tiresome.) When a professor stands on a platform in front of hundreds of students, the implicit assumption is that she or he is the giver of all knowledge while the students are the passive recipients. The professor and TAs for this course don't buy that. We start from the assumption that every one of you has strong feelings about some current environmental problems and that each one of you has important knowledge and perspectives on these problems. One of the principal purposes of the discussion sections is to allow us to share that knowledge with each other to a far greater extent than would be possible in a large lecture format. Other important objectives are to challenge students to think critically, to develop the cooperative problem-solving skills needed in the "real world" beyond undergraduate school, and to maximize interest in and enthusiasm for solving the critical environmental problems we all must face.

IV. Requirements and Grades

The total course score will be based on a curve and weighed as follows: discussion section grade 40%, midterm exam 20%, final exam 40%.

The discussion section grade will be based upon attendance and participation, performance in quizzes and grades in assigned projects. (Your TA will provide detailed information on the activities and requirements for your discussion section.) The midterm exam will be given during the lecture period on Wednesday, March 1. The final exam is scheduled for Wednesday, May 3, from 12:45 to 2:45 PM. It will be cumulative, drawing from the required readings and from all information presented and discussed in class. The midterm and final exams will consist of true-false, multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. More details on the content and design of the exams will be provided in time to assist with student preparations.

V. Lecture and Reading Schedule

Lecture topics and required readings will be covered in the following order (as noted above, a few additional readings may occasionally be assigned):

SCHEDULE OF TOPICS

	Pages in Pierce & VandeVeer	Pages in Cunningham
I. Introduction: examining our own preconceptions and expectations	1 - 20	1 - 23
• *Environmental science and environmental ethics: how we understand our place in nature*		
• *What do we perceive to be the most serious environmental problems of our time?*		
• *What can we already identify as the causes and solutions for these problems?*		
• *What do we hope to get out of this course?*		
II. The nature of nature: how natural systems function	21-63	280-288
• *What are ecosystems and how do they work?*		
• *Is there a balance of nature? If so, how does it work?*		
III. Ecology and economy	90 - 100	367-380
• *Are natural and economic systems compatible?*		412-441
• *Can technology overcome environmental limits?*		
• *How are environmental goods and environmental degradation distributed between social groups and generations?*		
IV. Environmental degradation: causes, consequences and solutions		
• *Human population growth:*	64 - 89	
• *Is it the number one problem?*		
• *What can and is being done to limit population growth?*		330-338
• *Is starvation primarily the result of over population?*	134 - 159	
• *Soils: How and why are we "losing ground?"*		
• *"Pests": How are we and how should we do battle with our natural competitors?*		
• *Resource management*	160 - 204	24-39, 139-42
• *Preservation of natural systems & biological diversity*		339-358
• *Air & Water systems and what we are doing to them*	205 - 247	
• *Energy*	248-274	
• *Fossil fuels*		
• *Nuclear power*		
• *Renewable energy*	112-132,	
• *Solid, toxic and hazardous waste*	276-297	39-44
• *Sustainable living in our cities and towns*	298 - 318	
V. Action for the environment: political and personal options	319 - 344	106-125
• *The philosophical underpinnings for action: shallow, deep, social and feminist ecology*		142-233 358-366
• *Green lifestyles*		442-469
• *Green politics*		

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Math 110 Spring 2004

COURSE OUTLINE

Text Applied Finite Mathematics, by Chester Piascik

Lecturer Lanette Poteete; office: A-531 Wells Hall; phone 353-0844

Lectures Mo., We., Fr. 9:10-10:00 a.m., B-108 Wells Hall.

Office Hours Mo., We., Fr. 10:30-11:30 a.m. and by appointment.
Office hours are intended to help you clarify any procedural and other questions you may have; they are NOT to be used to go over the material covered while you were absent or to provide extensive help with homework problems. As office hours are often crowded, make sure to prepare your questions in advance.

Recitations Tu. and Th., according to the Schedule of Classes.
At recitations, your TA will be solving problems not assigned for homework but similar to those assigned; if you have questions concerning the homework problems, you must see one of the TAs during his/her help hours.

Help Hours Each TA will have help hours. These hours will be announced during the first recitation as well as during lectures; you may use help hours of ANY TA. Help hours cannot be used as a substitute for lectures or recitations. When asking questions, be prepared to demonstrate your own attempts to answer them.

Attendance You are expected to attend ALL lectures and ALL recitations. As this is a five credit-hour course; in order to succeed, you are expected to spend at least ten hours per week studying (not counting lectures and recitations).

Calculator You need a graphing calculator. On lectures we shall cover the basics of Sharp EL 9200; if you get a different calculator, you will be responsible for learning how to use it. YOU ARE FULLY RESPONSIBLE FOR HAVING A CALCULATOR FOR ALL EXAMS AND ALL QUIZZES, AND FOR KNOWING HOW TO USE IT. If you forget to bring your calculator to an exam or if your calculator does not function properly, you will have to work without it.

Homework On the sheet attached, you will find a day-by-day schedule of the course as well as a list of problems from the text that you are expected to solve on your own (solutions to most of them are at the end of the text). Solutions of those problems are not expected to be turned in. It is considered that you cannot complete the course successfully unless you fully understand and can solve AT LEAST the assigned homework problems.

Exams You will have nine ten-minute quizzes, four fifty-minute exams, and the final three-hour exam (for dates see the day-by-day schedule). There will be no make-ups for either quizzes or fifty-minute exams; only extreme situations will allow a student to be excused from a quiz or a fifty-minute exam. Having three finals on the day of the final exam will excuse you from that exam; if such is the case, arrangements for the (common) make-up final exam must be made in A-212 Wells Hall.

Grading Every quiz counts 10 points, every fifty-minute exam counts 50 points; the final exam counts 300 points. Grading scale for each of the quizzes and fifty-minute exams is:

90% to 100% - 4.0	73% to 78% - 2.5	55% to 59% - 1.0
85% to 89% - 3.5	65% to 72% - 2.0	0% to 54% - 0.0
79% to 84% - 3.0	60% to 64% - 1.5	

Grading scale for the final exam will be made AFTER the results of that exam are turned in.

General Info 1. Section R in the textbook is an algebra review. You MUST be fully familiar with the first 30 pages of this review; if you are not, you should consider dropping this course and taking a more appropriate course instead.

2. Before being returned to you, a random selection of graded exams will be copied.

3. If you are caught cheating, the minimal penalty will be a zero for the course.

Important Dates

1. Quizzes: Jan. 21; Jan. 28; Feb. 11; Feb. 18; Mar. 11; Mar. 18; Apr. 1; Apr. 8; Apr. 22
2. Fifty-minute exams: Feb. 4; Feb. 25 Mar. 25; Apr. 15
3. Final Exam: May 4, 7:45-10:45 a.m. (locations will be announced.)

NOTE. To ALL quizzes and ALL exams you must bring your student ID and one pictured ID (or only your student ID, if it is pictured); otherwise, your exam will be invalid.

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MATH 110 Spring 2004

DAY-BY-DAY SCHEDULE

The following is a **tentative** day-by-day schedule of the course. Although no sections will be added to the course, if it turns to be necessary a section or two might be omitted; if that happens, an announcement will be made.

Jan. 13	1.1	Mar. 10	5.7
Jan.15	1.2	Mar. 12	6.1
Jan 18	1.3	Mar. 15	6.2
Jan. 20	1.4	Mar. 17	6.3
Jan. 22	2.1	Mar. 19	7.1
Jan. 25	2.2	Mar. 22	7.2
Jan. 27	2.3	Mar. 24	7.3
Jan. 28	2.4	Mar. 26	8.1
Feb. 1	3.1	Mar. 29	8.2
Feb. 3	3.2	Mar. 31	8.2
Feb. 5	3.2	Apr. 2	8.3
Feb. 8	3.3	Apr. 5	8.3, 8.4

Feb. 10: 4.2
Feb. 12 4.2
Feb. 15 4.2
Feb. 17 5.1
Feb. 19 5.2
Feb. 22 5.3
Feb. 24 5.4
Feb. 26 5.5
Mar. 8 5.6

Apr. 7 8.4
Apr. 9 8.5
Apr. 12 9.1
Apr. 14 9.2
Apr. 16 9.3
Apr. 19 9.4
Apr. 21 9.5
Apr. 23 9.6
Apr. 26 Review
Apr. 28 Review

If you miss a lecture, you are responsible for getting notes from one of the other students. Under no circumstances can you expect a lecture to be repeated for you.

Each quiz will cover the material from the previous two or three lectures.

Unless it is announced differently at the lectures, the one-hour exams will cover the following:

Exam 1: Ch. 1; Ch. 2
Exam 2: Ch. 3; Ch. 4
Exam 3: Ch. 5; Ch. 6
Exam 4: Ch. 7; Ch. 8

Final exam will cover the entire course (including chap. 9).

Keep in mind that March 9 is the last day to drop the course with no grade.

MATH 110 SPRING 2004

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

The following list includes a MINIMAL set of problems you must solve on your own and fully understand in order to get a reasonably good grade. To get the top grade, you might have to solve some or all of the problems that are on this list.

1.1 1,3,5,6,7,9,11-17 all,19,21,23,27,29,30,31
1.2 1-9 odd, 13-23 odd, 29-47 odd, 58-61 all, 63,65,67
1.3 1-21 odd
1.4 1-17 odd, 21,25,29-45 odd, 46,47
2.1 1-39 odd, 40-43 all
2.2 1-51 odd
2.3 1-17 odd, 23-31 odd
2.4 1,3,5,7,811-21 odd
3.1 1-71 odd
3.2 1-9 all, 11-99 odd, 101-109 odd
3.3 1-9 odd
4.1 1-49 odd
4.2 1-43 odd, 47,49,53-75 odd
5.1 1-21 odd,25,31,33,34
5.2 1-23 odd, 27-35 odd, 39,43,45

5.3	1-21 odd
5.4	1-77 odd
5.5	1,3,7-47 odd, 55-67 odd
5.6	1-23 odd, 24,25,26
5.7	1-29 odd
6.1	1-25 odd,26-32 all
6.2	1-17 odd,25,26,27,29,33
6.3	1-19 odd
7.1	1-9 odd
7.2	1,2,3-31 odd
7.3	1-19 odd
8.1	1-83 odd
8.2	1-23 odd, 27,29,31,43,49,53,57,59,61,62,63,65,67,69,77,80,81,83
8.3	1,2,5-11 all, 13-19 all, 31,33,37,39,43,45,49,51,52,55,56,59,61,63,67,71-81 odd
8.4	105 all, 9,14,17-36 odd, 37,41,43-50 all
8.5	1-11 odd, 12-24 all
9.1	1-15 odd
9.2	1-25 odd, 29,31
9.3	1-19 odd,12
9.4	1-23 all, 35,37,39
9.5	1-45 odd
9.6	1-21 odd

PHL 200
(Sections 1, 2)
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Instructor
Martin Benjamin
514 South Kedzie Hall
353-4617 (messages: 355-4490)
Office Hours: T Th 2:30-4:00
and by 4:00, Th. 12:30-1:30, and
by appointment

Teaching Assistant
Vanessa Tanaka
540 South Kedzie Hall
353-8860
Office Hours: W 3:00-
appointment

TEXTS:

Required
Joel Feinberg, ed., Reason and Responsibility (RR)

Recommended
Thomas Nagel, What Does It All Mean (WM)
Zachary Seech, Writing Philosophy Papers

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE:

Jan. 12 Introduction
Jan. 14 Philosophical Argument ((I)
Handout

Jan. 17 Philosophical Argument II and the Dilemma of Determinism
Handout
Feinberg, RR, pp. 354-56
Nagel, WM, pp. 3-7, 47-58
Jan. 19 Determinism (I)
Feinberg, RR, pp. 357-58
Paul Holbach, "The Illusions of Free Will," RR, pp. 363-67
Jan. 21 Determinism (II)[1]
Arthur Schopenhauer, "Every Existence Presupposes an Essence," RR, pp. 368-70

Jan. 24 Compatibilism (I)
A. J. Ayer, "Freedom and Necessity," RR, 370-75
Jan. 26 Compatibilism (II)
Walter T. Stace, "The Problem of Free Will," RR, pp. 375-80
Jan. 28 (Metaphysical) Libertarianism (I)
Richard Taylor, "Freedom and Determinism," RR, pp. 380-86

Jan. 31 (Metaphysical) Libertarianism (II)
C. A. Campbell, "Has the Self 'Free Will'?" RR, pp. 386-96
Feb. 2 Praise, Blame, and Determinism (I)
Elizabeth L. Beardsley, "Determinism and Moral Perspectives," RR, pp. 397-405

[1] This class will include a brief quiz on the nature and assessment of elementary philosophical arguments.

Feb. 4 Praise, Blame, and Determinism (II) Elizabeth L. Beardsley, "Determinism and Moral Perspectives," RR, pp. 407-407

Feb. 7 The Mind-body Problem: Origins
Feinberg, RR, pp. 262, 118-19
Rene Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, RR, pp. 125-133, 151-55
Nagel, WM, pp. 8-26

Feb. 9 The Mind-Body Problem: an Overview
Nagel, WM, pp. 27-37
Feinberg, RR, pp. 263-64

Feb. 11 Dualism and Materialism
Jerome Shaffer, "The Subject of Consciousness," RR, pp. 268-77, 280-81

Feb. 14 Philosophical Behaviorism
Paul M. Churchland, "Behaviorism, Materialism, and Functionalism," RR, pp. 290-91

Feb. 16 Reductive Materialism (The Identity Theory)
Paul M. Churchland, "Behaviorism, . . . ," RR, pp. 291-96

Feb. 18 Eliminative Materialism
Paul M. Churchland, "Behaviorism, . . . ," RR, pp. 296-300

Feb. 21 Functionalism
Paul M. Churchland, "Behaviorism, . . . ," RR, pp. 300-304

Feb. 23 Is the Mind a Computer Program? (I)[2]
John R. Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs," RR, pp. 304-307

Feb. 25 Is the Mind a Computer Program? (II)
John R. Searle, "Minds, Brains, and Programs," RR, pp. 307-315

Feb. 28 Reason and Religious Belief: an Introduction
Feinberg, RR, pp. 2-4

Mar. 2 The Ontological Argument
Saint Anselm, "The Ontological Argument," RR, pp. 6-7
William L. Rowe, "The Ontological Argument," RR, pp. 8-17

Mar. 4 The Cosmological Argument
Saint Thomas Aquinas, "The Five Ways," RR, pp. 17-18
Samuel Clarke, "A Modern Formulation of the Cosmological Argument," RR, p. 19
William L. Rowe, "The Cosmological Argument," RR, pp. 20-27

Mar. 7-11 SPRING BREAK--NO CLASSES

Mar. 14 The Argument from Design
William Paley, "The Argument from Design," RR, pp. 28-32
David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, RR, pp. 38-40, 48-50
Stephen Jay Gould, "The Panda's Thumb" and "Senseless Signs of History," RR, pp. 33-38

Mar. 16 The Problem of Evil (I)
David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, RR, pp. 59-69
Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Rebellion," RR, pp. 70-75

Mar. 18 The Problem of Evil (II)
J. . Mackie, "Evil and Omnipotence," URRU, pp. 75-82

Mar. 21 The Problem of Evil (III)

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[2]This class will include a videotape presentation.

Richard Swinburne, "The Problem of Evil," RR, pp. 83-92

Mar. 23 Reason and Faith (I)
Richard Swinburne, "The Problem of Evil," RR, pp. 83-92
W. K. Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief," RR, pp. 93-96
Blaise Pascal, "The Wager," RR, pp. 97-100

Mar. 25 Reason and Faith (II)
William James, "The Will to Believe," RR, pp. 109-116

Mar. 28 Ethics: The Challenge of Relativism
Feinberg, RR, pp. 440-442
Richard B. Brandt, "Relativism and Ultimate Disagreements about Ethical Principles," RR, pp. 449-51
James Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism," RR, pp. 452-58
Bernard Williams, "Relativism," RR, pp. 459-61

Mar. 30 Moral Motivation and Human Nature (I)
Feinberg, RR, pp. 442-43
Joel Feinberg, "Psychological Egoism," RR, pp. 461-72

Apr. 1 Moral Motivation and Human Nature (II)
Howard Kahane, "Making the World Safe for Reciprocity," RR, pp. 479-87

Apr. 4 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Utilitarianism (I)
Feinberg, RR, pp. 443-445
John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, RR, pp. 487-92
Nagel, WM, pp. 59-75

Apr. 6 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Utilitarianism (II)
John Stuart Mill, Utilitarianism, RR, pp. 492-99

Apr. 8 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Utilitarianism (III)
Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," RR, pp. 499-506

Apr. 11 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Ethical Egoism
Ayn Rand, "The Ethics of Emergencies," RR, pp. 506-510
James Rachels, "Ethical Egoism," RR, pp. 510-17

Apr. 13 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Kantianism (I)
Immanuel Kant, "The Categorical Imperative," RR, pp. 524-28

Apr. 15 Proposed Standards of Right Conduct: Kantianism (II)
Immanuel Kant, "The Categorical Imperative," RR, pp. 528-31

Apr. 18 Social and Political Philosophy: Just and Unjust Laws
Martin Luther King, "Letter from Birmingham City Jail," RR, pp. 536-44

Apr. 20 Social and Political Philosophy: Justice as Fairness (I)
John Rawls, A Theory of Justice, RR, pp. 531-33
Nagel, WM, pp. 76-86

Apr. 22 Social and Political Philosophy: Justice as Fairness (II)
John Rawls, A Theory of Justice, RR, pp. 534-536

Apr. 25 Social and Political Philosophy: Justice, Gender, and the Family
Susan Moller Okin, Justice, Gender, and the Family, RR, pp. 545-557

Apr. 27 Making Connections: The Fields and Interrelatedness of Philosophy

Apr. 29 Making Connections: The Nature and Value of Philosophy

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WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS

1 Short Papers

Short (3-5 page) papers will be assigned for Feb. 7, March 4, March 28, and April 22. Students must write the first paper and any two of the remaining three—for a total of three short papers. Specific topics will be distributed in class one week in advance of each due date.

Papers are due at the beginning of class. Late papers will be accepted without penalty only in very unusual circumstances and only if cleared with the instructor in advance. Late papers not authorized in advance will have their overall grade lowered by 0.5 for each 12-hour period for which the paper is late. The clock starts ticking at the beginning of class on the date the paper is due.

2. Final Examination

The final examination is scheduled for Wednesday, May 4, 7:45-9:45 a.m. Students will be asked to answer three essay questions to be chosen on the day of the exam from a set of 10-12 essay questions distributed in class on April 20.

3. Reflections on Readings and Class Meetings

Five (5) very short (no more than one double-spaced page) papers will be due in class on alternate weeks beginning Jan. 24. A specific schedule will be distributed in class on Jan 19. In these papers students will respond to two questions:

(1) What, to your mind, is the most interesting or important unanswered question raised in or by the previous class meeting--and why?

(2) What, to your mind, is the most interesting or important point raised in or by the assigned reading for today's class--and why?

These papers are due at the beginning of class. They will be read, evaluated, and returned at the following class meeting. Late papers will be accepted only in very unusual circumstances and only if cleared with the instructor in advance.

4. Quiz

There will be a brief quiz on the nature and assessment of elementary philosophical arguments in class on January 21.

Grading

Each of the three short (3-5 page) papers will count 20 percent of the final grade, for a total of 60 percent. The final examination will count 30 percent. Each of the five (1 page) reflection papers will count 2 percent, for a total of 10 percent. The usual adjustments will be made in borderline cases for steady and unmistakable improvement in written work and informed, thoughtful, and fairly regular participation in class discussion. The student's grade on the brief quiz on philosophical arguments will also be used to resolve borderline cases.

Criteria employed in evaluating written work include the following:

1. How well does the author understand and appreciate the complexity of the problem(s) and issue(s) he or she is addressing? To what extent has the author made judicious use of the clearly relevant concepts, categories, distinctions, positions, arguments, etc. that have been included in course readings and that have been brought out in class and come up in discussion?

2. Is the paper or essay clearly written? Are its claims precise? Does it have an explicit overall direction? Would it be intelligible to another student at this level who is interested in the topic, but not enrolled in the course?

3. To what extent has the author identified the assumptions or presuppositions underlying his or her position? And to what extent is he or she aware of the possible difficulties with them?

4 Are the author's claims and positions accompanied by cogent arguments? Are claims and arguments provided in different parts of the paper or essay consistent with each other?

5 Has the author been fairly thorough? Can the reader think of some fairly obvious objection to the author's position, raised in class or in the readings, that he or she has not anticipated and addressed?

Chapter III

EFFECTIVE TEACHING STRATEGIES

Whether we teach courses in mathematics, science, English, or forestry, one of our goals as instructors is to provide students with opportunities to become active, critical thinkers who move beyond a view of learning as information-gathering to a view of learning as knowledge-building. Real learning is transformative. It changes the nature of what is learned because it involves the learner's ability to synthesize, evaluate, and accommodate new information into old systems of knowledge.

We provide here a selection of strategies that encourage students' critical thinking, foster a sense of learning community, and empower students as learners.

INSTRUCTOR KNOWLEDGE

Effective teachers exhibit a breadth of knowledge, bring information together from a variety of sources, analyze concepts effectively, and stay up to date in their specialty.

Many new TAs assume that they can teach Math 10l because they took one course in statistics and two in quantitative analysis. However, an in-depth understanding of the subject is often necessary for dealing with the bright, inquisitive student who asks a relevant question that is not covered in the text: "Why didn't you use that same formula to solve the last problem?" Ideally, you will be assigned to a course in the area of your particular expertise, but you should still review material to refresh your memory, and you might try explaining it to someone else as a way of anticipating student questions and problems.

Just how you present your knowledge will depend on your approach to teaching in general, but you can take advantage of the expertise you have over mere textbook presentations by:

1. Revealing your thought processes and demonstrating and sharing your thinking so that students get a sense of what it means to think like a psychologist or a chemist or an art historian and tackle problems in the discipline

2. Discussing current developments and their effect on present theory

3. Being careful not to oversimplify; there is sometimes a tendency for TAs to summarize what students *need to know* from a course rather than invite them into the discipline and into academic inquiry as a process

Tips
Reveal your thought processes
Discuss current developments
Don't oversimplify/But be Clear & Concise
Stay a week ahead
Look up unanswered questions
Evaluate what students have learned

4. Staying at least a week ahead of the students if you are teaching outside your specialty, but remembering that you are not responsible for knowing all the answers or that you need not apologize for your lack of knowledge

5. Helping your students find out answers to questions they have by agreeing to look it up later—and following through with this offer—or by helping them find out the answers for themselves

6. Determining through evaluation procedures that are consistent with course goals and teaching strategies whether students have learned what you intended. (See the section on "Active Learning" in this chapter and "Classroom Assessment Techniques" in Chapter 5.)

Remember that you are not responsible for knowing all the answers; so do not feel compelled to apologize for your "lack of knowledge." If you cannot answer a question or you have made an error, admit it, but tell your students where they may find the answer or offer to look it up—and then do it.

INTERACTING SUCCESSFULLY WITH STUDENTS

Effective teachers interact with students in a skillful manner by establishing a rapport with the class by:

1. Creating a comfortable atmosphere in which learning is enjoyable and where individuality and creativity are encouraged

2. Remaining approachable, keeping office hours, and encouraging students to see you during those hours.

3. Being open to student questions by observing students' responses and sensing their confusions

4. Responding to their questions with respect and being courteous in dealing with questions that are irrelevant

5. Stimulating class participation and discussion (see section on "Active Learning")

Establishing Rapport
Create Comfortable Atmosphere
Remain approachable
Be open to questions
Respond with respect
Stimulate participation and discussion
Convey enthusiasm

6. Conveying your enthusiasm for the subject by being attentive to students, moving away from the chalkboard or podium, having eye contact with students to observe students' expressions, using humor appropriate to the subject, and indicating a genuine interest in their contributions and concern for their learning

DEMONSTRATING PROBLEM SOLVING

A major instructional goal in most courses is to develop students' ability to work with problems in the discipline. As a teacher, you are responsible for transmitting two levels of knowledge to your students. First, you need to explain how a member of your discipline perceives the situation and brings order to a maze of raw data. Second, you need to explain how these general principles apply to the specific case covered by a particular problem. It is important to keep in mind that your students are just beginning to learn the material and might have a naive, non-disciplinary view of the problem. Therefore, your job is to explain and demonstrate how you as a representative of your discipline approach the problem, from general conceptualization to specific procedures.

A little practice will help you decide which of the following techniques works best with your students the material to be covered in your class:

1. Demonstrate a problem's solution by systematically explaining the rationale for every step in a solution

2. Ask members of the class to take the lead and explain how they perceive the problem

3. Divide the class into small groups (3 or 4) and have group members take turns in leading a discussion on solving the problem, after which you can check their solutions as you lead a whole-class discussion

LECTURING AND OTHER LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Research clearly indicates that when students construct knowledge from their active participation in a course, real learning and critical thinking occur. The traditional format for the transmission of knowledge in the college classroom has been the lecture, but there are numerous alternatives to the lecture for providing opportunities for students to engage actively in the construction of knowledge and to develop a perspective on the kinds of critical thought that are central to understanding that discipline.

The following section presents strengths and weaknesses of the traditional lecture format, along with several alternative approaches that encourage active student participation in course content. Instructors need to determine their purposes and goals for presentation of course material and then decide which of the approaches discussed in this section are most appropriate for the course content, course goals, and classroom environment.

LECTURING

The survival of the basic lecture—a method of teaching by discourse rather than conversation or seminar—in this age of technology and electronic media is, in many ways, remarkable. Lecturing is probably the oldest teaching method and remains the most common form of instruction to be found in United States colleges and universities, despite the fact that some research has shown that lecturing is ineffective, especially if not combined with some alternative style of teaching. As well as working to improve skills at lecturing, the instructor might also determine if the lecture approach is the best method of teaching for the achievement of the instructional goals of the class. Lecturing is very appropriate for some goals and very inappropriate for others.

STRENGTHS OF THE LECTURE APPROACH

1. Lectures can communicate the intrinsic interest of the subject matter. The speaker can convey personal enthusiasm in a way that no book or other media can. Enthusiasm stimulates interest, and interested, stimulated people tend to learn more.
2. Lectures in university settings can provide students with role models of scholars in action. The professor's way of approaching knowledge can be demonstrated for students to emulate.
3. Lectures can convey material otherwise unavailable, including original research or recent developments that have not yet made it to publication.
4. Lectures can organize material in a special way. They may provide a faster, simpler method of presenting information to an audience with its own special needs. Lectures are particularly useful for students who read poorly or who are unable to organize print material.
5. Lectures can convey large amounts of factual material.
6. Lectures can speak to many listeners at the same time.
7. Lectures permit maximum teacher control. The instructor chooses what material to cover, whether to answer questions, and other courses of action.
8. Lectures present minimum threat to students. They are not required to do anything, which they may prefer.
9. Lectures emphasize learning by listening, an advantage for students who learn well this way.
10. As Eble (1976) noted, lecturing beats textbooks or video in that it offers "face-to face confrontations with other talking, gesturing, thinking, feeling humans."

WEAKNESSES OF THE LECTURE APPROACH

1. The lecture puts students in a passive rather than an active role. Passivity can hinder learning.
2. Lectures inhibit feedback to both the instructor and the student about the students' learning, encouraging one-way communication.
3. Lectures require an effective speaker who can vary tone, pitch, and pace of delivery. Lecturers must be verbally fluent; a skill that is neither stressed nor learned in many Ph. D. programs and is, in general, distributed unevenly among people.
4. Lectures place the burden of organizing and synthesizing content solely on the lecturer. They are not well suited to higher levels of learning such as application, analysis, and synthesis.
5. Lectures are not well suited to complex, detailed, or abstract material.
6. Lectures assume that all students are learning at the same pace and at the same level of understanding, which is hardly ever true.
7. Lectures do not sustain student attention, which wanes very quickly in l to 25 minutes.
8. Lectures tend to be forgotten quickly.

HOW TO PLAN AN EFFECTIVE LECTURE

Instructors might remember that learners' minds are not blank slates, and the organization of the lecture must take into account students' existing knowledge and expectations as well as the structure of the subject matter. L. Dee Fink (1989) has pointed out that the most intellectually alive and exciting lecturers tend to be those who view knowledge as a dynamic process rather than a static product.

Phil Martin, coordinator of Ohio State's public speaking team, has suggested that a good way to approach the preparation of a lecture is to follow this progression of steps, answering a variety of questions along the way:

1. **Select a topic**. The lecturer's first decision should be on the overall subject matter of the lecture. This will probably be drawn from whatever is on the syllabus for that day's class.

2. **Decide on the purpose**. Once the topic is chosen, the next stage is to decide why it is being taught (this is not as obvious as it may first appear). Possible questions might be: Is my aim to make students understand this difficult concept? What are the essential facts I want my students to remember? Do I want to advocate a particular idea or behavior? Is one of my purposes to entertain? Is preparation for an examination the main point of the lecture?

3. **Analyze the class**. Just as performers need to know their audience, so lecturers need to analyze their class. It is useful to determine the level of students in this class. How mature they are as learners, and their prior relationship (if any) with this subject matter. By exploring the demographics of the class, it may also be possible to predict what learning styles this group of students will prefer.

Preparing the Lecture
Select a topic
Decide on the purpose
Analyze the class
Analyze the occasion
Gather materials
Prepare the lecture
Practice the lecture

4. **Analyze the occasion**. In addition to studying the composition of the class, it is also helpful to analyze the occasion before preparing each lecture. A class early in the morning, for example, might require the lecturer to be more extroverted in order to wake students up. Long class periods may be especially suited to an interactive lecture. Students at the beginning of the semester may be more enthusiastic than during the last week of classes. These issues can be predicted in advance, and such awareness will usually improve the effectiveness of the lecture.

5. **Gather materials**. After this analysis, the next step is to gather the materials to be used in the preparation of the lecture. It is a good idea to bring everything together before sitting down to write, so that the instructor has all the necessary sources immediately at hand.

6. **Prepare the lecture**. After the materials are together, the next step is to write the lecture itself. Some discussion of what form of lecture notes is most appropriate follows, but it is certainly desirable for lecturers to have prepared with sufficient detail to be entirely comfortable with the content of the lecture.

7. **Practice the lecture**. Finally, it is a good idea to practice the lecture, whether to a living audience or an inanimate object (e.g., cassette tape), especially if the lecturer is inexperienced. This will help phrasing and delivery and will perhaps provide some advance feedback. Here are some further suggestions for the contents of an effective lecture.

THE INTRODUCTION

It is advisable to plan an introduction that might point to a gap in the students' knowledge or challenge or raise a question about something in the students' minds in order to arouse curiosity. Good introductions may also help students to discriminate between more and less important features of lectures, may help them create realistic expectations about what they are supposed to learn from the lecture, and may enable them to allocate their information-processing capability much more effectively. The aim, in short, is to capture the interest of the listener. As with good drama, effective lectures "hook" their listeners' attention from the start.

Suggestion: Raising a question to be answered by the end of the hour.

Example: By the end of the hour, you should be able to answer the question "Are lectures better than discussions"

Suggestion: Explaining the relationship of the lecture content to professional career interests, the real world, etc.

Example: Today's lecture is about the cost of living indices, a topic in macroeconomics that should help you understand the recent discussions in Congress related to inflation.

Suggestion: Relating lecture content to previous class material.

Example: For the past week, we have been occupied with the history of the live theater. Today, we will be looking at film history, and we will spend the rest of the week comparing the two forms.

Suggestion: Telling students how they are expected to use the lecture material.

Example: Today, I will offer a specific model of evaluation and illustrate its application in several different kinds of settings. When you meet in your discussion groups later this week, you will be asked to apply the model as you discuss the Brown vs. the Board of Education decision.

Some other ways to start a lecture include telling a personal anecdote or telling a relevant funny story or joke, providing an overview of the lecture, and giving the lecture an intriguing title.

THE BODY OF THE LECTURE

In the body, instructors can allow for some flexibility in the amount of content to be presented in order to respond to students' questions and comments. It is imperative for the lecturer to determine the key points to be developed during the class session, and not to present nuances and minute details to the extent that students lose sight of the main idea. Instructors should not feel pressed to cover everything, as an effective lecture uses varied pacing to help students make some critical distinctions between important concepts and trivia. Many researchers suggest that the individual lecture should cover only four or five main points that are made explicit to the students. The body of the lecture must, of course, be well organized. Organizing the lecture can be done in a number of different ways; the most appropriate will depend on the subject itself as well as the lecturer's personal approach. Here are some examples:

Cause and effect: Events are cited and explained by reference to their origins.

Example: One can demonstrate how the continual revolutionary movements of the late 1700s affected British politics at the turn of the century.

Time sequential: Lecture ideas are arranged chronologically.

Example: If lecturing about the steps in a clinical suspension model, talk about the initial step to be taken, the second step, and so forth.

Using an organizational idea to structure the lecture.

Example: Today we will view all these methods from a perspective of validity.

There are many other organizational possibilities. One can state a problem and then offer alternative solutions; arrange lecture topics according to their importance, familiarity, or complexity; or offer a two-sided "compare and contrast" presentation.

Examples should be included in the lecture. Almost all writers agree that illustrations help people to understand things. Lecturers might try to provide a break in the information output every 10 minutes or so to maintain attention. These are good times for anecdotes, visuals, humor, questions, and the like.

The body of the lecture can help the students understand the way that the points are organized. After stating major points verbally, it is a good idea to put them on a handout or write them on a board or overhead projector. Complex points are easier to explain if the instructor uses an appropriate vocabulary level, uses a variety of illustrations, includes essential content before "nice to know" content, and restates points after illustrations. Illustrations or examples will work best if they include some of the following qualities: precision (fit the idea well), relevance (fit the context well), ingenuity, interest, novelty, humor, and scholarship.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE LECTURE

McKeachie (1996) says that in the conclusion of the lecture one has the opportunity to make up for any lapses in the body of the lecture. He also notes that encouraging students to formulate questions by asking questions can facilitate memory and understanding. The prospect of unanswered questions to be treated in future lectures creates anticipation of the future. Other possibilities include:

1. Restating the main points by using a new example, asking for the main points, and showing where the class is now.

2. Asking a student to summarize the lecture's key ideas.

3. Restating what students are expected to have gained from the lectures.

Instructors can stimulate discussion and increase interaction after presenting a lecture or large amount of content by pairing up students and giving them two to three minutes to react, respond and raise questions or issues about the material just presented. They can ask volunteers to report on issues or questions raised in their discussions.

Another option for broadening the circle of discussions is to call on pairs that include individual members of social groups (e.g. women students, students of color, etc.) who may not be getting much "air-time."

A final point: Lecturers should not let students pressure them (by packing bags, talking, or moving around) into cutting the lecture short! Herr (1984) suggests that instructors make "a remark designed to refocus student attention: (With a smile) "You have four more minutes for which you have paid, and I shall end promptly, so just wait to grab your back packs." Another trick for the end of class is the creation of suspense, which can be accomplished in a variety of ways such as posing a question. One should make sure that there is no consistent verbal or nonverbal cue signaling the end of class, which will cause students to lose attention. Such a cue might be the return to the podium, the gathering of papers, etc.

ACTIVE LEARNING: DISCUSSION, WRITING, AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING[1]

Active learning is an approach that views the student as an active participant in the learning process. It is in many instances a viable alternative to and complement of the lecture approach. This section will talk about ways instructors can engage students actively through integrating instructional strategies into a lecture or using them as stand-alone methods. The focus will be on speaking, writing, laboratory and clinical instruction, and other strategies for active engagement.

LEADING EFFECTIVE DISCUSSIONS

A highly effective way of promoting active engagement in learning is to provide opportunities for students to verbalize what they are learning in the classroom. Instructors are thus able to provide the feedback that is such an important part of the learning process at the time when it is most needed.

Discussion techniques are one way to get students to verbalize what they are learning. In addition, discussions can provide a socializing mechanism, examine and clarify confusing concepts, and raise value questions. Discussions can be invaluable for any of the following goals of instruction:

1. To help students learn to think in ways that are particular to the discipline
2. To help students learn to identify and evaluate the logic and evidence that forms the basis of their own and others' positions
3. To give students opportunities to formulate applications of principles
4. To help students identify, formulate, and solve problems using information gained from readings, lectures, and or life experiences

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[1]This section of the handbook has been modified and reprinted with permission from *Teaching at The Ohio State University: A Handbook*. Center for Teaching Excellence, Faculty and TA Development, The Ohio State University, Revised 2002, pp. 47-54.

5. To use the resources of members of the group
6. To gain acceptance for information or theories counter to previous beliefs of students
7. To develop motivation for further learning
8. To get prompt feedback on how well objectives are being attained

SETTING DISCUSSION OBJECTIVES

Well-defined objectives are an important prerequisite to a good discussion. They also help determine the kind of discussion appropriate for the situation. It helps to view discussions along a continuum from targeted discussions, where the instructor carefully controls the discussion and asks questions requiring specific responses, to open ended discussions, where the instructor allows the students to formulate the questions and control the discussion. If the objective is to assess students' comprehension of course material or review or summarize content, targeted discussions will serve best. If the objective is to promote critical thinking, curiosity about the topic, or tolerance for opposing viewpoints, open-ended discussions are most appropriate.

An essential difference between a targeted and open-ended discussion is the kind of question asked. Questions asked in a targeted-discussion are often structured to produce short, convergent responses. Questions in an open-ended discussion provide more latitude for response. Some examples follow:

Targeted questions:	What is the definition of an adjective? What are the stages of cell division?
Open Ended Questions:	What are some ways we might solve the energy crisis? Given the medical data before you, how would you go about diagnosing this patient's problem?

In targeted discussions, the instructor wants to keep a tight rein on the direction. In addition to using convergent questions, other ways in which the instructor can focus the discussion include intervening after each response to comment upon it, summarize it, or redirect the question; mapping the direction of the discussion on the blackboard or overhead transparency; limiting the duration and number of responses, and moving quickly from one question to another. In contrast, the instructor in an open-ended discussion would act differently, using broader questions, allowing ample time to respond, encouraging a lateral rather than teacher directed response pattern, e.g., "Does anyone have a comment on X's response?" or "Feel free to jump in and respond to each other"; and reducing his or her role as authority by sitting down or remaining quiet.

Although the type of discussion questions must be tied to the purpose of the discussion, there are findings to indicate that questions that are middle-range in their openness elicit the highest quality of frequency of response. John Andrews writes, "Perhaps the most important quality to grasp is a subtle blend of structure and freedom which gives a discussion momentum and yet does not let it wander indiscriminately" (1980, p. 147). In a study of questioning behaviors, he found that when instructors used what he called "playground" questions, questions that designate the intellectual sphere for discussion and then give students latitude for answering, they got better results than when they asked very open-ended 'brainstorming" questions, convergent "quiz show" questions, or highly unfocused "general invitation" questions, such as "So what do you think about Plato?"

BUILDING RAPPORT

Perhaps nothing is more important to a good discussion than good rapport between instructor and students. Some behaviors that promote the establishment of good rapport include:

Willingness to share personal experiences

Willingness to admit uncertainties
Openness to new ideas
Ability to suspend one's judgment of others
Ability to listen carefully to others' statements
Tolerance of opposite points of view

Many students test the waters to see how their ideas will be accepted; if the instructor lacks sensitivity, students may become unwilling to contribute. This section will explore some ways to build rapport and to avoid damaging it.

OPENING SESSION

Students look for clues to an instructor's temperament and orientation in a number of ways on the first day. Instructors who emphasize that discussion will be an important part of the course influence students' expectations. Some instructors go on to define the criteria for receiving full credit for class participation, including such items as integration of class experiences and materials, the development of pertinent ideas, insights, or points of view, the sharing of exemplary experiences, asking of crucial questions, or building on provocative points made by others.

However, perhaps the most important ways to build rapport on the first day are subtler. In order to set up a supportive environment, some instructors start the first day with activities designed to break the ice and get students used to speaking in front of the group. In a smaller class, they might ask students to share their names, hometowns, academic majors, and/or a question they would like the course to answer. Some instructors have students break up into pairs and share this information with each other. In larger courses, instructors might ask the same questions, only using a show of hands, e.g., "How many of you are from central Michigan? How many from the South?" Instructors get the best results when they offer personal information about themselves to get the discussion rolling. They might, for example, talk about their personal and professional backgrounds or their initial experiences with the discipline.

Verbal Cues

During a course, the instructor can promote an atmosphere of trust and rapport by offering some of the following questions or comments:

1. Can you think of a situation in which this notion might apply? Might not apply?
2. That is an interesting idea, tell me more.
3. I do not know either, but that is a very interesting question. Can anyone help us unravel ourselves here?
4. I am not sure I understand. Were you saying that the survey questions were too personal? Can you give me an example?
5. Feels to me like we have rather strayed from the point. Have we?
6. Let us not forget the basic problem we are trying to solve.
7. What is the first step?

Nonverbal Cues

Nonverbal ways in which an instructor can create rapport during a discussion include:

1. Showing enthusiasm when listening to student responses by smiling expectantly and nodding as the student talks.
2. Keeping eye contact with the student talking.
3. Walking toward the person who is talking, even if there is only space to take a few steps in any direction.
4. Walking around the room throughout a discussion so students will view people in different parts of the room.

5. Looking relaxed by leaning against the wall, sitting on a desk, or pulling up a desk or chair and joining the class.
6. Arranging students' chairs in a circle or in a configuration in which they can see each other talking.

GETTING DISCUSSIONS STARTED

There are many different techniques for leading discussions, from the most non-directive to the most programmed. Here are some ways to get discussions moving:

Start with a common experience. One of the best ways to start a discussion is to provide a concrete, common experience through the presentation of a demonstration, film, or role-playing. Following such a presentation, it is often easy to ask a relatively open question such as, "What are your immediate reactions?" or "Does anything in this film disturb you?"

Start with a question. The range of questions is listed in the section above on setting objectives. Questions that speak well to students' puzzles can be obtained by asking students to submit written questions in advance of the session. Once the first question has been asked and responded to, further questions come easily. The trick is to phrase the first question as well as possible. In general, instructors may:

1. Use open questions to begin long discussions.
2. Wait at least 10 seconds before rephrasing the question. Instructors rarely wait long enough for student responses.
3. Offer an example if the problem you have posed appears too abstract.

When referring back to ground rules on sharing "air-time" doesn't work, instructors can share their own observations of the discussion patterns (e.g., men dominating or interrupting women) with the class and pose the analysis of the pattern as a class project. Another option is to assign students as process observers (on a rotating basis) and then save time at the end of class for them to report their observations.

Start with a controversy. One of the best ways to create a hot discussion is to pose a controversial issue and ask by a show of hands how many students take one side or the other (e.g., "how many of you believe that . . . is true? How many think it is false?"). To control the discussion, ask for five statements of evidence or argument from each side, then statements of rebuttal. Write these statements on the board. One of the easiest ways to create controversy is to play devil's advocate when a class comes too quickly to agreement on a complex issue. Students should be later informed that the position was taken for purposes of discussion.

Place students in buzz groups. In this procedure, classes are split into subgroups for a brief discussion of a problem. Groups can be asked to come up with one hypothesis that they see as relevant, with one application of a principle, or an example of a point. In order to make this method effective, students must be given a clear task and a definite amount of time in which to do it and asked to use their responses in a follow-up discussion with the class as a whole.

Discussion Starters
Start with a common experience
Start with a question
Start with a controversy
Place students in buzz groups
Ask for responses in writing

Ask for responses in writing. One excellent way to get discussions going is to ask students to respond to the question you wish answered in writing. Usually five minutes is enough time for students to prepare their answers. Encourage them to be creative by using the writing as a chance

to brainstorm. Then invite oral responses. Often quiet students will speak up if they have the words before them. Also, written responses often lead to more reflective discussions.

GROUND RULES

Ground rules can be ways of having students take ownership of the concept of co-creating a classroom environment conducive to learning. By gaining class consensus on ground rules from the outset, teachers can be assured of student support and participation in their enforcement. Four suggested ground rules are:

1. **Participation**. Rather than generalize and say "those people" or "don't you think," instructors can encourage students to use "I" statements and speak their own experience. Personalizing discussion invites diverse perspectives from students who often find themselves on the fringe of university life, such as gay, lesbian, and bisexual students; nontraditional-age students; and students of color. Instructors can ask students who know they tend to monopolize discussions to self-monitor and make room for quieter students. At the same time, instructors can encourage students who tend to be quieter to contribute to enhancing the learning by sharing their perspectives and experiences.

2. **Confidentiality**. Instructors can encourage students to take concepts and ideas from class and discuss them freely; however, they should suggest that personal stories or issues raised by individuals are to be kept confidential and the property of the class.

Ground Rules
Participation
Confidentiality
Respectful listening
No Put-downs

3. **Respectful listening**. If instructors demonstrate that they are good listeners, they can encourage students to raise questions. Instructors can point out that if someone raises a point that others disagree with or find offensive, it is important to remember that the human being behind that question or comment deserves respect.

4. **No Put-downs**. Tied to the notion of respect is the ground rule of no put-downs in class, not even the humorous variety called "zaps." To "zap" one person often serves to discourage open and honest exchange of ideas among the whole group.

MAINTAINING DISCUSSIONS

Maintaining discussions often means dealing as smoothly as possible with the problems that arise. Here are some common problems with suggestions for how to deal with them:

The student who talks too much. One way to approach the avid talker and pull in non-participants is to avoid looking in the direction of the persister or to structure the discussion in a way that precludes that person's participation, e.g.,"Let's hear from someone who has not yet contributed." Instructors might also ask one or more members of the class to act as observers for a few class periods, reporting back their observations to the class. Perhaps assigning the avid talker to the observer role would help sensitivity. Another technique is to talk to the student individually outside of class.

The student who will not talk. Instructors need to set clear expectations for participation. It is also important to reinforce participation. A way to approach non-participants is to provide opportunities for small group discussions. Smaller groups may help put some students more at ease. A second strategy is to occasionally ask opinion questions (e.g., "How do you feel about this?"). This may encourage participation by reducing students' fear of answering incorrectly. Another strategy is to have students write out their answers to a question. Having the words written out may make it easier for a shy or fearful person to speak up.

The discussion that turns into an argument. In good discussions, conflicts will often arise. If such conflicts are left ambiguous, they may cause continuing trouble. Here are some ways to resolve them:

1. If the solution depends on certain facts, the instructor can ask students to refer to the text or another authority.
2. If there is an experimentally verified answer, the instructor can use the opportunity to review the method by which the answer could be determined.
3. If the question is one of values, the instructor may use the occasion to help students become aware of the values involved.
4. The instructor can list both sides of the argument on the board.
5. The instructor can take a strong position as moderator, preventing students from interrupting each other or speaking simultaneously. She or he can lay ground rules for discussion, such as asking students to focus conflict on ideas rather than people and to resist being judgmental.

Common Problems
Student who talks too much
Student who won't talk
Discussion turns to argument
Unclear or hesitant comments
Discussion goes off-track
Student who attacks instructor

Unclear or hesitant comments. The instructor can encourage students making unclear contributions to give examples or restate points for verification or rejection by that student, encourage hesitant comments by enthusiastic nonverbal cues and patience, or asking for elaboration and examples at appropriate points.

The discussion that goes off track. Some instructors keep discussions on track by listing the questions or issues they want to cover on the board or summarizing the discussion on the board as it proceeds. Stopping and asking a student to summarize where the discussion is at the point it appears to go off track may also help.

The student who attacks the instructor. When students argue for the sake of argument, instructors will usually lose if they take the bait. This situation often occurs when instructors are going over exams or assignments. Students who attack usually want attention, so simply giving them some recognition while firmly moving on often takes care of the problem. If students are simply trying to embarrass the instructor, they may seek to make him or her defensive with such comments as, "How do you really know that . . .?" or "You're not really saying that . . .?" Such questions can be handled by playing boomerang. The instructor might say, "What I'm saying is . . . but now I'd like you to share your perspective." Turning the question back to the questioner forces him or her to take responsibility for his or her opinion. Other ways to handle these situations include:

1. **Confrontation**. Instructors can confront the questioner with their reactions to his or her behavior. "I'm uncomfortable with the imprecision of your questions. What I really hear you saying is..."

2. **Active listening**. Instructors can paraphrase the message they heard and check out the accuracy of their assumptions before responding.

3. **Locating**. Instructors can ask the questioner to explain the context behind the question.

4. **Reframing**. The focus can be on clarifying the assumptions behind the person's argument and then inviting her or him to see alternative possibilities. "Your argument is premised on the idea that people cannot be trusted. How would you restructure your position to reflect the assumption that people can be trusted?"

5. **Deferring**. Often, the best strategy is to invite students to come up after class and arrange for a time to talk about the disagreement further.

CREATING CLOSURE

Good discussions end with a summary so that students know what important points were covered. The advantage of active learning techniques such as the discussion is that students have the opportunity to verbalize course materials for themselves and receive responses in class from the instructor on how well they understand that material. In addition to showing students why the discussion was important to their learning, a summary provides the opportunity to fill in points that were not covered and praise the class for the quality of their responses.

STRUCTURED CONTROVERSY

Using structured controversy in the classroom can take many forms. In its most typical form, you select a specific problem (the closer the problem is to multiple issues central to the course the better); it involves providing students with a limited amount of background information and asking them to construct an argument based on this information. This they do by working in groups (and so, it is not unlike the cooperative learning strategy described below).

Let us imagine that you are teaching an undergraduate course in medical ethics. You are about to deal with issues surrounding the problem of organ donation. You introduce the topic briefly, perhaps providing students with essential background concerning, for example, the cost of different types of organ transplants, the availability of donor organs, the probability of success for transplantation of different organs, institutional constraints, etc. Then you set up the following situation: four individuals are on the list of potential recipients of a donor liver. One of these is a white male, 55 years old and a recovering alcoholic; another is a former teacher, 42 years old, married with two young children; the third is a 25-year old prostitute with a history of drug abuse; and the fourth is a 17-year old high school honors student who has just been offered a scholarship at an ivy-league university. A viable liver has now become available. Each of your students is assigned to a group, each of which represents a member of the hospital medical ethics review board. The job of the board is to decide which of the potential recipients should receive the donor organ. These groups include:

1) Clergy
2) Surgeon
3) Insurance company representative
4) Family member
5) Past recipient of donor liver
6) Chair of the hospital's Board of Directors

Each of these groups will receive a fact sheet providing them with information that they may choose to use in the development of their argument.

After the students have the opportunity (both in and out of class) to develop and present these arguments, it would be useful to have them all write about what factors they feel are important to weigh in making decisions such as these and what they learned from engaging in the process.

GETTING STUDENTS TO ASK THE QUESTIONS

Instructors traditionally ask the majority of questions as a way of getting students to think about course content or demonstrate their knowledge of the material. The typical pattern is:

I - Initiation of the question by the instructor
R - Response of student

E - Evaluation of response by the instructor

In this questioning pattern, the instructor does most of the cognitive work. To turn this around, you will want to get students to ask the questions, to make the cognitive connections, to evaluate ideas and responses—their own as well as those of their peers and the instructor.

IN-CLASS COMMUNICATION TIPS

Open communication is necessary to have a classroom conducive to learning. Good communication with your students will allow you to better assess and serve their needs. Misunderstanding, however, can occur. The following lists contain suggestions and questions for self-evaluation.

TIPS SPECIFIC TO ITAS

1. Try to become aware of common idioms and slang used by students on this campus; expressions can vary from place to place.
2. When not sure how to interpret student comments, ask for a fuller explanation; when a remark seems strange or out-of-place, ask if the student is joking. Check with someone familiar with such language expressions to help you better understand what the student may have meant.
3. Use some humor when having problems with language and ask students to help correct your word "bloopers."
4. Remember that listening carefully to someone who speaks a little differently than one is used to can be tiring, especially when material is difficult.
5. Take your time and speak a bit more slowly than you usually do.
6. If unsure of the pronunciation of a word, write it on the board or overhead projector to help avoid confusion about the word.

TIPS FOR ALL TAS

1. When students ask a question, start by stating the question back to them in the form of a question, "Are you asking whether the etiology of _____, is affected by _____?" Ask students to stop you, or correct your interpretation of the question if that is not what they indeed asked.
2. Allow students to stop you when they fail to understand something in your lecture.
3. Be careful of critical, negative comments. Offer specific suggestions for change, tactfully and constructively.
4. Keep a comfortable amount of distance between your personal life and those of your students. This makes issues of respect, grading propriety, and equitable treatment simpler.
5. To generate student interest, use personal stories, cartoons, popular culture, news, etc. to make the material more relevant to their lives and to show your own excitement about the subject.

After you have had some classroom instructional experience, you can better address the following questions. It would be a good idea to read them over before the term begins and then again as you have interacted with your students.

1. Are my speech habits conducive to good communication and maximum student learning?
2. Do I make every effort to speak in an orderly, direct manner?
3. Do I avoid the attitudes of prejudice and emotional bias in my classroom planning and speaking?
4. Do I speak at a rate that makes for effective comprehension?
5. Do I speak with the appropriate volume for the size of the room and the number of students? Do I use variety in vocal expression—pitch, rate, loudness, and quality?
6. As part of my regular presentations, do I include examples and explanations suitable to the levels of language and experience of my students?

7. When a student addresses me, do I listen fully and courteously to both thought and feeling?
8. When misunderstandings occur, do I explore them further and check out both my and my students' assumptions?
9. Do I respond fully to the student, with clear comments, using words, voice, gestures, and the like?
10. Could some of the failures in the listening of my students be due to weaknesses in my speaking and/or listening habits?

CONDUCTING OFFICE HOURS – SEE ALSO, RAJESH L'AL, "OFFICE HOURS AS A TEACHING OPPORTUNITY" http://tap.msu.edu/PPT/2005/TA_Rajesh_Lal.ppt

Office hours can be a powerful vehicle for learning if you strive to get a feel for your students' mindset. Particularly in a time of perceived conflict, students may approach your office feeling powerless, angry, and frustrated. You need to address their feelings first. The following guidelines will help you successfully negotiate with students during office hours:

Be prepared for student frustrations and allow students to vent. Do not let a student's anger, frustration, tone, etc. put you on the defensive. Student-instructor communication is not a competition. Avoid temptation to "show who is boss." Agree with students that they have a right to their feelings and strive to work for a solution. Although you may not understand the intensity of the emotion expressed, do not let this gap inhibit your role as a teacher and problem solver. Simply accept where the student is coming from and attempt to separate the problem from the emotion expressed.

Become an active listener. Repeat and summarize a student's comments. Paraphrasing allows the student to gauge whether or not you have understood the complaint, and it helps both student and instructor to frame the problem to be addressed. This also allows you to filter out some of the emotion and guide the discussion.

Practice the art of asking questions. Use open-ended, leading questions with students. If the student says, "You graded my paper unfairly. I didn't even know what you wanted, anyway," resist the temptation to reply "Why didn't you ask me before you started writing?" Nothing is gained when you launch into a lecture on sliding academic standards and your personal obligation to reestablish integrity in the university. Instead, ask the student how he or she arrived at this conclusion. Should you have given more feedback? Were your comments clear? What did the student think was unfair about your evaluation? The student's answers to your questions will both give you information about the immediate problem, and help you establish a picture of the student's mindset. Questions also help to separate issues. You could ask, for example, "Are you angry about the grade you received or about my comments on your paper?" The answer will help you work with the student toward specific solutions. Finally, in many cases asking questions diffuses student anger, because it shows the student that you are taking the concerns seriously.

Take student perceptions seriously. Try to eliminate statements like these from your conferences with students: "You are wrong," or "That is unreasonable," or "That is not rational," or "You are too emotional." Instead, accept students' perceptions and try to discover why they see things as they do. You might discover, for example, that students view education as a commodity: they pay their tuition, and they deserve a grade for it. Or they might believe that the time they spend preparing for a test or doing an assignment should ensure a particular grade. You may see things very differently, but if these are the student's perceptions, you must discover and address them before you can hope to resolve any differences with the student.

Propose multiple options to address student concerns. Demonstrate your willingness to help the student address the conflict. Aim for a win-win solution. For example, if a student has done well on homework but has failed a test, you might suggest having that student pair up with another to study for tests, or come to your office for help before the test. Perhaps you need to

advise the student on test-taking skills—the student might experience test anxiety, which interferes with performance. Do not stress students' obligations to fix their own problem or accept the consequences.

End the session with a plan of action. After discussing options, reinforce the problem-solving nature of the meeting by creating specific agreements with specific actions expected on both sides. Students who leave with a plan in hand will feel validated and more open to future learning.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Collaborative learning can be described as learning that occurs because of interactions between members of a collective (meaning two of more individuals). In classrooms, learning-related tasks we are most familiar with are laboratory groups in science classes where pairs of students work together to carry out an experiment, although in many cases, this does not represent true collaboration, but rather compartmentalization of work so that individuals do not have a complete understanding of all concepts involved, or inequitable distribution of effort, in which one student does most of the work but also understands more. A critical component of cooperative learning is division of labor by consent, within-group explanations, and sharing of information in equitable ways. Another critical prerequisite for success is the setting up of rewards for both the group and for individuals within the group; that is, each student must feel as though his or her contribution to the group and their individual contributions will be rewarded.

What might this look like when enacted in your classroom? Let us say, for example, that you are teaching a large lecture course in organismal biology. You might divide the class into groups of 4-5 and provide them with one of the topics or concepts that you will be dealing with in the coming weeks. Each group's job is to provide the rest of the class with an overview of that topic or concept in whatever form they would like. The conditions which must be met are the following: first, each group member must participate; second, the presentation or product must reveal the contribution of each group member; third, grading will consist of a group grade, as well as individual grades, the latter being based on a written product each group member turns in and which reflects their own contribution to the final presentation or product. What does this do for you? It allows you to structure the way a topic is introduced to the class and to link topics or concepts across the semester. Second, it provides students with additional investment in the course. Third, particularly in large classes, it allows students to get to know well at least some other students taking the course. You can choose to alter the groups as the semester progresses, but it is critical to allow students the opportunity periodically to let you know privately how they perceive things in their group are going. Cooperative learning strategies can be extended to homework assignments and other performance assessments (e.g., tests) in which you allow students to work in these groups on particular questions. Again, it is probably wise to include questions that must be answered individually on a test as well. Cooperative learning also can be used in the writing process, where students meet regularly in groups to develop a research proposal. Here they can develop ideas and shape their writing via peer editing and several other group-based strategies.

INCORPORATING WRITING IN INSTRUCTION[2]

Recently, writing has been recognized as an important vehicle through which people not only communicate ideas but also generate them. Writing, then, can be used as an inherent part of learning, creating occasions for students to fit new information into their existing knowledge structure and to expand their ways of thinking. The importance of writing in the thinking process

[2]This section of the handbook has been modified and reprinted with permission from *Teaching at The Ohio State University: A Handbook*. Center for Teaching Excellence, Faculty and TA Development, The Ohio State University, Revised 2002, pp. 54-56.

implies that writing should occur in courses throughout the curriculum, a belief that is implicit in the new curriculum revisions at MSU and elsewhere. The development of writing skills has been recognized as an essential accomplishment of a college graduate for which all instructors, not only those in English departments, have responsibility.

Many instructors, believing that they have not had specialized training in the teaching of writing, are uneasy about the role they are being asked to play. They are also reluctant to add the grading of great amounts of written work to their existing workload. Fortunately, experts in the field are able to provide reassurance on both counts. The emphasis on writing as process stresses the role of the instructor as a facilitator of the thinking process rather than as "guardian of the semicolon," the technical expert on points of grammar. Suggestions for setting and responding to writing assignments in ways that engage students without creating excessive burdens on the instructor are also available. They revolve around two main thoughts:

I. Writing assignments need not be formal or lengthy. Writing as a medium for actively engaging students in learning can be used as a tool for discovery and understanding in an ongoing way that is integral to course activities; for example, an instructor might ask students to take a minute to write down their ideas before they respond to a question posed in class. The instructor might ask the students to write a short summary of what they learned in class or any questions that they still have about the material after class. Good writing assignments are meaningful, related to the goals of the course, clearly defined, and practical for both student and instructor.

2. Not all written work needs to be graded. In fact, instructors who set only formal written assignments to be graded perpetuate the notion that writing is only an end product of learning, rather than a tool to be used in the process. Writing can be incorporated into the class to serve several different functions, including a feedback and class management tool for the instructor; a way of having students reflect back on their learning, themselves, and their audience; and a means of sharpening students' written skills.

As a feedback device, the instructor can employ an anonymous one-minute reaction paper at the end of class or after a particularly intense discussion to solicit input and to test for understanding. The results can be reported back to the class at the next session and/or incorporated into the course design.

Journals can help students reflect back on unresolved questions and conflicts raised for them in class, and they can assist students to see how they have grown during the life of the course. These journals can also serve to personalize the classroom learning if they are turned in periodically or midterm for instructor comment or response.

Finally, writing can help students see issues from diverse perspectives by stretching them to write with the perspective of the "other" in mind.

To incorporate writing as an integral part of the learning process, instructors can suggest a variety of ways in which students can write as the course progresses. Ways that have been used effectively across courses include:

Reading Journals
Instructors can suggest that students keep journals to chronicle their understanding of texts that they are reading for class. Students can be encouraged to write entries that reflect the main idea of the reading, major points that are covered, and the questions that they have after reading the text. To increase the level of cognitive activity involved in the reading assignments, instructors can suggest that students write about possible applications of the ideas, ways in which the material fits with other course readings and information, and their critical evaluations of the merit of the ideas or readings. Instructors may elect to review these journals periodically, reacting to points that they find particularly interesting, or they may view the journals as personal aids to scholarship for the use of the students alone.

Learning Logs
Learning logs are a specific kind of reading journal in which students are asked to structure their reading responses in dual columns in their notebooks. Students are asked to divide a paper in half, to list key concepts in the left half as they read the text, and to write their responses to the concepts in the right half, continuing the process through the text. Learning logs help students become more aware of text organization, more ready to participate in class discussion, and more capable of formulating ideas for their own writing.

The Précis
Instructors can ask students to write a very brief summary of the major points of a reading assignment or class session. Often, they may wish to specify a certain word limit, such as 25 words, in order to stretch students' language skills and cause further reflection on the material. Once again, these may be collected—they may serve as an attendance check or to motivate students to keep up with their reading—or they may be used only to help focus a discussion or for the students' personal use. When collected, they may be graded very quickly. Elaborate comments do not have to be given if the précis paragraphs are viewed as formative documents.

Brainstorming/Freewriting
Instructors can ask students to jot down ideas very quickly in response to a given problem or stimulus. They should be encouraged to focus on generating ideas rather than worrying about the format that their writing takes. Brainstorming can be used before the introduction of new material to enhance discovery and curiosity. Instructors can ask students to guess the causes of a historical phenomenon before these are discussed in class; they may ask students to predict the results of a scientific experiment before it is demonstrated. The lists that result can be shared in groups or in class before the material is formally discussed. Brainstorming and freewriting can also be used as effective summarizing techniques. Students may be asked to compose "laundry lists" of things to remember when diagnosing a certain virus or characteristics of abstract art. They can compare lists.

Inkshedding
Students are asked to spend a few minutes writing in response to a particular question related to a reading assignment in the course. Then, students exchange papers and read the other person's comment, continuing this exchange for several papers. The instructor then asks students to report on what they found out or on what patterns they saw in the papers they read as the basis for a discussion. This strategy allows students to participate in a class discussion by building on the accumulating knowledge from reading other people's responses. It helps students share information and knowledge in a non-threatening way and to discover in the process similar and different interpretations of the material that will increase their own understanding of the issue being discussed.

Written Conversation
The instructor asks students to list at the top of a blank sheet of paper one question they would like to have discussed related to the reading assignment for the day. Students read each other's

questions and write responses to them, passing them on for further comment from other class members. Students are encouraged to respond not only to the original question but also to other class members' responses to that question so that a written conversation begins to emerge. This strategy is useful in helping students understand the nature of the questions that other students have, and it provides a means of responding in a non-threatening way to a wide range of questions and issues that increase opportunities for critical thought.

Papers

Although the formal term paper can be a valuable learning activity for many courses, some instructors who once gave their students long research papers are discovering that assigning one or more five-page papers, usually requiring some sort of analysis of ideas or readings, is easier to evaluate and more useful for their students' learning. To focus students' work, it is helpful to pose direct question—e.g., "What problems do sociologists encounter in defining 'deviance'?"— and convey as clearly as possible the instructor's expectations concerning the appropriate style and tone of the writing, the desired length, and the kind of documentation required. Exemplary papers from past offerings of the course can be made available for students to refer to. If the assignment calls for prescribed format, such as a laboratory report, an outline of the format or examples of good lab reports will help the students. Students may also be encouraged to look in scholarly journals in the discipline for examples of writing to use as models. When longer papers are assigned, instructors have found that requiring drafts in advance of the final paper helps students to pace themselves better and gives the instructor a chance to provide direction while the ideas are still in process so at the resulting final papers are of higher quality. Drafts also give instructors the opportunity to note stylistic and grammatical problems for students to correct so that they learn about writing while they are engaged in a specific revision task, rather than in the abstract.

INSTRUCTING RECITATION AND LAB SECTIONS[3] *(FOR MORE INFORMATION SEE, "TEACHING LABORATORIES, BY ANNA MONFILS, PHD. LOCATED ON THE TAP WEBSITE AT HTTP://TAP.MSU.EDU/PPT/2005/TA_TEACHING_LAB.PPT)*

Though some of you will have considerable responsibility for your own course, many of you will be instructing one or more sections offered in conjunction with a large lecture course. In this section of the handbook, we attempt to anticipate your specific concerns and give you suggestions for conducting effective sections.

TEACHING ASSISTANTS AND THE LABORATORY ASSIGNMENT

If you are assigned to teaching a laboratory, you will likely have multiple roles as a teacher. Therefore, most of the other material in this Handbook is applicable! You need only be creative in applying it. In fact, your assignment may be more challenging, but with more opportunities, than a single discussion session or recitation, or even a lecture only course, because you will likely be combining the skills of lecture, leading a discussion, demonstrating techniques, as well as helping students learn how to conduct experiments, interpret results and prepare lab reports. Others of you will have the additional challenges of organizing and leading field trips. And all of this with the additional responsibility of maintaining safety in the lab for all students (and the TA!).

No matter what the specific lab assignment, you will be responsible for helping students to acquire basic knowledge in the discipline and, often, to augment the knowledge learned in the lecture part of the course. Students will also learn methods of scientific investigation that may

[3]This section of the handbook was modified and reprinted with permission from *Mentor: A Handbook for New Teaching Assistants* (Fifth Edition). Maren Halvorsen, ed. Center for Instructional Development, U of Washington, 1992, pp. 30-31.

include any or all of the following: planning, executing, analyzing, and interpreting experiments. Lab techniques, operation of equipment, and/or field methods may all be a part of your assignment. In addition, you may need to conduct a "dry run" before your lab section to ensure that all equipment is working properly. Here, other TAs in prior sections may be very helpful in pointing out difficulties and things to watch for.

Finally, of course, helping the students to learn critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as to learn to communicate their knowledge through exams and lab reports (written or oral) are all activities that are often part of the laboratory TA assignment.

Nyquist and Wulff (1996) point out an important difference between laboratories and other forms of teaching such as lecture and leading discussions: labs are active learning experiences. A good laboratory TA will work toward achieving a balance between telling students everything about an experiment or field location and letting students discover information for themselves. It may take a little longer to encourage students to learn for themselves, but the lesson is apt to stick with them longer and be more exciting and stimulating, even if the experiment doesn't work correctly every time.

Nyquist and Wulff recommend using the technique of asking questions in order to elicit student interest and discovery: What is happening here? What do you observe about this experiment, or this field site? Have you seen this before? What else have you learned about in lecture or past labs that might help explain your observations? What other experiments might you design to gather further information?

In most laboratories, it will be important to provide careful instructions for the operation of equipment (including safety features) and for setting up and conducting experiments. You may have done the same operation a dozen times, but most the students in your section will find this a new experience. It will also be important to circulate through the lab to check on the progress of each student and/or group of students. Ask about their progress. Ask if they have any questions or want to know more. Check the equipment or experiment yourself. Laboratory sections are active; you should be, too.

A final word about safety: If your department or faculty member in charge of the course or the TAs does not talk about safety, ASK! It is important that you know the procedures for chemical and biological hazards, as well as for radioactive compounds, if these are part of the assignment. Know where the Material Safety Data Sheets are stored in the lab, or be able to access them via the web. Insist that students know and use the equipment that is provided for their safety (and yours). The best way is for you to be a good example. Yes, safety glasses may look goofy, and gloves may be time consuming to put on and take off, but both are important to protect the students. Uninterested and/or cavalier students may present the greatest risk to themselves and to other students. It is vitally important that you use your position of responsibility and authority to make sure that the lab is a safe environment where everyone can learn. Students who refuse to cooperate with safety instructions should be reported promptly to the faculty member in charge or the department chair.

If you are leading a field trip, do you know where to go or call for help, if needed? Do you know first aid? Excellent laboratory safety information is available from the Office of Radiation, Chemical, and Biological Safety.

WORKING WITH THE INSTRUCTOR OF RECORD

The professor of record may have very definite expectations about how you should instruct your session. This professor might even give you an instructor syllabus, which you are expected to follow, which includes problems to solve, instructional goals, etc. On the other hand, the professor may expect you to develop the agenda/materials to complement the class. In order to plan your semester, it is important that you meet with the professor to ask specific questions about

the course, grading procedures, and your responsibility in lecture and in sections. The following is a list of questions you may want to approach the instructor of record with before the class starts:

Will you be expected to solve problems and answer questions about the lecture in sections?
Should you develop a section syllabus?
Will you be expected to supplement the lectures with entirely new material?
Will you have any lecture responsibilities in addition to leading your section?
Will you design your own tests or read and grade tests written by the professor?
Will you read term papers?
Will you tutor students who need help beyond what you would normally offer during office hours?
How does the professor want issues of conflict handled?

Some professors hold weekly meetings with their TAs during the semester to discuss problems and plan strategies and assignments for the coming week. Others wait for you to approach them with questions or problems.

LECTURES AND TEXTBOOKS

It is generally expected that you will attend the professor's lecture unless informed otherwise. This allows you to know what it is you are supplementing and clarifying for the students. Even when you know the subject thoroughly, you will be unprepared for sections unless you know which problems were covered in class, the professor's approach, etc.

Listening from a student's perspective will help you understand why students feel overwhelmed, bored, or confused during lectures. Similarly, reading textbooks from a student's perspective will help you decide which topics need the most review. Some "introductory" texts were written for a tenth grade audience, while others will baffle even you. Read everything your students are expected to read; it is better to be baffled in your office than embarrassed in class. If, however, you are asked questions in section, which you are unable to answer be honest with students. Tell them you will check with the professor or you will consult a text and address the question in the next section.

DAY-TO-DAY SECTION INSTRUCTION

There are many ways to approach section instruction, depending on the information you gather from the professor of record. If you are given an open-ended assignment, you may want to consider the suggestions about problem solving given in the preceding section. Of general concern, however, is how well the students are interacting with the lecture material. This will indicate what you need to focus on in sections, if the professor does not already map out your section goals. If you find that students are having difficulty with the lecture materials and they are unable to complete the professor's section goals, you should inform the professor and see how he or she would like to proceed. The professor may choose to adjust the level of examinations and the pace of the course as necessary.

It is essential that you identify what needs to be covered and then choose an appropriate approach. Is the material suitable for a section lecture? A question and answer session? A discussion? Rather than repeating the professor's lecture, consider a new approach to the topic. Perhaps you need to break a large topic into smaller units, or design a problem-solving session that encourages students to both conceptualize the approach and use it.

If your chief responsibility is review, it is especially important to get comments on whether you are covering what students think they really need. It is impossible to review all the material from the lecture or the textbook in detail. You will have to choose between covering most of the

material somewhat superficially or only representing parts in depth. Briefly reviewing all the important topics usually stimulates student questions. However, concentrating on particularly difficult aspects of the course that may not have received much time in the lecture will open up areas on which students would otherwise not have been able to formulate questions.

INSTRUCTOR PREPARATION

The best way to prepare for labs is to conduct the experiment yourself with the students' lab manual in hand. You will discover whether the directions are clear and whether students have the skills necessary to complete the experiment. Jot down notes as you proceed so that you can tell students how long the experiment will take, clarify confusing passages, and demonstrate new or difficult procedures. If you know in advance what to expect, what problems students are likely to encounter and what questions they will ask, you will be able to make much better use of your time in the lab. It is important to make sure that you have enough beakers, stations, chemicals, etc., ready before the lab begins.

SAFETY

Check with your department about university and national safety guidelines. Make sure students are aware of appropriate safety considerations and steps. Check to see that appropriate signage is posted in the lab.

STUDENT PREPARATION

In conjunction with the professor, devise some means to ensure that students are familiar with the lab before they come to class. Some instructors feel that grades on lab reports are incentive enough, while other require student to submit a statement of purposes and procedures or an explanation of what and how the experiment is relevant to the course.

SUPERVISING THE EXPERIMENT

At the beginning of the lab, review the purposes and procedures of the experiment. You might deliver a brief lecture on how the experiment relates to current developments in the discipline, or you might discuss the students' statements of objectives. Ask for questions, clarify any ambiguities in the lab manual, and demonstrate special procedures now rather than interrupt the experiment later.

If both you and your students are well prepared, you will be free to perform your most important role, that of guiding the students' development. Try to talk with each student at least once during the experiment. Technical and procedural matters can be handled quickly in a few words of advice or a very brief demonstration, but your primary role is to help students master the steps of scientific inquiry—recognizing and stating a problem so that it can be explored, data collected, a hypothesis formed and tested, and a conclusion drawn.

Attempt to allow students to solve problems for themselves, perhaps by rephrasing the question and reminding them of a concept they have forgotten. However, you approach problem solving, refrain from giving outright answers or advice. If lab partners ask, "Why can't we get this to come out right?" try asking a series of questions that leads them to discover the reasons for themselves rather than simply explaining why the experiment failed. Sometimes the reason will be relatively simple, but just as often the reason will be more substantial—a matter of timing, sequence, proportion or interpretation. Perhaps the student has the necessary data but has overlooked an important step in analyzing the results or is unable to synthesize a solution. It is very tempting to help students by saying, "Aha, I see where you went wrong," but unless you resist the temptation,

they are likely to falter at the same stage in the next experiment. Students may become frustrated if they cannot get an easy answer out of you, but they will also learn more.

READING AND STUDYING TO CONSTRUCT MEANING

Many entering students, as well as faculty of these students, have identified *reading and studying to construct meaning* as activities requiring skills that are often under-developed or non-existent. In fact, many students have never really learned how to approach demanding reading and studying tasks at all. While it is clearly not the identified task of the instructor to include these strategies as part of a class, there are many ways an instructor can help entering students learn to cope with the sheer volume of academic reading and studying that college work demands. Most inexperienced students do not really know how to read text, no matter what form this text might take. Undergraduates tend to approach text in a linear fashion: sentence by sentence, straight through from beginning to end. Many students are completely unaware of alternative strategies and therefore stand to benefit enormously by being exposed to a more effective model.

The Mini-Lecture on a Reading and Studying Model

Giving a mini-lecture on reading and studying for meaning is one way to ensure that all the students in your class have strategies for learning content, irrespective of their educational background. Using text from assigned reading, it is possible to model the reading and studying process with students; reading material out loud is an effective way to learn a great deal about how the members of a class think. There are as many ways to present strategies as there are instructors. One choice might be to model the process in its entirety, preferably at the beginning of the term. Another might be to present parts of the process and apply these strategies to different types of text, revisiting the process several times during the term. Still another might include presenting parts of the process as often as student performance indicates there is a need. At the very least, it should be possible to present a quick overview of the organization of various kinds of texts: how to use a table of contents, an index, a glossary, references, and how to identify the main points. No matter what choice you make, knowledge of these strategies can serve as a resource for both you and your students.

The following suggestions are simply that - suggestions. There are many theories about reading and studying. The following collection of strategies is based on brain-based teaching and represents a combination of some effective ways to approach complex text. It is included here in a form that could serve as a handout to be used by students as a guide for reading and constructing meaning.

A Reading-Studying Process

Overview (Preread) the Content

Why the Overview?
To gain a "big picture" of the material to be studied (how much? how difficult?)
To discover the basic structure of the material and identify major concepts
To increase understanding when the material is read in depth
To identify the author's purpose for writing the material
How do you overview the content?
Identify the Chapter heads and Sub-Heads
Create an "advance organizer" (empty outline) of the structure, based on the Chapter heads and sub-heads
Skim the pictures, graphs, and charts
Look over the essential terms and vocabulary
Read the end-of-chapter Summaries
Read the end-of-chapter Questions

A Reading-Studying Process
Overview (Preread) the Content
Chunk the Content
Look for Patterns
Reorganize the Content
Summarize the Content

Chunk the Content
Why Chunk the Content?
To put large quantities or complex text information into manageable groups
To increase the ability to store and retrieve information
To learn well the *first time* and thereby minimize forgetting
To develop a process for classifying material
How do you chunk content?
Divide text into smaller related sections (or paragraphs)
Stop after each chunk and take notes—write the important concepts, list supporting ideas, and mark vocabulary for later study (in pencil)

Look for Organizational Patterns
Why Organizational Patterns?
To provide a structure for sorting out information
To put information into categories to make relationships between information stand out
To help clarify the author's purpose for writing the text:
- is the author stating facts?
- is the author biased?
- how do the ideas presented fit with the ideas of others?
How do you find organizational patterns?
Look for Closed (numbered) Lists - these lists usually identify important steps or characteristics. [For example, "there are *six* characteristics of …."]
Look for Organizational Patterns

Some Common Organization Patterns	**Signal Words**
Cause - Effect	All, none, clearly, conclusively, it appears, it seems, contributing to, seems to be a link
Problem - Solution	Problem, question, issue, solution, answer, findings, explanation, plan, proposal
Comparison - Contrast	*Comparison* - And, also, like, similar, resembling, much the same, comparable *Contrast* - But, however, yet, on the one hand, different from, opposite, conversely
Sequence of Events	Events in *chronological order* (dates) or a Process (*sequence of steps*) First, second, third, now, later, after, often, 1945, 1978, Steps 1, 2, and 3
Spatial - Geographic	Visualize *parts of an organism or* location of places *external, upper, lower, anterior, posterior* above, below, next to, between, inward…
Thesis - Support	Thesis (Point of View) Support (Facts/Details) Thesis, hypothesis, my belief that, it is theorized that, the idea is supported by…
Definition	Definition, term, general category, examples, characteristics, features
Descriptive	Recreates experiences through use of details and sensory language

Reorganize the Content
Why Reorganize Content?
To rephrase and order the content in the reader's own words
To recognize larger meaning and patterns of relationship
To "map" or create a "picture" to increase retention
To link new information with information you already have
How do you reorganize content?
Use the Organization Patterns to create relevant categories for the text. (For example, if the primary organizational pattern is *Problem - Solution*, the main category might *present* the problem, and the subcategories might be various *possibilities for solutions*. Or, if the primary organizational pattern is *Definition (of an organism's behaviors)*, subcategories might be *reproduction, group behavior, defense mechanisms, etc*.)
Represent the larger categories and supporting ideas with a graphic organizer (For example: charts, outlines, trees, diagrams, pictures, maps, grids, etc.)

Summarize the Content
Why Summarize Content?
To enhance concentration on the content
To integrate information into a coherent piece of writing making appropriate use of key words, phrases, and topic sentences.
To lead to deeper comprehension - it is the *process* of separating important ideas from less important ones that promotes deep meaning
How do you construct a summary?
If you have constructed a graphic organizer (in Step Four above), use the main ideas and major details to form a written summary. State these ideas clearly and do *not* include unnecessary detail.
Integrate the information using keywords, phrases, and topic sentences you create.
Write another draft if needed.

Beyond Summarizing - Incorporate Several Texts into a Longer Argument
Why a Longer Argument?
To use information as part of a developed argument
To synthesize various sources
To integrate information with other material
To challenge and revise information in relation to other sources, including personal experiences and knowledge
See the Handbook section entitled "Incorporating Writing in Instruction" for specific suggestions for the development of writing skills.

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES FOR ACTIVELY INVOLVING STUDENTS[4]

CASE STUDIES

Very broadly defined, a case study is a teaching instrument that portrays a real life situation for student analysis. Case studies are used frequently in professional schools to enable students to develop their skills in analyzing situations and making sound decisions. Often, a prepared case can be used, but when new cases are developed, the instructor should focus on an important dilemma or issue, create enough detail for the students to comprehend the case, and choose a situation about which there is room for debate and several possible courses of action. Students are

[4]This section of the handbook has been modified and reprinted with permission from *Teaching at The Ohio State University: A Handbook*. Center for Teaching Excellence, Faculty and TA Development, The Ohio State University, Revised 2002, pp.60-61.

asked to read the case before class. During the class session, the instructor first makes sure that the students understand the details of the case, then leads them through an analysis of the problem and discussion of possible alternative courses of action. The instructor serves as discussion facilitator, probing for detail, support for arguments, evidence, etc.

PEER LEARNING

Classes can be divided into groups of about five students with a mixture of more and less knowledgeable students in each group. The groups are given learning tasks that will require them to share knowledge and experiences. The task may be to answer some review questions, to pose some critical issues about a topic, to solve a problem, apply some principles, or create a product. If the groups are balanced well, the task is clearly outlined, and the allocated time is appropriate for the task, the group will engage in peer learning and increase their abilities to function in an interpersonal setting through the process. The instructor's role is to serve as designer by carefully structuring the groups and tasks and to serve as facilitator while the groups are working, helping with interpersonal or task-related problems as they arise.

LEARNING CELLS

Learning cells are a variety of peer-learning that can be used when it is important to have students verbalize what they have read. Reading assignments are given before class and part of class time is spent with students in pairs telling each other what they read. The students may have read the same material beforehand, in which case they are demonstrating their comprehension and recall and getting an opportunity to clarify their understanding with one another, or they may have been assigned different readings, in which case they can complement each others' knowledge with some different information or perspectives.

DISCOVERY FORMAT

In a discovery or inquiry format, the instructor sets up a novel situation, an interesting puzzle, or an open-ended question that students are asked to explore using their own creativity and resources. They may be asked to hypothesize, based on only partial information, on what building materials were used to construct an ancient building; they may be asked to construct a device for measuring something or making certain musical tones; or they may be asked to interview each other about what triggers depression in their lives. The instructor once again serves as designer of the activity, choosing activities that are likely to lead students to accomplish a learning goal, and as facilitator during the process, helping students to stay on course and to locate the resources they need. In the discovery format it is important for the instructor to stay as non-directive as possible so that students develop independence and personal excitement.

ROLE PLAYING

In many courses, role playing can be used to develop empathy, to enliven a historical, philosophical, or literary topic, or to provide a concrete enactment of an abstract topic. Volunteers are asked to portray certain roles and given sufficient information on the context to enable them to improvise dialogue and actions. In some classes, the instructors have attended class in the role of a character and have enlisted colleagues to join them in enacting a situation for the students. The class is asked to play the role of those in the situation as well, asking questions or engaging in dialogue in ways that would be appropriate for the setting.

CLASS DEBATE

Using a central aisle or a real or imaginary boundary to divide the class space in half, the instructor poses a debatable proposition and asks those who agree to sit in one section and those who disagree to sit in the other. (The instructor may also want to create a third section for those who are undecided.) The instructor then moderates, asking students from one section, then the other, to support their position. At set intervals of perhaps fifteen minutes, students are given the opportunity to move to another section, based on whether they have changed their positions through listening and participating in the debate. A variant on this theme is to have students argue for the opposite of their original positions by changing the section designations after the students have already chosen positions. The instructor is responsible for setting up the proposition, enforcing the rules of the debate, and summarizing the discussion and results of the debate.

SIMULATIONS

Simulations allow students to engage in learning activities that may otherwise be too time consuming, too expensive, or ethically questionable (requiring animals or intervention into human behavior). Using an established game or computer software or creating a scenario, the instructor develops a simulated environment within which students will engage in activity directed toward a learning goal. They may be asked to set up companies and create mergers; they may be asked to develop marketing packages that they will present to a real or simulated client; they may be blind folded to experience sightlessness; or they may be required to recreate a military battle or other historical event using a new strategy. The role of the instructor is to identify and preview established simulations for use in the course or to create scenarios that are likely to engage students in experiential learning directed toward a course goal. During the simulation, the instructor serves as a facilitator.

SUMMARY

The particular learning strategies and activities that are selected for engaging students actively will depend on the context of the specific course and student preparation with which the strategies are employed. Given the variety of strategies available, however, there are ways to pervade every course with opportunities for students to become actively involved in learning during class time. In addition to increasing motivation and providing feedback at crucial points, strategies that engage students help to develop the competencies of reading, speaking, writing, critical thinking, and problem solving that are marks of the well-educated person.

TEACHING WITH PROPS, VISUAL AIDS, AND COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY

Including technology in your classroom can be as simple as making overheads or calling IMC and/or ITV to include a film or voice recording. It can be as complex as interactive video and hypermedia. The level of sophistication depends on many factors: your familiarity with the technology, instructional needs, availability of equipment, etc., and your department. This section is designed not to explain how to use technical equipment in the classroom but instead to encourage you to access and assess the different mediums to your fullest instructional advantage.

BLACKBOARD USE

Think about your experiences as a student. How many times have you looked up in class after being distracted or after losing the main thread of the lesson only to be greeted by a meaningless, randomly distributed set of symbols or facts on the blackboard? How often, after getting home have you found you notes so meaningless that it is not even clear what subject was discussed? If the answer to either question is never, either you learned to take good notes or you have a fantastic memory. The fact is, many students' notes are an exact copy of what appeared on the

blackboard, with few additional qualifiers, explanations, etc. If you are skeptical, ask to see your students' notes right after class. You will be amazed that many will not differ in even a single word. If you keep this in mind, you are part way to more effective blackboard use. When we do a problem at the board, students not only see the solution, but they see how we organize a solution. Effective board work highlights and emphasizes this organization and provides the students with a valuable model for writing, and often for doing, problems. The result of the board work accompanying a unit of the lesson should be an outline of what transpired. If you are solving a problem, an outline of the problem should remain at the end. The hypotheses, main points, and conclusion should be isolated, boxed off, or otherwise emphasized. Even the best students will occasionally lose the thread of a lesson or forget the original objective of a discussion. The blackboard is their major, and often their only, resource for reentering the lesson.

The following tips should help you structure your board work:

1. **Start with a clean board.** Board work from the previous class is distracting.
2. **Be organized.** Use headings. Before using the board, determine the major elements of your presentation. Consider how you could place them on the board for logical visual as well as verbal presentation. Keep diagrams near their written descriptions and label carefully. When solving equations, show each step in a logical sequence and mark major steps and answers.
3. **Be neat.** Print if at all possible—medium size. If you write too large, you will not have enough room. If you write too small, no one will be able to read it.
4. **Try not to work with eraser in hand.** Teachers who simplify expressions as they go along by erasing are anathema to students trying to take notes. Put a single line through expression you wish to simplify and write the new expressions above.
5. **Avoid talking to the board.** After you write on the board, turn to face your students before speaking. A good pattern to develop is to state the topic first, turn and write the topic name on the board, then turn back to the students and discuss the topic. When appropriate, add key points under the topic name.
6. **Avoid blocking the board.** Once you have finished writing, stand to one side while you discuss what you have written.

At the end of your class, take a moment to stand in the back of the classroom and examine the board. Can you reconstruct your lecture from what is written? Could students read your writing? Are diagrams labeled? If so, you are developing good board-work skills.

PREPARING VISUAL AIDS[5]

The use of overheads, graphs, charts, can be a note-taking guide and a timesaving aid if they are used in the most effective way. However, putting an overhead on the screen accompanied by the following comments "I know you cannot see this, BUT. . ." is cause for anger and frustration. In order to serve your students well, keep in mind the following tips:

1. The "Rule of 7'2"—Overheads and slides should be limited to:
   7 words per line
   7 lines per visual aid
2. 18-24 point font size
3. Cartoons: Good idea, but do they illustrate a point?
4. Graphs, charts and tables from books? Blow them up!
5. Leave material you have placed on the overhead in view until students have had a chance to examine it.

[5]This section of the handbook was adapted from "Preparation and Delivery of Presentations," a workshop offered on behalf of TAP by Dr. Christopher B. Reznich, Office of Medical Education and Research, MSU, September 29, 1993.

6. Face students. The only time you should look at the screen is to check focusing, visibility and placement of materials. Move away from the overheads whenever possible and avoid blocking the light.
7. Get confirmation from students. Can they see everything? Did they have time to copy important steps?
8. When writing notes or highlighting overheads, use projector pens and write legibly, perhaps using different colors to illustrate different points.

On a final note, remember that visual aids, such as charts and graphs, should be used to illustrate or demonstrate a point in the lecture/discussion. The important concept being demonstrated by a visual aid may be readily apparent to you, but it is not always so for your students. On the other hand, do not simply read the chart to students. Instead, interact with it, reminding students what it demonstrates at different points.

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION AT MSU

Email Interactions with Students

The increased availability of email at MSU enables the students to have greater access to TAs. Email is an excellent way to handle questions that might not normally merit office hour time, or to handle more detailed questions, if the TA so desires. Additionally, email is a way to foster out-of-class communication. Some courses, particularly in Integrative Studies, require email interaction. But no matter how you use it, email can be a powerful tool for your classroom.

Instructional Software Collection (Main Library, Room E208).

If you would like to find out what kinds of instructional software are available for classroom use, check out the Instructional Software Collection in the Main Library. The Instructional Software Collection houses demonstration copies of hundreds of software packages and videodiscs for graduate and undergraduate course work, curriculum development, and research. Programs cover all subject areas and include computer-aided instruction, models and simulations, tutorials and drill and practice packages. Programs may be checked out for three days by faculty or graduate students, or run on equipment in room E208 of the Main Library (call for hours). For further information on the Instructional Software Collection phone 355-1840.

CD-ROM Databases: Main Library and Selected Branch Libraries.

CD-ROM (Compact Disk-Read Only Memory) is a storage technology that allows vast amounts of information to be stored and searched on a microcomputer. CD-ROMs are available to be searched at no charge, and downloading results is possible on most systems. The databases contain millions of references to journal articles, books, government documents, research reports, newspaper articles, and other publications. Students can use it to download information for research projects. You can use it to prepare lectures. For more information on CD-ROM Databases, call Main Library Information/Referral, 353-8700 or access Gopher.

Computing Resource Center (Room 305, Computer Center).

CRC resources include on-site access to Information System for Advanced Academic Computing (ISAAC) and the Computer Select Monthly CD-ROM disc by Computer Library. ISAAC provides information about IBM-PC compatible software and hardware for higher education instruction and research. The Computer Select CD-ROM database contains 70,000 articles and abstracts from more than 140 leading computer publications, including reviews, evaluations, and computer manufacture specifications. For a more complete description of its services, see Appendix A.

Technology Classrooms

Several classrooms across campus have been designated technology classrooms. These classrooms are equipped with various technologies to enhance teaching. Included in the rooms is

a high-powered projector, computer with Ethernet connection, Zip drive, VCR, lighting controls, presentation software, and in some a flatbed scanner. Contact IMC for more information at 353-3960.

The World Wide Web

As we all are well aware, the World Wide Web has taken our culture by storm. A very important part of the World Wide Web is educational. A variety of Web sites dedicated to education exist, some associated with organizations, some with centers, and others owned by individuals. Our students browse the web on a daily basis. So one of the most powerful tools an instructor can use is a class Web page. A brief search of faculty Web pages will reveal plenty of examples. Things one should include on a course web page are a syllabus, list of texts, assignments, sample work, and links to useful resources. Avoid intense graphics, since many of your students may be dialing in from home.

Chatrooms and Forums

A very new resource, now available in The College of Arts and Letters, is the class Chatroom and Forum. Chatrooms are Web documents that students add to as they respond to other students. Students type their comments in a dialog box, press a submit button, and the chat discussion is updated with the student's comments. A forum is an organized chatroom. Students work in separate subject threads, responding to each other or starting new subject threads. An instructor can control threads by posing questions or topics when starting a thread. Both chatrooms and forums are password protected, so only students enrolled in the course can view comments. Password protection is important for posting copyrighted materials. TAs can copy items from the Web or listserve lists directly into the chatroom or forum, and since the readership is limited to that class, this is not in violation of copyright.

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Chapter IV

EVALUATING TEACHING and LEARNING

TESTING

Occasionally, you will find yourself wondering whether your students are concerned more about the grades they obtain in your course than about how much they actually learn in it. Commonly, student grades are based on performances on a number of tests, quizzes, projects, etc. Keep in mind that, just as it is important to state course objectives clearly, it is also important to make clear how you will evaluate this performance.

General Tips about Testing

Integrating test construction with other course-planning activities is a good idea. An essential part of each instructional component is a method for evaluating student progress. In performance areas, instructors can plan tests that will ask students to demonstrate learning of a given sequence, technique, or skill. In areas where written tests are used, instructors can compose test items as they progress through the term rather than all in one sitting. Doing so helps to avoid fatigue later and will result in questions that are posed closer to the way that the information was discussed in class.

Mixing types of items (multiple choice, true/false, essay) on a written exam or mixing types of exams (a performance component with a written component) is often advantageous, minimizing weaknesses connected with one kind of item or component or in students' test taking skills.

Testing early in the term and considering discounting the first test if results are poor can also be helpful. Students often need a practice test to understand the format each instructor uses and to anticipate the best way to prepare for and take particular tests.

Frequent testing helps students to avoid getting behind, provides instructors with multiple sources of information to use in computing the final course grade (thus minimizing the effect of "bad days"), and gives students regular feedback.

Testing Tips
Test Early
Test Often
Use Various Test Types
Proofread Exams

It is important to test various topics in proportion to the emphasis they have been given in class. Students will expect this practice and will study with this expectation.

Proofread written exams carefully and, when possible, have another person proofread them. Tiny mistakes, such as incorrectly numbering the responses, can cause problems later. Collation should also be checked carefully, since missing pages can cause trouble.

Instructors should be cautious about using tests written by others. Often, items developed by a previous instructor, a textbook publisher, etc., can save time, but they should be checked for accuracy and appropriateness for the given course.

If enough test items are developed and kept out of circulation between tests, instructors can develop a test-item bank from which known effective items can be reused on multiple versions or offerings of a test.

Generally, on either a written or a performance test, try to avoid having separate items or tasks depend upon answers or skills required in previous items or tasks. Otherwise, a student's initial mistake will be perpetuated over the course of succeeding items or tasks, penalizing the student repeatedly for one error.

Instructors have found that using a little humor or placing less difficult items or tasks at the beginning of an exam can help students with test anxiety reduce their preliminary tension and thus provide a more accurate demonstration of their progress.

A good way to detect test errors in advance is by pilot testing the exam. Instructors can take the test themselves or ask colleagues and/or former students to comment on it.

Try to anticipate special considerations that learning disabled students or non-native speakers may need. The instructor needs to anticipate special needs in advance and decide whether students will be allowed the use of dictionaries, extra time, separate testing sites, or other special conditions.

Limited Choice vs. Open-Ended Items

Instructors often ask, "Are essay tests better than objective tests?" The answer, of course, depends on the circumstances and on the goals of the tests. The advantages and disadvantages of two main types of items are discussed below in terms of the various issues that will often be considered when a test is being developed.

The term "limited-choice" will be used here to describe test questions that require students to choose one or more given alternatives (multiple choice, true/false, matching columns), and "open-ended" will be used to refer to questions that require students to formulate their own answers (sentence completion, short answer, essay). This avoids implying that one type of question is automatically "objective" and the other necessarily "subjective"—a faulty assumption. Following are some things to consider in deciding on types of test items.

LEVEL OF LEARNING

In principle, both limited-choice and open-ended items can be used to test a wide range of learning objectives. In practice, most people find it easier to construct limited-choice items to test recall and comprehension and open-ended items to test higher-level learning objectives, but other possibilities exist. Limited-choice items that require students to do such things as classify statements as fact or opinion go beyond rote learning, and focused essay questions can easily stay at the recall level.

CONTENT COVERAGE

Since more limited-choice than open-ended items can be used in exams of the same length, it is possible to sample more broadly over a body of subject matter with limited-choice items. However, a small number of open-ended items that are broad in scope and call for the inclusion of many specifics can also test subject matter comprehensively.

PRACTICE AND REWARD OF WRITING AND READING SKILLS

A long-term goal of many learning tasks in higher education is the cultivation of students' reading and writing skills. Limited-choice items give virtually no writing practice, while open-ended exams, particularly short-answer and essay, provide opportunities to improve writing. Open-ended exams, therefore, give students with good writing skills an advantage over those who do not have these skills, and limited-choice exams do not favor students who write well. They do, however, favor students who read well, since these students have the skills to attend to keywords, recognize logical qualifications and cues, and discriminate among close choices.

PRACTICE AND REWARD OF CREATIVITY AND DIVERGENT THINKING

Open-ended items, especially essay questions, can provide far more opportunity for creative or divergent thinking than limited-choice items, depending on how the item is written since an essay question can call for convergent thinking, such as reaching a set solution to a problem situation. An argument often made about limited-choice exams is that they fail to foster and actually penalize divergent thinking.

FEEDBACK TO TEACHER AND STUDENT

Limited-choice exams allow faster feedback than open-ended exams. Open-ended exams, however, usually are more revealing to the teacher about specific student strengths and weaknesses in processes such as comprehension and reasoning and can occasion more dialogue if teacher and student use this possibility.

REUSABILITY OF EXAM

In general, exams consisting of a large number of limited-choice items are easier to reuse than those consisting of only a few essay questions, since it is harder in this case for students to remember and transmit the questions to others who will take the exam after them (if the printed exam does not get into circulation). If a large item bank is built and different exams can be randomly generated from the same pool of questions, limited-choice items are highly reusable.

PREVENTION OF CHEATING

Limited-choice exams provide easier conditions for cheating than open-ended exams, since single letters or numbers are far easier to see or hear than extensive text. Cheating can be minimized in several ways, however, such as using alternative test forms and controlling seating.

Writing Test Items

In the discussion of limited-choice items below, the term *stem* is used to refer to the part of the item that asks the question. The terms *responses, choices*, and *alternatives* are used to refer to the parts of the item that will be used to answer the question. For example:

Stem: Who is the author of Jane Eyre?

Responses:
A) Emily Bronte
B) Charlotte Bronte
C) Thomas Hardy
D) None of the above

MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

Multiple-choice items are considered to be among the most versatile of all item types. They can be used to test factual recall as well as level of understanding and ability to apply learning. Multiple-choice items can also provide an excellent basis for post-test discussion, especially if the discussion addresses why the incorrect responses were wrong as well as why the correct responses were right. Unfortunately, they are difficult and time consuming to construct well. They may also appear too discriminating (picky) to students, especially when the alternatives are well constructed and are open to misinterpretation by students who read more into questions than is there.

Some effective practices in constructing multiple-choice items include:

1. Using the stem to present the problem or question as clearly as possible.
2. Using direct questions rather than incomplete statements for the stem.
3. Including as much of the item as possible in the stem so alternatives can be kept brief.
4. In testing for definitions, using the term in the stem rather than as an option.
5. Listing alternatives on separate lines (rather than including the options as part of the stem) so that all options can be clearly distinguished.
6. Keeping all alternatives in a similar format (i.e., all phrases, all sentences, etc.).
7. Making sure that all options are plausible responses to the stem. Poor alternatives should not be included just for the sake of having more options.
8. Checking to see that all choices are grammatically consistent with the stem.
9. Trying to make alternatives for an item approximately the same length. Making the correct response consistently longer is a common error.
10. Using misconceptions students have indicated in class or errors commonly made by students in the class as the basis for incorrect alternatives.
11. Using "all of the above" and "none of the above" sparingly, since these alternatives are often chosen because of incomplete knowledge.
12. Using capital letters (A,B,C,D,E) as response signs rather than lower case letters ("a" gets confused with "d" and "c" with "e" if the type or duplication is poor).
13. Trying to write items with equal numbers of alternatives to avoid asking students to continually adjust to a new pattern caused by different numbers.
14. Putting the incomplete part of the sentence at the end rather than the beginning of the stem when using a statement rather than a direct question.
15. Using negatively stated items sparingly. When they are used, it helps to underline or otherwise visually emphasize the negative word.
16. Making sure that there is only one best or correct response to the stem.
17. Keeping the number of alternatives at five or less. The more alternatives used, the lower the probability of getting the correct answer by guessing. Beyond five alternatives, however, confusion and poor alternatives are likely.
18. Randomly distributing correct responses among the alternative positions so that there are no discernible patterns to the answer sequence (ABBABBABB, etc.) and a nearly equal proportion of As, Bs, Cs, etc.

TRUE/FALSE ITEMS

True/false items are relatively easy to prepare since each item comes rather directly from the content. They offer the instructor the opportunity to write questions that cover more content than most other item types since students can respond to so many in the time allowed. They are easy to score accurately and quickly. True/false items, however, may not give an accurate estimate of the students' knowledge since half can be answered correctly by mere chance. They are very poor for diagnosing student strengths and weaknesses and are generally considered "tricky" by students. Since true/false questions tend to be either extremely easy or extremely difficult, they do not discriminate between students of varying ability as well as other types of questions do.

Some effective practices in constructing true/false items include:

1. Keeping language as simple and clear as possible.
2. Using a relatively large number of items—75 or more when the entire test is T/F).
3. Avoiding taking statements verbatim from the text.
4. Being aware that extremely long or complicated statements will test reading skill rather than content knowledge.
5. Requiring students to circle or underline a typed "r" or "F" rather than to fill in a "r" or "F" next to the statement, thus avoiding having to interpret confusing handwriting.
6. Avoiding the use of negatives, especially double negatives.
7. Avoiding ambiguous and trick items.
8. Making sure that the statements used are entirely true or entirely false. Partially or marginally true or false statements cause unnecessary ambiguity.
9. Using certain key words sparingly since they tip students off to the correct answers. The words *all, always, never, every, none,* and *only* usually indicate a false statement, where as the words *generally, sometimes, usually, maybe* and *often* are frequently used in true statements.
10. Using precise terms, such as *50% of the time,* rather than less precise terms, such as *several, seldom,* and *frequently*.
11. Using more false than true items, but not more than 15% more. (False items tend to discriminate more than true items.)

MATCHING ITEMS

Matching items are generally quite brief and uninvolved and are especially suitable for *who, what, when,* and *where* questions. They can, however, be used to have students discriminate among and apply concepts. They permit efficient use of space when there are several similar types of information to be tested. They are easy to score accurately and quickly. Among the drawbacks of matching items are that they are difficult to use to measure learning beyond recognition of basic factual knowledge, they are usually poor for diagnosing student strengths and weaknesses, they are appropriate in only a limited number of situations, and they are difficult to construct since parallel information is required.

Effective practices in constructing matching items include:

1. Using only homogeneous material in a set of matching items (i.e., dates and places should not be in the same set).
2. Using the more involved expressions in the stem and keeping the responses short and simple.
3. Supplying directions that clearly state the basis for the matching, indicating whether or not a response can be used more than once, and stating where the answer should be placed.
4. Making sure that there are never multiple correct responses for one stem (although a response may be used as the correct answer for more than one stem).
5. Avoiding giving inadvertent grammatical clues to the correct response.
6. Arranging items in the response column in some logical order—alphabetical, numerical, chronological—so that students can find them easily.
7. Avoiding breaking a set of items (stems and responses) over two pages.
8. Using no more than 15 items in one set.
9. Providing more responses than stems to make process-of-elimination guessing less effective.
10. Numbering each stem for ease in later discussions.
11. Using capital letters for the response signs rather than lower-case letters.

COMPLETION ITEMS

Completion items are especially useful in assessing mastery of information when a specific word or phrase is important to know. They preclude the kind of guessing that is possible on limited-choice items since they require a definite response rather than simple recognition of the correct answer. Because only a short answer is required, their use on a test can enable a wide sampling of content. Completion items, however,

tend to test only rote, repetitive responses and may encourage a fragmented study style since memorization of bits and pieces will result in higher scores. They are more difficult to score than forced-choice items and scoring often must be done by the test writer since more than one answer may have to be considered correct. Overall, they have little advantage over other item types unless the need for specific recall is essential.

Effective practices for writing completion items include:

1. Using original questions rather than taking questions directly from the text.
2. Providing clear and concise cues about the expected response in the statement.
3. Using vocabulary and phrasing that comes from the text or class presentation.
4. When possible, providing explicit directions as to what amount of variation will be accepted in the answers.
5. Giving much more credit for completions than for T/F or matching items.
6. Avoiding using a long quote with multiple blanks to complete.
7. Requiring only one word or phrase in each blank.
7. Facilitating scoring by having the students write their responses on lines arranged in a column to the left of the items.
9. Asking students to fill in only important terms or expressions.
10. Avoiding providing grammatical clues to the correct answer by using a /an, etc., instead of specific modifiers.

ESSAY/SHORT ANSWER ITEMS

The main advantages of essay and short answer items are that they encourage students to strive toward understanding a concept as an integrated whole, permit students to demonstrate achievement of such higher level objectives as analyzing given conditions and critical thinking, allow expression of both breadth and depth of learning, and encourage originality, creativity, and divergent thinking. Written items offer students the opportunity to use their own judgment, writing styles, and vocabularies. They are less time consuming to prepare than any other item type. Unfortunately, tests consisting only of written items permit only a limited sampling of content learning due to the time required for students to respond. Essay items are not efficient for assessing knowledge of basic facts and provide students more opportunity for bluffing and rambling, and than limited-choice items. They favor students who possess good writing skills and neatness and are pitfalls for students who tend to go off on tangents or misunderstand the main point of the question. The main disadvantage, however, is that essay items are very difficult and time consuming to score and potentially subject to biased and unreliable scoring.

Effective practices for constructing essay questions include:

1. Using novel problems or material whenever possible, but only if they relate to class learning.
2. Making essay questions comprehensive rather than focused on small units of content.
3. Providing clear directions as to the expectations.
4. Allowing students an appropriate amount of time. (It is helpful to give students some guidelines on how much time to use on each question, as well as the desired length and format of the response, such as full sentences, phrases only, outline, and so on.)
5. Informing students, in advance of answering the questions, of the proportional value of each item in comparison to the total grade.
6. Requiring students to demonstrate command of background information by asking them to provide supporting evidence for claims and assertions.

GRADING AND ASSESSMENT

Determining and Explaining Criteria

Students are sensitive to grades and the criteria according to which grades are given. Many times throughout your teaching career you will be asked questions like: "will this be on the test?" "How much does a quiz count toward the final grade?" "Do you take attendance and participation into account when giving final grades?" "Will you be grading on a curve or on a straight scale?" and "If I cannot make it to the test, how will that affect my grade?" In order to avoid unnecessary problems, you must be able to answer these and similar questions on the first day of classes. This means that you need to decide in advance, and in many cases in conjunction with the instructor of record or your supervising instructor, what the answers are.

Most departments have policies on grading and issues related to grading. Before starting your first semester of teaching, you need to find out what those policies are and how much freedom (if any) you have to modify or amend them. It is particularly important to learn how many exams you are expected to give throughout a semester; if you can set exam dates yourself or if you must follow the departmental exam calendar; what activities other than exams (such as quizzes, term papers, essays, group projects, homework assignments and the like) you are expected to take into account when determining final grades; if make-up exams are allowed and, if so, when they must be given; under what conditions should you allow a student to have more time for an exam or to take it away from the rest of the class; and if there are any special conditions concerning the final exam. Although some of these matters may seem trivial to you, if not resolved properly, they can cause problems later in the semester. Once you resolve them, you must decide which to include in the syllabus and which to communicate to students orally. Be careful. On the one hand, you want to set all-important policies as early in a semester as possible. On the other hand, you do not want to make rules so inflexible that you cannot change later if necessary.

The single most important thing connected with grading is how the final grades will be assigned. To start with, you must know that MSU has a numerical grading system in which grades are: 0.0, 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5, 3.0. 3.5, 4.0. However, you should, in addition, find out if your particular department has a policy on a final grading scale that you must use. If so, find out all details, follow the policy closely, and do not make exceptions unless approved by a course supervisor.

To avoid confusion in applying MSU's numerical grading system, consult with your supervising faculty member prior to grading to determine what constitutes the acceptable range of responses and how the numerical grading system should be applied.

If your department has no policy concerning grading procedures and grading scale (if it allows instructors to define their own grading procedures and decide on their own grading scales), be sure to give careful consideration to all issues and potential problems associated with the act of assigning final grades. This section is meant to help you understand different options you have and make an informed decision.

KEEPING RECORDS[1]

Keep accurate records of your evaluation of each student's performance throughout the semester. You should also keep your records for a while since students may come back later to question a grade, finish an incomplete, ask you to write a recommendation, or file a grievance. Such records will help you justify and/or reevaluate a student's final grade if necessary.

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[1]"Keeping Records," "Determining Grades," "Testing your Tests," and "Forming and Discussing Criteria," have been modified and reprinted with permission from *Mentor: A Handbook for New Teaching Assistants* (Fifth Edition). Maren Halvorsen, Ed. Center for Instructional Development and Research, U of Washington, pp. 34-38.

DETERMINING GRADES

Grading is an extremely complex task that is too often taken for granted. Grades do not exist in a vacuum but are part of the instructional process and serve as a feedback loop between you and the student. Because your grading policy should be consistent with your learning objectives, it is particularly important to discuss grading standards and policies with your course supervisor or coordinator when you are planning your course, especially when devising exams, quizzes or assignments. Your grading policy should figure into your decision about the type of material for which you test, the kinds of tests or assignments you give, and the degree of difficulty of those tests and assignments.

Whether or not you are ultimately responsible for assigning course grades, students will ask you about grading policies and criteria. In order to be prepared for such inquiries, ask yourself first whether your grading strategy is based on an independent judgment of each student's performance, or whether the grade will be based on the student's performance relative to other students in the class. Unless you are grading on a curve (see below, "Grading on a Curve"), you are always balancing two overriding considerations: quality and distribution.

If you concentrate solely on quality, on the students' mastery of the material, you may find yourself awarding all 4.0s—if all students get over 90 on an examination, for example, or if they all demonstrate understanding of a given concept or methodology in an essay, paper or research project. If, on the other hand, they all get below 80, and if you have beforehand said "80 and above is a 3.0," then you are trapped into giving no 4.0s or 3.0s. There is nothing wrong with this mastery-based grading philosophy, provided you have asked yourself crucial questions about what you have tested for (see below, "Testing Your Tests").

On the other hand, if you concentrate solely on distribution, and grade on a curve (see below, "Grading on a Curve"), you are predetermining that a set percentage of students will receive a set grade, irrespective of the quality of their work (for example, deciding that one-third of the class will get 2.0s on the midterm, even if they correctly answer over 90% of the questions).

In most cases, grading seems to navigate between mastery-based, criteria-referenced grading ("4.0 work is 4.0 work, period") and norm-referenced grading, in which "4.0" work is entirely relative to the current class (deciding that the top five scores get 4.0s, for example). Everyone must make his or her own adjustments to the intricacies of grading, so don't be surprised if you change your philosophy and methodology your first year.

If you are solely responsible for course grades and assign grades based on how students perform relative to other students, then look for natural breaks in your class's distribution as an easy way to make at least preliminary distinctions. If you are evaluating essays or research papers, one very helpful way to proceed is to rank the papers before assigning any grades. Natural clusters often occur in such a process, and you also can get a better feel for your specific criteria by saying, "This one is better than this one because…"

If your grades are skewed at the high or low end, or are not in line with your colleagues, meet with the professor of record, your TA supervisor and other TAs to discuss what your questions or assignments are designed to evaluate. If you are using a criteria-based grading system, see if a consensus can be reached on what constitutes effective student work. Comparing grades on a set of essays can be one of the most productive ways of arriving at a common language and standard for assessment, thus preventing students from shopping around for sections.

GRADING ON A CURVE

This is the process by which you divide a distribution of scores into groups of different sizes. In a normal (bell-shaped) curve the smallest groups occur on either end of the distribution, and are awarded 4.0s and 0.0s. The largest group is the middle group and those students are assigned 2.0s, while 1.0s and 3.0s are assigned to the next-largest groups.

Unless you are teaching a very large class, you shouldn't insist on, or expect, a bell-shaped distribution in your class. If you are part of a large class that is graded on a normal curve, it might be wise to say beforehand something like: "Typically, when we give tests like this, scores cluster in a normal distribution that looks something like this . . . " rather than saying "20% of you will get 1.5s," etc.

Students will often say to you: "This grade doesn't seem fair, can't you grade on the curve?" A good strategy for answering this is to ask students what they mean by "curve." Typically they don't mean a normal curve, since that would destine a preset percentage of them to 1.0s and 0.0s, but, rather, are saying that you seem to have given too few 4.0s, too many 2.0s and should award more 3.0s and 4.0s to "even out" the grades. In other words, they perceive grades as symmetrically distributed around a mean of 3.0. If this is indeed what the students are implying, explain that they really don't want you to curve the class but simply raise the grades.

FORMING AND DISCUSSING CRITERIA

Grading is easier—and less likely to be contested—if you make the evaluation criteria for individual assignments clear from the beginning. Don't think that merely handing out your standards at the beginning of the semester will clarify things for the students. Be prepared to repeat them several times for reinforcement—out loud; on the board; in handouts, and, most importantly, integrated into each discussion of assignments and results. Ideally, in fact, your grading criteria should be implicit in everything you say in class; the ways you define and analyze problems and present evidence should model the very processes you want to see in student work.

Crucial points about discussing grades with students follow:

1. If you are grading on the percentage of points a student earns ("90% and over is a 4.0," etc.), then work out a system for translating those percentages into the decimal system. But when communicating this system to the students, indicate some broad guidelines about percentages in terms of the entire course, rather than on every exam or graded piece of work. Especially on early tests, consider leaving the raw score as a percentage only, rather than assigning it a decimal or letter grade. This avoids repeated queries as to whether an 87 is a 3.3 or 3.4, or B or a B plus, etc.

Recommendations

Translate the 4.0 system into percentages
Be consistent and equitable
Inform students of what to expect on exams
Inform students why tested topics are important
Before deciding on requested grade changes allow a "cooling off" period
TEST on what you TEACH!

2. Be consistent and equitable.

3. Make sure students know what types of questions will be asked, what types of evidence they will be expected to present, or what procedures they will be expected to follow. Whenever possible, hand out sample questions ahead of time.

4. Make sure students understand why they are being tested on certain material—what is being measured, how it is being measured, and what the test has to do with course objectives. Are students being asked to recall information, recognize patterns or analogies, draw inferences, make connections, originate a thesis, or solve a problem?

5. When students ask to have a grade changed, or contest an answer, don't act hastily. Avoid spot judgments by scheduling a meeting for a few days later. Research the issue, prepare a response and a rationale, and, if necessary, talk with the course supervisor or TA coordinator about it. If students are not satisfied with your response, refer them to the course supervisor or TA coordinator for a determination.

Also, document your interactions with disgruntled students as promptly as possible, so you have accurate notes for later discussions.

TESTING YOUR TESTS

As a novice grader, you are probably still developing your criteria and have little experience with the distribution of results in a large student sample. Therefore, after you have arrived at raw scores, ranking or percentiles, it is important for you to assess why the results are the way they are before you assign grades. In fact, many faculty prefer not to assign grades, especially early in the semester, but just indicate a broad range for translating scores into grades ("Any score 90% correct or above is in the 4.0 range"). This gives you time to assess your exam or assignment and also compare a student's scores over the entire term.

You might think about what adjustments you would be willing to make if your exam or assignment does yield predominantly high or low scores, no scores in the middle, etc. If the scores are uniformly high, for example, you may be doing everything right, or have an unusually good class. On the other hand, your test may have been too easy or may not have measured what you intended.

Some of the key factors in evaluating test results are the following:

Did I test what I thought I was testing? If you wanted to know whether students could apply a concept to a new situation, but mostly asked questions determining whether they could label parts or define terms, then you tested their memory rather than their ability to apply that memory.

Did I test what I taught? For example, your questions may have tested the students' understanding of surface features or procedures, while you had been lecturing on causation or relation—not so much what the name of the bones of the foot are, but how they work together when we walk.

Did I test what I emphasized in class? Make sure that you have asked a majority of the questions about the material you think is the most important, especially if you have emphasized it in class. Don't try to trip students up with questions on obscure material that are weighted the same as questions on crucial material.

Is the material I tested really what I wanted students to learn? For example, if you wanted students to use analytical skills such as the ability to recognize patterns or draw inferences, but only used true-false questions requiring non-inferential recall, you might try writing more complex true-false or multiple-choice questions.

CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES (CATS)

In addition to evaluating students for the purpose of assigning grades, it is also useful to immediately evaluate the level of student comprehension of a particular subject. A quick method to determine the level at which students comprehend course material is through classroom assessment techniques (CAT). There is often a large discrepancy between instructor expectations of the students and what the students think is expected, and a CAT may call this to the instructor's attention as well as help the students become aware of the instructor's expectations and perhaps even achieve them. A major advantage of utilizing CATs is that you are able to assess learning immediately after the material has been provided, before the next exam, when it will become more clear in hindsight which topics were easier to understand based on your lectures/discussions.

One example of a CAT is to ask students to write the most important point you have discussed on a 3x5 index card or piece of paper after you have finished a particular concept. Hopefully the students will provide exactly the main topic that you have illustrated. However, some may record one of the minor points that you had intended to support the broader idea. This exercise will allow you to determine what topics the students are focusing on. It will provide the students a chance to stop and reflect on the material instead of just recording what you are saying, and furthermore it will give you a few minutes to gather your

thoughts and prepare to move on. Be sure to clarify exactly what you expect to be the best answer before you advance to the next topic, which will also help link the items that you are teaching.

There are several commonly used classroom assessment techniques, including:

1. "Reality check": what was the most important point we discussed today/this week?
2. Summarize what we just did.
3. What was the clearest point/muddiest point about today's material?
4. Why is this concept relevant?
5. What is wrong with the following statement . . .?
6. Define a key term that has provided a focal point for today's discussion.
7. Make a drawing/graph that illustrates or utilizes a concept.
8. Draw a concept map linking up main ideas that you provide.
9. Write a metaphor illustrating a concept that we have focused on today.
10. Provide an example test question from the material you have covered today.

TEACHING ASSESSMENT AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Learning to accept and request feedback on, to assess criticism of, and to make modification in your teaching practice is an important and ongoing process in your professional development. Whether the evaluation process is externally mandated or self-initiated, teaching assessment always presents you with an opportunity to improve your practice. The first part of this section will suggest ways in which you might initiate this process and use feedback effectively. The remaining part of the section will examine ways to put that assessment and reflection process to work for you in the job market.

Starting Points for Reflective Practice

Before moving to formal forums of evaluation, we suggest that you take a few minutes to jot down answers to the following questions or to record memorable and uncomfortable events in your teaching. This pre-writing on your experiences will help you to clarify your thoughts and will also prepare you with specific examples and instances you might use in job interviews or other situations where you are called upon to exemplify your practices.

Documentation: Recall a time when you had a wonderful educational experience.
Reflection: What does this suggest to you about teaching and learning that you might apply to your work?

Documentation: Recall a painful or difficult educational experience.
Reflection: What does this suggest about teaching and learning that you might apply to your work?

Documentation: Recall a time when you felt you did a terrific job of teaching someone.
Reflection: What made this such a positive experience? How might you encourage this to happen again?

Documentation: Recall a time when your teaching did not result in the desired learning.
Reflection: What went wrong between intention and performance? What does this suggest?

Put yourself in your students' shoes. Imagine you are a student in your own class. Write some notes to yourself describing the educational experience you would like to have.

Evaluation Forms (For MSU TA Evaluation Forms see http://tap.msu.edu/PDF/TA_Eval.pdf)

In this section, we discuss external evaluations that inform your self-assessment and hopefully guide your professional development. The questions you have considered in the previous section should help you to solicit feedback and to determine how to respond to both positive and negative criticism.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS

Student Instructional Rating System Form (SIRS)

MSU has developed a general instrument for student feedback, the SIRS Form. It is an anonymous survey that queries students about your preparedness, receptiveness to questions, lecturing, organization and the like. At the end of each semester, your department will provide you with either the SIRS form or their own evaluation sheet or both. If your department does not provide you with specific instructions about the process of distribution, you should check with your departmental office. Generally the instructor obtains the bubble sheets, cover sheet and a manila envelope from the department office, hands it out to the class, and solicits a student volunteer to return it to the department office. After you have turned in your grades, you can go to your department office and read your SIRS forms. This is a basic forum for student feedback.

Departmental Evaluation Forms

Several departments on campus have developed their own student evaluation forms, tailored to their own departments' concerns. Check with your department to see if they use the SIRS form, an alternative department form or both. Follow the procedure for collecting the evaluations outlined by your department when using its instrument.

Instructor Developed Evaluations

You can supplement the feedback you receive from the SIRS or Departmental evaluations by developing alternative evaluations. If you are assisting in a class, check with the instructor-of-record to see what kinds of evaluation he or she uses and whether or not the professor is open to you collecting some feedback of your own. Instructors can request written or verbal feedback. (Many times written feedback is less intimidating for students to provide.) You might have students evaluate you as part of an assignment or on a form you have generated.

Evaluations can serve many purposes. You can distribute them or request comments at any time during the semester. Early evaluation allows you something the SIRS forms do not—it allows you to address issues specific to the course and students you are instructing now.

For additional models of evaluations, see Thomas Angelo's 1993 edition of *Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers*, Jossey-Bass. This text proposes techniques that are more informal than SIRS forms or departmental forms. In addition, you gain instant feedback on a variety of levels: how the class is going, how well students are learning, how students are processing information, and what problems the students are encountering. One such suggestion is the "One-Minute Paper," in which you ask students to take a minute at the end of the class to write a response to questions such as: "What was the most important concept you learned today?" To target student difficulties with specific material or your presentation style, Angelo suggests the "Muddiest Point Paper," in which you ask students to jot down questions and problems.

Evaluation by Your Department

Each department has different policies concerning supervision and evaluation of teaching assistants. You should check with your department or supervising faculty member to find out what kind of evaluations will be done of your teaching performance. Beyond that, it is your right to request a faculty visit or a visit by another TA who can give you feedback. These visits and evaluations should be arranged with your department.

Utilization of Evaluations

All of the above-described forms of evaluations—self-reflection, student feedback and departmental evaluation—allow you to better assess your teaching and to make improvements in the future. Evaluation materials also lend themselves nicely to professional dossier construction and teaching portfolios, as described in the next section. A faculty member recently suggested that his preparation for tenure evaluation was enhanced because he maintained a collection of evaluations, which allowed him to periodically assess his role in the classroom, as a researcher, and as a member of MSU.

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20 WEB Sources on Plagiarism: How to Detect and Avoid It

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3. http://newark.rutgers.edu/~ehrlich/plagiarism598.html - resource on plagiarism
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5. http://www.rbs2.com/plag.htm- plagiarism resource, with duplication restrictions.
6. http://www.StThomasU.ca/~hunt/plagiary.htm - From Russell A. Hunt, Professor of English, St. Thomas University (New Brunswick), an excellent piece entitled, "In Defense of Plagiarism," in which he discusses how plagiarism effects teaching.
7. http://www.princeton.edu/pr/pub/integrity/pages/plagiarism.html - excellent guide to plagiarism AND mentions specifically international students.
8. http://education.indiana.edu/~frick/plagiarism/ - A plagiarism assessment tool that reveals the "shifty" nature of plagiarism.
9. http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.pdf - also at Indiana, a source to help students learn about the appropriate use of sources.
10. http://tlt.its.psu.edu/suggestions/cyberplag/ - A Penn State Resource for faculty and students, including a quiz to help students identify what constitutes plagiarism.
11. http://www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/papermil.html - "Cheating 101: Paper Mills and You." Full text, also references to other articles, sites. Outstanding Resource.
12. http://honor.georgetown.edu/plagiarism.html - "Reflections on Internet Paper Mills."
13. http://www.ksu.edu/honor - Dissertation in which K-state faculty were asked to give their opinions on whether they deemed four scenarios as cheating behavior.
14. http://www.academicintegrity.org - Center for Academic Integrity
15. The Bedford Workshop on Plagiarism http://bedfordstmartins.com/plagiarism/ Developed by Nick Carbone, The site includes classroom ready PDF handouts you can give your students, including the very popular "Straight Talk about Plagiarism" flyer. All resources on this site are FREE.
16. http://www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/4_resource/plagiarism.html- Oxford University Website devoted to plagiarism issues
17. http://www.tss.uoguelph.ca/resources/onlineres/plagiarism.htm - Canada's University of Guelph website. Includes research from Don McCabe, a leading authority on issues related to what students cheat.
18. http://www.stu.ca/~hunt/4reasons.htm - Russ Hunt's piece describing why there are reasons to be happy that students cheat.
19. http://www.plagiarism.org/ - detecting plagiarism
20. http://www.plagiarism.com/ - detecting plagiarism.

MARKETING YOUR TEACHING CREDENTIALS/ TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

We all know that research projects, publications, conference papers, fellowships, and awards are crucial measures of our achievement and are therefore noteworthy (read curriculum vitae worthy) accomplishments. There is another important professional dimension, however, that we often neglect. A good many TAs spend 20 hours a week in undergraduate education-related activities. Your tenure as a TA at MSU might span from serving as a grader for a large lecture course, to conducting lab/recitation sections, to acting as an autonomous instructor with the full responsibilities of a course. Why spotlight your teaching? First, because for many of us it is our largest commitment throughout a normal semester. Second, because teaching success is evidence of your participation in the profession. Third, teaching will probably be a major commitment in your academic career. If you learn to market these aspects of your professional efforts as well, you will strengthen your professional dossiers.

In "How to Land that First Teaching Job," Perlman, McFadden and McCann recommend that the future professoriate (TAs) give a great deal of consideration to marketing teaching experiences and ability (*APS Observer*, March 1994). They cite studies that suggest that teaching occupies "almost two-thirds (64%) of faculty work time." Search committees, many of whom are responding to increased attention given to higher education in state legislatures, are placing more emphasis on teaching. A list of the sponsors for "The Fifth National Conference on the Training and Employment of Graduate Teaching Assistants" (1995) indicates that the disciplines of Chemistry and Mathematics, as well as those within the humanities, social sciences, and natural sciences, are giving more consideration to teaching. A glance at your discipline's professional journals might confirm this trend.

Here at MSU, we have taken the traditional concept of a teaching portfolio and customized it into a professional development/marketing tool for TAs—a "teaching-full professional dossier." Some of you may have attended one of the TA workshops entitled "Start Now: Marketing Yourself via the Teaching Portfolio." For those of you who haven't and would like an opportunity to learn more about the portfolio as a marketing tool, keep on the lookout for a workshop flyer. Some variation of this workshop should be offered on a regular basis. In the interim, take a look at the summary of the teaching portfolio that follows and refer to the citations provided at the end of this handbook for further reading.

Now that you have given consideration to teaching assessment, you are ready to channel those evaluations into a strong curriculum vitae or teaching portfolio. The following section describes the portfolio proper as a collection of documents separate from your CV. Even as we discuss the component parts of a portfolio and the documents that might assist you to create one, we must admit that it is somewhat unlikely that you will actually submit a hard copy of the portfolio to a search committee. (Although in some fields this is becoming an option.) Alternatively, we suggest that the teaching portfolio process is analogous to creating a windows menu for your computer or a filing system for your accomplishments. The process of reflecting and compiling offers several advantages apart from a portfolio to hand out to a committee. It allows you to develop a strategy for representing yourself as a professional. The actual compiled and organized documents allow you to compose a statement about yourself within your profession. As you consider what kind of statement this process tells you about yourself, you will be simultaneously preparing for the interview process. These documents and your production and consideration of them will help you to write persuasive letters of introduction, and most importantly, ones which will help you to position yourself within your field—to demonstrate in your letters, publications and interview answers that you are familiar with your pedagogy, methodology, and your relationship to other academics in your field as well as to scholars in other disciplines. In addition, this reflection and recording process will simplify your preparation for the application process and later for tenure review.

Building a Teaching Portfolio

by Volker Langeheine

THE TEACHING PORTFOLIO: BECOMING A PROFESSIONAL TEACHER

Changes in the job market and a growing emphasis in academia on teaching have led us to taking teaching more seriously.

If you are considering a future career in teaching at the secondary level, at a 2-4 year college (quite often with a teaching load of up to 12 hours per week), teaching undergraduates, or at a major research institution, teaching undergraduates and graduates, you have to become a professional teacher. Building your teaching portfolio (or teaching dossier) is a key factor to reaching that goal.

Becoming a Professional Teacher

Gain Teaching Experience
Evaluate Teaching
Document Teaching Experience
Assemble a Teaching Portfolio
Improve Teaching

As a teaching assistant you are provided with many opportunities to gain teaching experience no matter to what extent you are involved in a course, for example as a grader for a large lecture class, a conductor of lab/recitation sections, or as an instructor with full responsibilities for a course. Do not hesitate to document your teaching experience in a teaching portfolio right from the start. By the time a job ad for a teaching position you want to apply for arrives, it might be too late to begin reflecting on your teaching and thinking about what to include in a portfolio.

THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

Teaching portfolios can be used by teaching assistants (as well as by faculty) to *document teaching experience*, and to *market teaching experience* when used as a tool in an application process. They can also be used for the personal development of the teacher (to *improve teaching*) or as part of an evaluation system (to *evaluate teaching*).

Using the Teaching Portfolio in an Application Process	
Search Committee	*Applicant*
Job ad *(usually applicants are asked to submit evidence of teaching effectiveness)*	*Prepares teaching portfolio* Mails cover letter, curriculum vitae, letters of recommendation, teaching portfolio (if requested)
Initial screening, eventually further requests	Mails writing samples, video with taped teaching practice, teaching portfolio (if requested)

Telephone interviews/ Conference interviews	Uses teaching portfolio as quick reference Writes thank-you letter
On-campus interviews for applicants on "short list"	Presents research Teaches a class Refers to teaching portfolio if needed Attends social events Writes thank-you letter
Job offer	Accepts/rejects/negotiates offer
Contract	***SIGNS CONTRACT***

Edgerton, Hutchings & Quinlan state that "portfolios can capture the intellectual substance and 'situated-ness' of teaching in ways that other methods of evaluation cannot" (4). They feel that "portfolios encourage faculty to take important, new roles in the documentation, observation, and review of teaching." They view portfolios as "a particularly powerful tool to improvement" and are convinced that "portfolios can help forge a new campus culture of professionalism about teaching."

WHAT IS A TEACHING PORTFOLIO?

The teaching portfolio is a means to discuss what you do, or plan to do as a teacher, and then demonstrates this through supporting materials. It is a *representative sample* of your work as a teacher rather than an all-encompassing catalog of documents.

A simple format for your teaching portfolio includes two parts:

1. a three to six page *reflective statement* about your teaching (usually a description of experiences, goals, strategies, philosophy) and

2. appendices comprising *documentary evidence* supporting the assertions made in your reflective statement (typically written evaluations from your department and your students, sample syllabi, a list of courses you have taught, evidence of professional development).

The selection of materials reflects the scope and quality of your teaching in various areas of instruction. The narrative sections establish context and continuity for the selected materials. Teaching portfolios can take different shapes and serve various purposes.

PREPARING AN EFFECTIVE PORTFOLIO: WHICH MATERIALS ARE INCLUDED?

According to Floyd Urbach, seven dimensions of documenting a teaching portfolio must be considered. He suggests that a portfolio should include information (i.e. reflection based on a list of questions to consider and possible types of documents and artifacts) about

What you teach
How you teach
Changes in your teaching and courses
Rigor in your academic standards

Student impressions of your teaching and their learning
Your efforts at developing your teaching skills
Assessment of your teaching by colleagues.

Supporting evidence for the assertions you make in your reflective statement is included in the portfolio appendices. The selection of materials for the appendix should be based on how well they demonstrate the connection between your concepts of teaching and your actual teaching practice. Since evidence of successful teaching practice is an important element of this equation, evaluations by your students, peers and supervisors add particular strength to your portfolio. Schools and departments using portfolios as part of an evaluation system often require specific kinds of documentation but usually allow you to include additional material.

Materials for Inclusion in the Teaching Portfolio

Evidence of Course Planning
Course titles, numbers, credits, enrollments, descriptions
- Syllabi
- Assignments
- Work sheets
- Exams and quizzes
- Group project plans
- Lesson plans
- List of teaching materials (films, guest speakers etc.)

Evaluations and Feedback
- Faculty/mentor evaluations based on classroom observation
- Peer evaluations based on classroom observation
- *SIRS Forms/Departmental Evaluations*

TA-generated evaluations at the end of the term
- TA requests for student feedback throughout the term
- Self-evaluation

Samples of your Students' Work (with permission!)
- Completed Exams
- Journals
- Assignments and graded student work

Evidence of Professional Development
Documentation of workshop/seminar attendance
- Documentation of giving a paper/workshop at a professional conference
- Contributions to a professional journal on teaching
- Responses to journal articles on pedagogy

Video-taped teaching practice (upon request)

Evidence of Teaching Excellence
- Awards
- Recognition
- Notes/Thank-you letters from students

HOW TO GET STARTED: STEPS TO CREATING A TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Starting a portfolio is best accomplished in partnership with a colleague or mentor. Find out what others in your field have in their portfolios. Keep in mind that your portfolio is changing over time. Be selective of what you include in your portfolio. Too many items is as much of a mistake as too few! The following steps can function as a general guideline:

Step 1: Summarize your teaching responsibilities.

Step 2: Describe your approach to teaching. Write reflective statements based on the syllabi for courses you have taught. Then write an overall statement of your teaching philosophy (how and why you teach) to guide the reader through your samples of supporting materials. Describe methods, materials, objectives of instruction, ongoing efforts to improve your teaching, your future teaching goals etc.

Step 3: Select representative samples of supporting materials (from yourself, from others, products of student learning), prepare statements on various items if necessary.

Step 4: Arrange the items in order and include a table of contents.

The following questions may help you get started:

What are your teaching responsibilities? Have you been responsible for designing new courses or for redesigning old courses?

How do you teach? How would you describe your teaching style and methods?

Why do you teach as you do? What are your teaching goals?

Who are your students? How do the types of students affect how you teach your courses?

What are some of your underlying beliefs in how students learn?

Which major course projects, assignments or other activities did you use to support or help students learn, to help students achieve your instructional goals?

How do you motivate students to learn? How do you accommodate different learning styles and levels of preparation? How do you establish a classroom environment conducive to learning?

How do you maintain a current knowledge base about how students learn your discipline and about how colleagues teach your discipline? How do you change your courses to reflect that knowledge?

What are your future goals for teaching?

What do you do to enhance your teaching effectiveness? Are you willing to experiment in your classroom practices?

Which areas of the teaching and learning process do you expect to document and/or examine in the preparation of your teaching portfolio?

What kinds of evidence would demonstrate that your teaching practice reflects your teaching beliefs, theories and goals?

What would you include in your portfolio to document your teaching effectiveness, your teaching philosophy and goals? Which of these items do you have, and which items will you need to develop or acquire?

The uses of your teaching portfolio are many. First, the Portfolio provides an infrastructure to reflect upon, analyze, and improve your teaching. It also documents your teaching experience, materials, and efforts at improving instruction. This documentation can be used here at MSU when you apply for an assistantship and on the job market. But it is important to begin your portfolio as early as possible in your teaching career and to continually update it with the completion of each class you teach. If you do this, you will avoid scrambling to put together a portfolio at the last minute. Taking a small amount of time to organize your materials into a portfolio will enhance your teaching and marketability in the future.

"Documenting Your Professional Progress" Selected Bibliography

Anthony, Rebecca. *The Curriculum Vitae Handbook : Using your CV to Present and Promote your Academic Career*. Iowa City, Iowa : Rudi, 1994.

Brinko, Kathleen. "Documenting Excellence in Teaching." *The Teaching Professor* 5:8 (October 1991): 3-4.

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MSU Certification in College Teaching Guidebook. http://grad.msu.edu/teaching.htm

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APPENDIX A

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR TAs: A SHORT GUIDE

Teaching is a challenge, so every TA deserves as much practical help as the university can give. Scattered on campus are many resources and services that can help you do your TA work more easily and effectively. This directory is a guide to those resources.

Section One, "Logistical Support," examines sources of technology and media that you can use in your classroom and facilities outside the classroom that you or your students can use in connection with your course.

Section Two, "Support for Your Teaching," provides resources to help you improve and develop your teaching skills. **(A List of MSU TA Program resources and services is located at the end of this Appendix.)**

Section Three, "Support Services for Your Students," lists campus offices to which you can refer individual students when they need help with personal problems, career planning, or particular learning difficulties.

Section Four, "Problem Prevention and Conflict Resolution," highlights the offices where you or your students can go for help regarding serious conflicts, such as violation of the law, violence, harassment, abuse of authority, violation of university policies.

Section Five, "MSU TA Program Resources," is a detailed listing of pedagogical, language, and professional development programs available to MSU TAs from our office.

I. LOGISTICAL SUPPORT

Computer Hardware, Software, and Information:
- Microcomputer Labs
- Computer Store
- Computing Resource Center
- Consulting

Electronic Computer Communication
- Pilot (campus e-mail)
- Gopher (electronic bulletin board)

Audio-Visual Media
- Film, Video, and Audio Collections
- Broadcast Service through Instructional Television (ITV)
- Delivery of Audio-Visual Equipment to Your Classroom [Instructional Media Center (IMC)]
- Main Library Audio-Visual Laboratory and Reserve
- Language Laboratory Audio-Visual Equipment and Reserve

Consulting Services
- Statistical Consulting Service

Print Media
- Main Library Assigned Reading Department
- Assigned Readings, Departmental and College Libraries
- COGS Copy Center

Computer Hardware, Software, and Information **ATS HELPDESK** **http://help.msu.edu/**

MSU's Computer Laboratory is responsible for organizing computer services on campus. The Computer Lab administers its services to the MSU community through the Computer Information Center (CIC), 305 Computer Center (355-4500). Among the services of interest to TAs are:

Microcomputer Labs: Laboratories equipped with personal computers (IBM compatible, Macintosh, NeXt and Sun Computers) are available for TAs and students to use free of charge at many locations on campus. The labs can be used for word-processing, graphics, desk-top publishing, classroom assignments, programming, electronic mail and computer enrollment. Most labs are also connected to MSUnet (the campus computer network) and can be used to access the university's mainframe computer. For the hours and particular lab specifications, contact the Computing Information Center, Room 305 Computer Center, or 355-4500. The sixteen locations are: Computer Center, Biochemistry Bldg, Case Hall, Eppley Center, Kedzie Hall, MSU Union, Olds Hall, Wilson Hall, Bessey Hall, Brody Complex, Chemistry Bldg, Holmes Hall, MSU Main Library, Music Practice Bldg., and Wells Hall.

Computer Store: Located at 305 Computer Center (355-4500), the store operates a large demonstration area where you can try out hardware, software and peripherals; and provides some free software, including a disk virus protection program and Kermit, a dial-up communication package explained under "Electronic Computer Communication."

Computing Resource Center: Located at 305 Computer Center, (355-4500). The Resource Center: distributes reference materials and publishes literature on computer hardware, software and services; and offers self-paced tutorials and low-cost classes on how to use certain software and hardware;

Consulting: The Computer Information Center provides services and consultation on: basic access issues, including electronic mail and networking; mainframe and microcomputer applications; and software products and applications.

Audio-Visual Media

With modern technology, the possibilities for using audio-visual media in teaching are vast. Not only does MSU have large, varied collections of audiovisual materials (films, tapes, slides, etc), but it also provides you with equipment and opportunities for using these materials in teaching your students.

Film, Video, and Audio Collections: Several collections of film, videos, and audio tapes are available for instruction on campus:

Instructional TV (ITV) maintains a video library of over 3000 videotapes. To view a catalog, stop by the ITV Library, 105 Communication Arts Building. Catalogs with descriptions of individual videos are available by subject. Viewings may also be arranged by appointment. A partial listing of ITV holdings may be viewed on E-mail.

The Instructional Media Center (IMC) (separate from ITV) maintains a collection of films. Catalogs of film holdings are available at the Instructional Media Building, or the catalog can be sent on disk. Films also may be previewed at the Instructional Media Building. To request a catalogue or arrange a preview, call 353-3960.

The National Voice Library houses recordings of over 8,000 famous voices, the largest collection of its kind in the world. It has particularly strong holdings in American politics, foreign politics, labor relations, show business, media history, academic lectures, sports, local history, jazz and popular song, and literature. If you would like to include audio materials in your students curriculum, either visit or phone the Voice Library at 4th Floor West Main Library, 355-5122.

Broadcast Service through Instructional Television (ITV): MSU has a closed circuit TV system run by Instructional TV which is linked to many classrooms. If your classroom has an overhead monitor, it is part of the TV system, and you can arrange for ITV to broadcast specific films and videos into your classroom at specific times. If your regular classroom is not part of the system, you can reserve a special classroom equipped for a showing through ITV. To make arrangements for an ITV showing, either in your own or a special classroom, call the ITV Library, 355-2300, ext. 202. Room and showing arrangements should be made early in the semester, particularly if the video you want show is more than 50 minutes in length. In addition to broadcasting university owned films and videos, ITV will also broadcast videos that you bring in personally from network TV or PBS recordings. It will not broadcast commercial tapes rented from a video store or videos recorded from pay-cable channels such as HBO. To use a rented film or other restricted programming, you need to use IMC equipment, which involves a fee (see below). ITV services are free for instructors.

Delivery of Audio-Visual Equipment to Your Classroom [Instructional Media Center (IMC)]: The Instructional Media Center maintains audiovisual equipment for campus instructional purposes. For a nominal fee, which is billed to your department, you can have IMC deliver audio-visual equipment to your classroom on a specified day. To order equipment, get your department's approval and account number first. Then, with the account number and your course and section number handy, contact IMC at 353-3960 to make your order. The following items are available for classrooms with at least 24 hours notice (some can be ordered in advance for an entire semester; in addition some can be rented by graduate students or faculty for non-classroom purposes, for $10 to $30):

TV monitors (1 to 2 can be delivered at a time)
VCRs (Beta and VHS)
Slide projectors
Film projectors
Overhead projectors
Liquid crystal display units (to project the image on your computer screen onto a larger screen)
Laser disc players (capable of playing CDs as well)
Viewing screens
Microphones

Audience response systems (individual keypads for surveying class responses or opinions)

Main Library Audio-Visual Laboratory and Reserve: To place videotapes or audio tapes on reserve at the Audio-Visual Library, 4th Floor, West Wing, MSU Main Library, contact John Shaw at 353-1753 to make arrangements. Students can check out and then view the materials on site. Both VHS and BETA formats are acceptable. Cassette recorders are also available for use.

Language Laboratory Audio-Visual Equipment and Reserve: The MSU Language Laboratory, in 141 Old Horticulture, maintains facilities for listening to audio materials and for viewing videotaped materials. The Lab will accept audiovisual materials for course reserve. Contact the Language Lab at 355-8374 for information about lab hours, placing materials on reserve, and procedures for reserving the use of equipment. Frequently, the Lab has audio recorders and VCRs that have not been pre-reserved and are available to users on a walk-in basis.

Additional Consulting Services

Statistical Consulting Service: Because statistical concepts play an important role in much basic research and in application in a variety of settings, the Department of Statistics and Probability provides a statistical consulting service for researchers from the university.

This service matches its expertise in areas of experimental and survey design, data analysis, statistical quality assurance and reliability, statistical computing, time series, forecasting and modeling with the needs of the user. Consultations during the early design stages of a study are most useful. When appropriate, advanced graduate students in Statistics team with faculty to provide the consultation.

In order to make the best use of SCS resources, please avoid the late semester rush and take note of the SCS rules:

1. There is no charge for the initial contact and discussions. If extensive consulting is required, a fee for services may be charged at an agreed upon rate.

2. If a student seeks extensive consulting from the SCS, a meeting which includes the major professor of the student must be arranged.

3. The SCS does not provide consulting on data entry, the use of mainframe computers and routine statistical analyses, although advice and referrals may be given.

If you wish to use the SCS, please call or email the Department of Statistics and Probability, A404 Wells Hall, 353-7177, consult@stt.msu.edu.

SERVICES FOR TEACHING AND RESEARCH ASSISTANTS

MSU Libraries' Home Page – Your gateway to the extensive resources and services of the Main Library and its nine branches. Search the MAGIC online catalog or explore our "Electronic Resources" page, with links to thousands of online indexes, full-text journal articles, e-books and much more.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/
http://magic.msu.edu/
http://er.lib.msu.edu/

TA Library Guide Fast Track – http://guides.lib.msu.edu/page.phtml?page_id=1299

Library Instruction Services – Course-specific library instruction and tours for the classes you teach, presented by librarian subject specialists and bibliographers. Book a session online and let us introduce your students to print and Web-based library resources—plus effective strategies for using them.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/libinstr/

Subject Specialists – Library liaisons and contact information for your discipline and individual research interests.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/coll_man/dbases/gen/findsel.htm

Classes and Seminars – Free sessions (most only one hour long) presented each semester on a variety of library-related topics, including "Introduction to Library Electronic Resources" and "Learn to Speak Library," designed to increase your information skills and academic success.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/events/classes/

EndNote – Information and free training sessions for the popular bibliographic citation utility.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/endnote/

Grants and Related Funding Sources- electronic and printed funding resources, indexes and directories available through MSU Libraries and the Internet http://www.lib.msu.edu/harris23/grants/index.htm

Reserve Reading – Course-specific materials you select from library collections or provided by faculty, available for a short loan period and searchable by course number or instructor in the MAGIC online catalog.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/prr/reserves.htm

Research Guides – Suggested research tools, research strategies, and Web resources for a variety of topics to get you started on your research.
http://er.lib.msu.edu/guides_all.cfm

InterLibrary Services – Borrow or obtain copies of materials not available at the MSU Libraries.
http://interlib.lib.msu.edu:8080

Ask a Librarian – E-mail and real-time chat reference service when a visit to the reference desk or telephone query is not an option.
http://www.lib.msu.edu/services/emailref/

Print Media

Main Library Reserve Reading Department: TAs who wish to reserve certain books for assigned class readings can do so at the Main Library's Reserve Reading Department, 1st floor, East Wing. To place a book on reserve, TAs need only complete a one-page form giving their name, the course and section number they are teaching, and the author, title, and call number of the book they want reserved. This form will then be placed in one of several binders for easy reference by student. Some restrictions on book reservation apply. For full information and reservation forms, stop by Reserve Reading, call 353-8721.

Reserve Readings, Departmental and College Libraries: The main library administers branch libraries and reference rooms at different colleges and departments across campus. If you have a departmental specific reference room or library and would like to place items on assigned reading, visit the library and ask to speak with the Branch librarian. Lending and reserve policies differ across the campus library system. The following is a list of libraries operated by the Main Library:

Agricultural Economics Reference Room, 219 Agriculture Hall, ...355-6650
Animal Industries Reference Room, 3285 Anthony Hall, ...355-8483
Business Library, 50 DCL Bldg., ...355-3380
Chemistry Library, 426 Chemistry, ...355-9715 x363
Clinical Center Library, A137 Clinical Center, ...353-3037
Conrad Library, 101 Conrad Hall, ...353-1738
Engineering Library, 1515 Engineering Building, ...355-8536
Geology Library, 5 Natural Science, ...353-7988
Labor and Industrial Relations Library, Main Library Bldg. 355-4647
Mathematics Library, D101 Wells Hall, ...353-8852
Music Library, 253 Music Building, ...353-4593
Physics Library, 230 Physics-Astronomy Building, ...355-9704
Planning and Design Library, 212 Urban Plan Building, ...353-3941
Veterinary Medical Center Library, G201 Vet Med Center, ...353-5099

COGS Copy Center: The Council of Graduate Students has two high-quality photocopiers for use at low prices. All 8.5" x 11" copies are 4 cents each, 8.5" x 14" copies are 4.5 cents each, and 11" x 17" copies are 5.5 cents each. Transparencies are available. The COGS Copy Center is able to provide features such as collating, reducing and enlarging, two-sided copying, and automatic sheet feed. Office staff members are always on hand to assist you. You can find the COGS Copy Center at 316 Student Services Building. Hours are 9-5, Monday through Friday.

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II. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUR TEACHING

Courses on Teaching
Graduate School Professional Development Workshops
TAP Workshop Series
Responsible Conduct of Research Series
Videotapes on Teaching
Instructional Software Collection
MSU TA Program Resources on College Teaching
Test Scoring Office
MSU Excellence-in-Teaching Citations for Graduate TAs

Courses on Teaching: Several MSU departments and colleges sponsor courses on the theory and practice of teaching for TAs. The College of Education also offers courses of great relevance for new college teachers. Often these classes are offered by the most dedicated mentor-teachers on campus. We encourage you to with the department or instructor about relevant schedules and enrollment restrictions and requirements. If a course is not offered the semester you need it, you still may meet a faculty member who has a valuable syllabus and bibliography to share.

TA Workshop Series: Each year the Teaching Assistant Program (TAP) organizes workshops to give TAs practical tools for teaching and classroom management. Conducted by experienced faculty members development professionals, the workshops have included: "Evaluating Your Own Teaching," "Lessons Learned From Excellent Teachers," "Motivating Your Students by Keeping Your Classroom Lively," "Preparation and Delivery of Presentations," and "Construction and Grading of Multiple Choice and Other Closed-Ended Tests," Building a Teaching Philosophy," to name a few. Watch for workshop schedule flyers at the beginning of each term. Attendance at the workshops is free, but advance registration is required. To register, contact TAP, 9 International Center, 353-3063, or check on-line at **www.tap.msu.edu** **(See TAP Announcements, workshops, which also lists all TA training opportunities campus-wide.)**.

Office of Faculty & Organizational Development: http://fod.msu.edu/LillySeminar/thissem.asp . TAs can also occasionally attend selected seminars of the Lilly Teaching Fellows Program. This program provides a diverse group of MSU faculty with the opportunity to improve their teaching abilities and become future faculty leaders. Each year, the program pairs eight MSU junior faculty members (Lilly Fellows) with experienced MSU faculty mentors. It invites experts in teaching from across the country to conduct seminars with the fellows on issues of teaching. When space is available, TAs are welcome to attend a selection of these seminars. The TA Program will advertise available Lilly's each semester.

Videotapes on Teaching: A collection of videotapes on teaching methods and problems is now available at the Audio Visual (A.V.) Reserve, 4th Floor West, MSU Main Library. The collection includes tapes of the most successful and highly rated Lilly Fellows and TA workshops, as well as commercially distributed materials. The videos are listed in the A.V. Reserve binders under "TA 000 #__ " and a catalogue is also available from the TA Program. TAs may view videos during the A.V. Reserve's regular hours of operation. Call Main Library Information, 353-8700, for exact hours. You will need your current MSU I.D. in order to request videos.

Instructional Software Collection: The instructional Software Collection houses demonstration copies of hundreds of software packages and videodiscs for graduate and undergraduate coursework, curriculum development, and research. Programs cover all subject areas and include computer-aided instruction, models and simulations, tutorials, and drill and practice packages. Programs may be checked out for three days by faculty or graduate students, or run on equipment in room E208 of the Main Library. Call 355-1840 for hours.

TA Program Resources: The TA Program has a wide collection of resources on teaching and graduate student professional deelopment. Should you want to borrow any of these materials or consult the staff on matters of pedagogy or policy, feel free to drop by the TAP, 9 International Center, or call 353-3063 for assistance. **(See the end of Appendix A for a detailed description of MSU TA Office resources and services.)**

Test Scoring Office: TAs who wish to give multiple-choice or other objective exams and have them scored by computer should contact the Scoring Office, 208 Computer Center, 355-1819. Its many services include grade and record keeping, free test scoring, test analysis and item analysis and feedback generating for students. The Scoring Office also offers free consultation on design of data entry systems, test and survey design and computer management of instruction by appointment on a first-come, first-served basis, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. The Scoring Office will provide TAs with a wide variety of standardized bubble sheets free of charge for your students to use in answering objective tests. The office's optical scanners can then read the student responses coded on the sheets. Once the exams have been processed, a test score distribution report will be generated for your use. This report will give an analysis of item difficulties, item discriminations, and patterns of student response. It will also provide a single-page report for each student, listing the student's name, student number, raw score, percentile rank and standard score. Reports by student number only can be requested so the

lists may be posted for student inspection. For help in the preparation of student exercises, exams, drills or homework assignments, inquire about SOCRATES, a menu-driven item storage and retrieval program containing a supply of ready-to-use exercises and test items classified by subject.

MSU Excellence-in-Teaching Citations for Graduate Teaching Assistants: Each year, MSU Excellence-In-Teaching Citations are awarded to six graduate teaching assistants. The citation brings University-wide recognition to the best of the graduate teaching assistants and underlines the qualitative contribution that they make to the undergraduate program. Recipients receive public recognition at an awards ceremony and receive a monetary award. Candidates are nominated by supervising professors and/or faculty teaching advisors.

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III. SUPPORT SERVICES FOR YOUR STUDENTS

Academic Advice and Support

- Academic Advisors
- Learning Resources Center (LRC)
- Writing Center
- Service-Learning Center

Career Development and Placement

- Career Development Center
- Employment Listings (Student Employment Office)
- Assistance with Job Searches
- Assistance with Life and Career Planning
- Internship Placements for Career Development

Personal Counseling and Counseling Center

- General Counseling Services
- Minority Counseling Programs
- The Testing Office
- The Self-Management Laboratory

Special Needs

- Achieving Program and Classroom Accessibility for Handicappers
  [The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)]
- Office of Minority Student Affairs
- Office of Supportive Services (OSS)
- University Women's Resource Center

All TAs should be aware of an annual publication available from the Career Development Center: *The Referral Directory: Directory of Michigan State University Referral Resources.* A complete guide to MSU referral resources for career and educational information, the directory is the source for much of the information below and lists faculty and staff who are available to talk with students about educational and career goals. TAs are urged to get a copy or browse through it on Gopher.

Academic Advice and Support

Academic Advisors: MSU's trained academic advisors give students information about academic and major requirements, courses and course schedules, academic policies, forms, and academic actions such as drops and adds, incompletes, major changes, and the like. TAs who are uncertain how to handle a particular student's advisory needs should call an advisor for guidance and referral. Those students who have not yet declared a major preference should consult advisors at the University Undergraduate Division, 170 Bessey Hall, (355-3515). Students who have already declared their major preference or entered a major should consult advisors in their department or college. In regard to questions about course scheduling or the requirements of a major, students should be sent to their departmental advisor. For broader policy questions, late drops, serious personal problems, and withdrawals from the university, students should be sent to their college advisors.

Learning Resources Center (LRC): The Learning Resources Center (LRC), 209J Bessey Hall, (355-2363) provides instructional facilities, staff, and materials for MSU students interested in improving their reading, writing, listening, study and test-taking skills. TAs and faculty can refer students to the LRC for special assistance through the use of referral forms, which can be obtained from the LRC office. Students may be directed to self-learning modules, helped by trained staff, or connected with qualified tutors. Students do not need to make an appointment to use the computer-assisted materials in math, writing, and speed reading. If students want to meet individually with a tutor or instructor, however, they need to schedule an appointment. The staff also provides evaluation to determine if the student has a learning disability, and offer referral for special assistance for handicapped or disabled students. If desired, the LRC can report the results of a student referral to the referring TA or faculty member.

The Writing Center: Students who desire special assistance with specific writing projects may obtain individualized assistance at the Writing Center, 300 Bessey Hall. Both undergraduate and graduate students are welcome. Unlike the Learning Resources Center, the Writing Center does not offer learning modules in general writing skills. Instead, trained writing consultants help students with actual papers the students have written, using special questioning techniques to encourage students to think problems through for themselves. TAs and graduate students who are interested in becoming consultants at the Writing Center should call 432-3610 for more information.

Service-Learning Center: The Service-Learning Center, 27 Student Services, provides undergraduate and graduate students opportunities to learn and explore careers through voluntary community service. Students should speak with their departmental or college advisors about obtaining internship credits for some kinds of volunteer work. Programs are available in the Lansing area in business, communications, corrections, education, government, law, health, personnel, nutrition, recreation, science, social work, special education, and veterinary medicine. Students schedule from four to six hours per week for their placement. Employers agree that career exposure and community service work are valuable additions to a student's academic program. Some students are offered paying positions by their service-learning employers upon completion of their service. Information and applications are available in the office at 27 Student Services from noon to 5 P.M.

Career Development and Placement

MSU's Career Development and Placement Center, located at 113 Student Services, offers support to all students seeking career planning assistance. The following services, among others, are administered through the center:

Career Development Center: The Career Development Center, Room 6 of the Student Services Building, provides free information on careers in various majors. The Center houses background information on numerous corporations and agencies (history, philosophy, positions offered), and the largest collection of graduate and professional school catalogues on campus. The center also offers a comprehensive collection of magazines, books, videos, microfiche, and free handouts on career exploration covering such subjects as selecting a major, researching employers, writing resumes and cover letters, interviewing techniques, salary studies and projections, specific job openings, and networking.

Employment Listings (Student Employment Office): Students seeking career-related employment or part-time employment, on or off campus, should be directed to 110 Student Services Building. The Student Employment Office maintains job lists and a current bulletin board of on and off campus positions.

Assistance with Job Searches: The Career Development Center gives seminars on career-related issues (including interviewing, resume building), hosts on-campus interviews, and has a special officer for each college who is willing to critique students' resumes free of charge and to assist them in mounting a job-seeking campaign. Graduating students may call 355-9510 for appointments.

Assistance with Life and Career Planning: (see Testing Office and Self-Management Laboratory, under the Counseling Center, below).

Internship Placements for Career Development: (see Service-Learning Center, under Academic Advice and Support, above).

Personal Counseling and Counseling Center

General Counseling Services are provided by the Counseling Center to regularly enrolled MSU students free of charge. Counselors assist in dealing with such issues as family pressures, feelings of inadequacy, motivation, uncertainty concerning aptitudes and interests, or generalized problems in decision-making. Career, ethnic, self-management, sexual assault and substance abuse counseling are also provided. Special group counseling services are available and will be discussed during the initial meeting with the counselor. In addition, the Self-Management Laboratory provides resources for students considering self-directed behavioral changes.

The center is open Monday through Friday from 8-12 and 1-5 at both 207 Student Services Building (355-8270) and 336 Olin Health Center (355-2310). The Center also provide the following more specialized services:

Minority Counseling Programs are available via the Multi-Ethnic Counseling Center Alliance (MECCA), for students who wish to discuss specific issues or to work with minority counselors. Refer students to 207 Student Services for a complete list of services.

The Testing Office, located in 207 Student Services, is not only a national test and testing information center (for the GRE, LSAT, etc.), but also provides complete testing services for students working with counselors in the assessment of their personal attributes. Resources include interactive computer-based guidance systems which provide assistance in making informed major choices and career decisions. They can help gather information, explore options, and develop strategies for decision-making.

The Self-Management Laboratory, located in 207 Student Services, offers resources for self-help with assertion, anxiety, insomnia, thought problems, stress management, self esteem, and career decision-making. It contains the System for Interactive Guidance and Information (SIGI+), a computer-assisted career information program to aid students in the process of making informed career decisions. SIGI+ is also offered in the following locations:

Career Information Center, 6 Student Services, 355-9510, ext. 335
Learning Resources Center, 209J Bessey Hall, 355-2363
Adult Services, Office of the Vice Provost for University Outreach, 51 Kellogg Center, 353-0139 or 353-0791

Special Needs

Achieving Program and Classroom Accessibility for Handicappers

Program Accessibility For Students And Employees With Disabilities: Teaching Assistant Responsibilities

The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990 and the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998, prohibit discrimination against persons with disabilities. Under these laws, MSU students and staff with certified disabilities have rights to special support (known as 'accommodations') that enable them to participate fully in university programs. Michigan State University makes every effort to comply with both the letter and the spirit of these laws. As a representative of the University, you will be expected to comply as well.

The Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) is the university office responsible for MSU's compliance and ensuring the full inclusion of persons with disabilities into the MSU community. All types of special accommodations for MSU students or staff with disabilities are approved and facilitated by this office. This is the office that you as a TA should contact if you have questions or problems regarding any students with disabilities. The office is located in 120 Bessey Hall, (517) 353-9642 (voice) or (517) 355-1293 (TTY).

Your responsibilities as a teaching assistant include the following:

1. At the beginning of each semester, you should announce the location and phone number of the RCPD so your students are aware of it. Put this information in your syllabus for students who may miss your announcement.
2. If a student indicates that he or she has a disability and has not registered with the Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities, please refer the student to the center. Once a student has registered with the RCPD, a complete needs-assessment is conducted and the RCPD can help you understand what accommodations are appropriate for that student.
3. Some students with disabilities who request accommodations will have a letter from the RCPD that states the specific ways that you can be of help. Please follow the instructions on the letter. Call the RCPD if you have questions regarding the accommodations for any student.
4. Some students, whether registered with RCPD or not, may identify themselves to you and request accommodations that seem complicated or unreasonable (e.g., unlimited time for tests, or an expensive piece of equipment to use in class). Call the RCPD for assistance.

In addition:

5. You are NEVER asked to determine the level or type of accommodation that is appropriate for a student. That is the responsibility of the staff specialists at the RCPD.
6. Do not ask a student for documentation of their disability. That is CONFIDENTIAL information. If a student gives documentation of his or her disability to you, do not accept it. Refer him or her to RCPD.
7. Do not independently amend the recommended accommodations determined by the RCPD staff. The specialists at RCPD recommend specific reasonable accommodations after consultations with the student and evaluation of supporting documentation.

Your general responsibilities under the Americans With Disabilities Act also include the following:

1. Plan every event or meeting in an accessible and accommodating facility. This is to be done when you know someone with a disability will attend or when you cannot predict if someone with a disability will attend.
2. Any publicity materials for special events (including meetings) should include a statement listing whom to call to request accommodations.

Minority Student Affairs is located in 338 Student Services Building. As part of the Division of Student Affairs and Services, the Office of Minority Student Affairs is committed to serving the racial ethnic minority students of Michigan State University.

Through its numerous endeavors, the Office of minority Student Affairs strives to positively impact the many dimensions of the student's personal, academic, and social growth. This brochure describes some of the many activities the Office is involved with to help students move towards new horizons.

The Office is also a place where students can come with questions and problems they may encounter at the University. The staff of the Office of Minority Student Affairs is dedicated to providing you with committed assistance and referral services, prepared to direct you to the "right place."

Office of Supportive Services (OSS): The Office of Supportive Services, located in 209 Bessey Hall, provides assistance to College Achievement Admission Program (CAAP) students who may require additional academic support. CAAP students come from educationally disadvantaged areas of Michigan, and are admitted to the undergraduate program by special provision. OSS services to CAAP students include personal and academic counseling, tutorial assistance, and skill-building workshops. All entering CAAP students are assigned an academic guidance counselor at OSS who meets with them regularly until they establish satisfactory academic progress. If a CAAP student in your class is experiencing academic difficulties, you may notify OSS. OSS will then call the student in for additional counseling and tutoring. For information or assistance, call 353-5210.

University Women's Resource Center: Of its many vital roles, the University Women's Resource Center provides: 1) information, resources and assistance to individual female students, staff, and faculty on matter of equal opportunity and gender equity; 2) serves as a resource for women in identifying problems and resolution strategies; 3) provides information about and referral to on- and off-campus units which may assist women in such matters as economic hardship, domestic assault, housing, dysfunctional families, child care, and additional/continuing education. The Women's Resource Center is committed to ensuring a comfortable campus climate for all campus members, particularly women. It offers services that focus on recognizing and responding to sexual harassment. Advice and referrals are given to individuals who feel that they may have experienced sexual harassment. The Women's Resource Center also offers assistance in the informal resolution of sexual harassment complaints.

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IV. PROBLEM PREVENTION/CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Office of the Ombudsman: The Ombudsman is a senior faculty member appointed by the President to assist students at all levels in resolving problems and complaints involving instructors, teaching assistants, administrators, and staff. Operating in a confidential, neutral, and independent manner, the Ombudsman assesses the validity of each complaint, advises on possible options, and, where indicated, actively investigates the problem. For example, TAs may seek the Ombudsman's assistance regarding conflicts or problems with a student, with their professor or TA supervisor, or with other university staff. The Ombudsman also assists students in requesting formal grievance hearings. For detailed discussions of various issues, including academic integrity, course syllabi, and classroom disruption, visit the Ombudsman website: www.msu.edu/unit/ombud .

The current Ombudsman is Stan Soffin, and the Assistant Ombudsman is Sandra Harley. The Office of the Ombudsman is located in 129 N. Kedzie Hall. Call 517/353-8830 or e-mail at ombud@msu.edu . The office is open from 8 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday throughout the year.

RESOURCE PHONE DIRECTORY

Audio-Visual Reserve
Library
353-1753
Librarian: John Shaw

Career Information Center
6 Student Services
355-9510

Computing Information Center
305 Computer Center
355-4500

Counseling Services
207 Student Services
355-8270

335 Olin Health Center
355-2310

Instructional Media Center
Scheduling Office
126 Instructional Media Center
353-3960

Instructional Television Library
355-2300, ext. 202

TA Orientation Program
9 International Center
353-3062
Director: Kevin M. Johnston

Learning Resources Center
209J Bessey Hall
355-2363

Lilly Teaching Fellows Program
Dr. Deborah De Zure
432-2033

Main Library Reserved Reading Department
1st Floor East
353-8721

Office of Minority Student Affairs
338 Student Services Bldg
353-7745

Office of Supportive Services
209 Bessey Hall
353-5210

Ombudsman's Office
129 N. Kedzie HAll
353-8830
Ombudsman: Stan Soffin

Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD)
120 Bessey Hall
353-9642
353-9643

Room Scheduling
355-4522

Scoring Office
208 Computer Center
353-5296

Service-Learning Center
27 Student Services

University Women's Resource Center
332 Union Bldg.
353-1635
Director: Patricia M. Lowrie

Writing Center
300 Bessey Hall
432-3610

MSU Teaching Assistant Training Program Services and Resources

Teaching Assistant Program Office
9 International Center
353-3062/353-3156 (fax)
www.tap.msu.edu

TO: MSU Teaching Assistants

FM: Kevin M. Johnston
Curriculum Development Specialist and
Director, University TA Programs

RE: Services and Resources Available to Teaching Assistants

Following is a description of the services our office provides to all MSU Teaching Assistants and to any graduate students or faculty interested in pedagogical development. In addition to the services on this list, our office will assist departments and units in creating their own TA development programs and in conducting workshops devoted to their specific teaching and learning topics for TAs. We will provide teaching consultations for TAs and new faculty upon request and can furnish you with the latest resources and information available from MSU and abroad concerning teaching and learning development in higher education.

The TA Program staff look forward to working with you. We are at your service and as always, open to any recommendations you have for improving TA training and teaching at MSU.

Sincerely,

Kevin M. Johnston
kmj@msu.edu

MSU Teaching Assistant Program Resources

MSU TA: A Handbook for Teaching Assistants
Fall and Spring Workshop Series
MSU TA Seminar on College Teaching
(For all new TAs)
Teaching Orientations for International Students
MSU TA Web Page
www.tap.msu.edu
MSU Teaching Thoughts
http://tap.msu.edu/nvgt/rescs/thoughts.htm
The Certification in College Teaching Program
Graduate School: http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/teaching.htm
Arts & Letters: http://www.cal.msu.edu/grad/cctp/cctp.html
Nat. Science: http://www.ns.msu.edu/TAcertificate/Default.htm
MSU Teaching Consultation Service
MSU Buddy Program
Summer English Program (SEP) and TA English Class (ENG 097)
T.E.A.M.
English Help room and Tutoring

MSU TA: A Handbook for Teaching Assistants

The Handbook provides TAs with useful information about MSU's instructional atmosphere and on the most important aspects of university teaching. *MSU TA* contains in-depth material on topics such as "MSU Undergraduates and You," "The Syllabus as a Learning Tool," "Effective Teaching Strategies," "Evaluating Learning," "Grading and Assessment," and "Teaching Assessment and Professional Development." In addition, the Handbook contains an appendix each on MSU resources for TAs, MSU policies that pertain to TAs, and extensive resource lists addressing a wide variety of important teaching and learning issues.

MSU TA Seminar on College Teaching

The MSU TA Seminar on College Teaching assists and complements departments and units in the training of all teaching assistants on campus. This orientation often is a teaching assistant's initial introduction to life as an MSU TA. The three- (half) day program consists of talks by experienced professors and outstanding MSU TAs on a number of topics, including MSU policies for TAs, professional conduct guidelines, and pedagogical concerns. TAs also meet in valuable breakout sessions to further explore a wide range of teaching and learning issues with experience TA and faculty facilitators. New teaching assistants without departmental programs required to attend.

Teaching Orientation for International Students

The Teaching Orientation for international students is the international teaching assistant's initial introduction to life as a MSU TA. Lasting over 7 days in August, this Orientation importantly helps new international TAs adjust to their new surroundings. Faculty, experienced TA facilitators, and undergraduate tutors also provide participants important information about the American educational system, MSU students, and campus policies for teaching assistants. International students also receive pedagogical information in the orientation and participate in videotaped practice teaching sessions. The program is mandatory for all new international graduate students who expect to be teaching assistants.

MSU TA Program Fall and Spring Workshop Series

Each semester, the Teaching Assistant Program in conjunction with The Graduate School and MSU Faculty Development Programs, sponsors several workshops by distinguished faculty and award winning TAs. Now in its eighth season, the TA workshop series addresses the specific instructional and professional needs of teaching assistants. Topics have included developing a teaching portfolio, facilitating productive class discussion, creating a teaching philosophy, using writing in the classroom, dealing with difficult students, planning your own course, interviewing for a faculty position, and using media in the classroom. All teaching assistants and those who anticipate teaching in the near

future are welcome to participate. Suggestions of topics and presenters are also welcome.

MSU TA Web Page

The Teaching Assistant Program has a Web located at www.tap.msu.edu . Included here in addition to a description of our office's services is information concerning campus-wide teaching and learning activities, announcements for upcoming workshops, links to other electronic resources on the Web, including MSU's Teaching and Learning Forum, *MSU Thoughts on Teaching*, The Graduate School's Certification in College Teaching Program, and a variety of other useful information and announcements.

The Certification in College Teaching Program

MSU's Certification in College Teaching is an initiative of The Graduate School, in partnership with departments and colleges. The CCTP helps students organize and develop their teaching experience in a systematic and thoughtful way, with assistance from faculty and campus offices, in a manner similar to that already in place for research programs. As part of the program, participants will develop a teaching portfolio to highlight, organize, and reflect upon their teaching experiences. Upon completion, participants will receive an MSU Certificate in College Teaching from the appropriate department or college. A transcript notation will also be provided. Please visit http://www.msu.edu/user/gradschl/teaching.htm for a detailed description of The Graduate School's CCT Program.

TA Program Teaching Consultation Service

This service provides TAs and faculty with meaningful feedback on their classroom performance. A specially trained evaluator will work closely with instructors in a series of sessions, including a pre-video tape consultation, a videotaped classroom session, and a follow-up meeting and narrative report. The videotape belongs to the instructor. No information from the sessions can be used for anything except self- evaluation. The service is free and may be used as many times as instructors wish. Please contact Kevin Johnston for more information.

MSU Buddy Program

Now in its ninth year, the Buddy Program pairs international teaching assistants with undergraduate "buddies" to help ITAs learn more about their undergraduate students and American culture. The teaching assistant/buddy pairs meet weekly to explore and compare American undergraduate life with student life in the teaching assistants' home country. The weekly activities include visits to residence halls and student workplaces, observations of undergraduate classes, and discussions of undergraduate study habits. The program provides a continuous friendly relationship over the semester and information that can help new ITAs be successful teachers of MSU students. Since the TA Program can only accommodate a limited number of pairs, there is a sign-up period at the beginning of each term. Call the TA Program for more information.

Summer English Program (SEP) and English 097

The Summer English Program (SEP) features a month-long program of intensive English language study and teaching practice for new ITAs before they begin their fall studies. New international TAs meet daily with ESL teachers and qualified undergraduate tutors to undergo rigorous language exercises in basic English language techniques and in language training specific to their disciplines. Offered each semester, English 097, the English speaking and listening class for international TAs, meets five hours a week for ten weeks in sections of ten or fewer students. The course provides systematic practice in English pronunciation, the English of classroom presentations, and "course management." Students with SPEAK scores of 45 or higher are eligible to enroll. Students with SPEAK scores of 40 may enroll with permission of the instructor.

TEAM

TEAM is a computer-assisted pronunciation program. International TAs work with trained undergraduate tutors and the specially designed TEAM software to modify their accent to be more easily understood by U.S. students. The TEAM software allows ITAs to record, play back, and view graphic displays of their English pronunciation. The course also provides ITAs systematic practice in the English of classroom presentations, and "course management." Students with SPEAK scores of 45 or higher are eligible to

enroll. Students with SPEAK scores of 40 may enroll with permission of the instructor. All participants in the course are also eligible to participate in the TEAM computer assisted pronunciation tutorials free of charge. The TEAM software allows TAs to record, play back, and view graphic displays of their own speech and to compare these to pre-recorded models. Tutors act as coaches, helping TAs in making their speech more like the models they hear. Through TEAM, International TAs can become more aware of the features of their accent and of methods for making change. The practice lessons cover topics including intonation, intrusive sounds, phrasing, and speech flow as well as the correct pronunciation of individual English sounds.

ENGLISH TUTORING

Volunteer tutoring programs provide free English practice for interested international teaching assistants. The tutoring program provides undergraduate volunteers as conversation partners.

APPENDIX B

MSU Policies (See also MSU *Spartan Life*)

http://www.vps.msu.edu/SpLife/default.pdf

MSU Policies on Discrimination

MSU Anti-discrimination policy (All-University Policy)

Article I. Purpose

Michigan State University's scholarly community-building efforts occur within the context of general societal expectations, as embodied in the law. The University, consistent with its policies and governing law, promotes institutional diversity and pluralism through mechanisms such as affirmative action, within an over-arching strategy promoting equitable access to opportunity. The University's commitment to non-discrimination is the foundation for such efforts.

This policy states expectations for institutional and individual conduct. It applies to all university community members, including faculty, staff, students, registered student organizations, student governing bodies, and the University's administrative units, and the University's contractors in the execution of their University contracts or engagements, with respect to the following:

1) All educational, employment, cultural, and social activities occurring on the University campus;
2) University-sponsored programs occurring off-campus, including but not limited to cooperative extension, intercollegiate athletics, lifelong education, and any regularly scheduled classes;
3) University housing; and
4) Programs and activities sponsored by student governing bodies, including their constituent groups, and by registered student organizations.

Article II. Prohibited Discrimination

Unlawful acts of discrimination or harassment are prohibited.

In addition, the University community holds itself to certain standards of conduct more stringent than those mandated by law. Thus, even if not illegal, acts are prohibited under this policy if they:

1) Discriminate against any University community member(s) through inappropriate limitation of employment opportunity, access to University residential facilities, or participant in educational, athletic, social, cultural, or other University activities on the basis of age, color, gender, handicapper status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight; or
2) Harass any University community member(s) on the basis of age, color, gender, handicapper status, height, marital status, national origin, political persuasion, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, or weight.

These prohibitions are not intended to abridge University community members' rights of free expression or other civil rights.

Article III. Mediation and Adjudication

Mediation of claims and disputes, through consultation provided by offices serving the University, is encouraged.

Complaints under this policy may be submitted for non-disciplinary adjudication according to the provisions of the "Procedures of the Anti-Discrimination Judicial Board." Upon its review, the ADJB may recommend that appropriate disciplinary proceedings be initiated, if such has not already occurred. Disciplinary proceedings are governed by the documents listed in Appendix C.

Excepting the President and the General Counsel, any University community member may be named in a complaint.

MSU Policies and Procedures

The contracts, policy documents, and procedures listed below provide avenues for the consideration of disciplinary complaints or actions against the various members of the Michigan State University Community.

"Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University"
"Bylaws of the Medical Staff, Colleges, of Human and Osteopathic Medicine: Michigan State University"
"Cooperative Extension Service Continuing Employment Policy and Dismissal Hearing Procedure"
"Dismissal of Tenured Faculty for Cause"
"Faculty Grievance Procedure"
"General Grievance Procedure for Non-Unionized Employees"
"Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities"
"Librarian Personnel Handbook of Policies, Procedures, and Practices: Michigan State University"
"Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities"
"Michigan State University Collective Bargaining Agreements"
"Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual"

MSU Sexual Harassment Policy

The following policy was issued by the Office of the President in May 1999.

I. INTRODUCTION

Michigan State University is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment for all students, faculty, and staff that is fair, humane, and responsible--an environment that supports career and educational advancement on the basis of job and academic performance. Sexual harassment subverts the mission of the University and offends the integrity of the University community. It is reprehensible and is not tolerated at Michigan State University.

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful gender (sex) discrimination. It may involve harassment of women by men, harassment of men by women, and harassment between persons of the same sex. Sexual harassment is made unlawful by Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, and Michigan's Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act. The University and the law also prohibit retaliation against persons who complain about alleged sexual harassment or who cooperate in an investigation of reported sexual harassment.

This Policy applies to all members of the University community--faculty, staff, and students.

II. PROHIBITION

Members of the University community shall not engage in sexual harassment. Persons who do so are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge for employees and suspension for students.

III. DEFINITION

A. What is Sexual Harassment?

"Sexual harassment" means unwelcome sexual advances, unwelcome requests for sexual favors, or other unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature when:

1. submission to such behavior is made, explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or status in a course, program, or activity; or

2. submission to or rejection of such behavior is used as a basis for a decision affecting an individual's employment or participation in a course, program, or activity; or

3. such behavior is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that a reasonable person would find that it:

a) alters the terms or conditions of a person's employment or educational experience, or

b) unreasonably interferes with an individual's work or performance in a course, program, or activity, thus creating a hostile or abusive working or educational environment.

Sexual harassment involves unwanted sexual attention. However, a person’s subjective belief that behavior is offensive does not make that behavior sexual harassment. The behavior must also be objectively unreasonable.

The determination as to whether behavior is sexual harassment must take account of the totality of the circumstances, including the nature of the behavior and the context in which it occurred. Sexually harassing conduct often involves a pattern of offensive behavior. However, a single instance of assault, physically threat, or other especially abusive behavior may constitute sexual harassment.

B. Examples of Sexual Harassment

Many kinds of behavior may fit within the preceding definition of sexual harassment. The following list is not exhaustive.

* sexual assault

* threats or insinuations which lead the victim reasonably to believe that granting or denying sexual favors will affect her or his reputation, education, employment, advancement, or standing within the University

* sexual advances, sexual propositions, or sexual demands which are not agreeable to both parties

* unwelcome and persistent sexually explicit statements or stories which are not legitimately related to employment duties, course content, research, or other University programs or activities

* repeatedly using sexually degrading words or sounds to describe a person

* unwanted and unnecessary touching, patting, hugging, or other physical contact

* recurring comments or questions about an individual's sexual prowess, sexual deficiencies, or sexual behavior

Speech and expressive conduct can be sexual harassment. However, this Policy shall not be interpreted to abridge First Amendment rights or to infringe academic freedom, as defined in the Faculty Handbook, the Faculty Rights and Responsibilities policy, and the document entitled Academic Freedom for Students at Michigan State University.

Behavior of a sexual nature that is not sexual harassment may nonetheless be unprofessional in the workplace or disruptive in the classroom and, like other unprofessional or disruptive behavior, could warrant discipline.

IV. VIOLATIONS

A.. Seeking Information on Sexual Harassment

A member of the University community who seeks information regarding sexual harassment and this Policy may contact:

Women's Resource Center staff

the Anti-Discrimination Judicial Board Coordinator

the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring

the administrator in charge (e.g., chairperson, director, dean, vice president) of the relevant academic or support unit

the Faculty Grievance Official

the Coordinator of the Employee Assistance Program

the Associate Dean for Graduate Student Welfare

the Director of Human Resources

the Director or the Coordinator of Sexual Assault Safety Education of the MSU Counseling Center

University Undergraduate Division staff

the Ombudsman

Residence Hall Directors

the Director of Student Life

the Director of the Student Employment Office

Unit administrators who need help in applying this Policy should contact: the Director of Human Resources or the Assistant Provost/Assistant Vice President for Academic Human Resources, whichever is appropriate; the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring; or the Office of the General Counsel.

B. Complaining about Sexual Harassment

A member of the University community who wishes to complain about sexual harassment by an employee or student of the University should take the following action:

* If the alleged harasser is a faculty or staff member, the complaint should be made, orally or in writing, to the alleged harasser's unit administrator or to the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring.

* If the alleged harasser is the unit administrator, the complaint should be made, orally or in writing, to the unit administrator's superior or to the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring.

* If the alleged harasser is a student, the complaint should be made to the Office of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs and Services.

For the University most effectively to investigate and respond to alleged sexual harassment, the complaint should be made as promptly as possible after the alleged sexual harassment occurs.

A member of the University community who believes that she or he has been sexually harassed may also elect to file a complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Judicial Board for violation of the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy or to file a grievance against the alleged harasser under applicable University procedures. The submission of such a complaint or grievance does not affect the University's ability to take disciplinary or other administrative action even though the complaint or grievance is still pending.

Reports of sexual assault and other crimes should be directed to the University's Department of Police and Public Safety, regardless of whether the matter is also reported as sexual harassment.

C. Processing Complaints

Complaints of alleged sexual harassment made to the Office of Judicial Affairs, Division of Student Affairs and Services, will be processed under the applicable student disciplinary code.

Complaints of alleged sexual harassment made to the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring will be referred to the unit administrator of the alleged harasser or, if the alleged harasser is the unit administrator, to the unit administrator's superior. Complaints made or referred to the unit administrator of the alleged harasser or the unit administrator's superior will be processed by those individuals.

Each complaint of sexual harassment must be evaluated with reference to the pertinent circumstances. On occasion, a complaint will be resolved informally. Other complaints will result in investigations, including interviews and the review of documentary material. Both the complainant and the alleged harasser will be notified of the outcome of an investigation. If an investigation results in a determination that sexual harassment has occurred, the University will take remedial, including, where appropriate, disciplinary, action.

In processing sexual harassment complaints, the responsible administrator will normally confer with the Office of the General Counsel and academic or human resources administrators. Guidelines for investigating allegations of sexual harassment are available to administrators.

Members of the University community are expected to cooperate in investigations of alleged sexual harassment by University officials.

D. Sexual Harassment by Third Parties

If a University student believes that she or he has been sexually harassed in a University academic program by an individual who is not a University employee or student, the student should report the alleged sexual harassment to the unit administrator (department chair or dean) responsible for that academic program or to the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring.

If a University employee (including a student employee) believes that he or she has been sexually harassed within the scope of his or her employment activities by an individual who is not a University employee or student, the University employee should report the alleged sexual harassment to his or her supervisor or to the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring.

If the University determines that a third party has sexually harassed a University student in a University academic program or a University employee within the scope of her or his employment, the University will take corrective action. Individuals who are not students or employees of the University are not subject to discipline under the University's internal processes, however.

A member of the University community who believes that he or she has been sexually harassed by a University contractor in the execution of a University contract or engagement may also elect to file a written complaint with the Anti-Discrimination Judicial Board for violation of the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy.

E. Confidentiality

To the extent permitted by law, the confidentiality of all persons involved in a sexual harassment investigation or complaint will be observed, except insofar as information needs to be disclosed so that the University may effectively investigate the matter or take corrective measures.

F. Retaliation

Persons who complain about sexual harassment, or who cooperate in the University's investigation and handling of sexual harassment reports or complaints, shall not be subject to retaliation for complaining or cooperating, whether or not the University finds that there was sexual harassment. If a complainant or witness believes that she or he is being subjected to
retaliation, she or he should promptly contact the Director of Human Resources (staff), the Assistant Provost/Assistant Vice President for Academic Human Resources (faculty and academic staff), the Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs (students), or the Director of the Office of Affirmative Action Compliance and Monitoring (faculty, staff, or students).

G. False Complaints

Any member of the University community who knowingly files a false complaint of sexual harassment, or who knowingly provides false information to or intentionally misleads University officials who are investigating a complaint of alleged sexual harassment, is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge for employees and suspension for students.

V. OTHER RELEVANT UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Since sexual harassment is a form of unlawful gender discrimination, a member of the University community who violates this Policy also violates the University's Anti-Discrimination Policy. Other University policies relevant to behavior of a sexual nature by members of the University community include Conflict of Interest in Educational Responsibilities Resulting from Consensual Amorous or Sexual Relationships, Conflict of Interest in Employment, Article 2.00 of the General Student Regulations, Article 3.00 of the Graduate and Undergraduate Residence Hall Regulations, and Ordinance 22.00.

MSU Policies on Teaching

CODE OF TEACHING RESPONSIBILITY

This policy was approved by the Academic Council on November 4, 1969 and the Academic Senate on November 19, 1969; it was subsequently revised by Academic Council on May 19, 1976, February 27, 1996, and April 19, 2005 (effective Fall semester 2005).

Satisfaction of teaching responsibilities by instructional staff members (herein referred to as instructors) is essential to the successful functioning of a university. This University conceives these responsibilities to be so important that performance by instructors in meeting the provisions of this Code shall be taken into consideration in determining salary increases, tenure, and promotion.

1. **Course content:** Instructors shall be responsible for ensuring that the content of the courses they teach is consistent with the course descriptions approved by the University Committee on Curriculum and the Academic Council. Instructors shall direct class activities toward the fulfillment of course objectives and shall evaluate student performance in a manner consistent with these objectives.

2. **Course syllabi:** Instructors shall be responsible for distributing a course syllabus (either in print or electronic form) at the beginning of the semester. The syllabus shall minimally include:
   (a) instructional objectives;
   (b) instructor contact information and office hours;
   (c) grading criteria and methods used to determine final course grades;
   (d) date of the final examination and tentative dates of required assignments, quizzes, and tests, if applicable;
   (e) attendance policy, if different from the University attendance policy and especially when that attendance policy affects student grades; and
   (f) required and recommended course materials to be purchased, including textbooks and supplies.

3. **Student Assessment and Final Grades:** Instructors shall be responsible for informing students, in a timely manner so as to enhance learning, of the grading criteria and methods used to determine grades on individual assignments. Instructors shall be responsible for assessing a student's performance based on announced criteria and on standards of academic achievement. Instructors shall submit final course grades in accordance with University deadlines.

4. **Testing Documents:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning to students student answers to quizzes, tests, and examinations with such promptness to enhance the learning experience. Instructors shall retain final examination answers for at least one semester to allow students to review or to retrieve them. All testing questions (whether on quizzes, tests, or mid-semester or final examinations) are an integral part of course materials, and the decision whether to allow students to retain them is left to the discretion of the instructor.

5. **Term Papers and Comparable Projects:** Instructors shall be responsible for returning to students student term papers and other comparable projects with sufficient promptness to enhance the learning experience. Term papers and other comparable projects are the property of students who prepare them. Instructors shall retain such unclaimed course work for at least one semester to allow students to retrieve such work. Instructors have a right to retain a copy of student course work for their own files.

6. **Class Meetings:** Instructors shall be responsible for meeting their classes regularly and at scheduled times. To allow units to take appropriate action, instructors shall notify their units if they are to be absent and have not made suitable arrangements regarding their classes.

7. **Applicability of the Code of Teaching Responsibility to Student Assistants:** Instructors of courses in which assistants are authorized to perform teaching, grading, or other instructional functions shall be responsible for acquainting such individuals with the provisions of this Code and for monitoring their compliance.

8. **Instructor Accessibility to Students:** Instructors shall be responsible for being accessible to students outside of class time and therefore shall schedule and keep office hours for student conferences. Office hours should be scheduled at times convenient to both students and instructors with the additional option of mutually convenient prearranged appointments for students whose schedules conflict with announced office hours. Each teaching unit shall determine the minimum number of office hours for instructors in that unit. Instructors who serve as academic advisors also shall be responsible for maintaining appropriate office hours before and during enrollment periods. In addition to office hours, instructor accessibility through e-mail and other means is encouraged.

9. **Commercialization of Course Notes and Materials:** The University prohibits students from commercializing their notes of lectures and University-provided class materials *without the written consent of the instructor*. Instructors may allow commercialization by including permission in the course syllabus or other written statement distributed to all students in the class.

Hearing Procedures

1. Students may register complaints regarding an instructor's failure to comply with the provisions of the *Code of Teaching Responsibility* directly with that instructor.

2. Students may also take complaints directly to teaching units' chief administrators or their designates. If those persons are unable to resolve matters to the student's satisfaction, they are obligated to transmit written complaints to unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A copy of any complaint transmitted shall be sent to the instructor. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the student and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

3. Complaints coming to the University Ombudsman will be reported, in writing, to chief administrators of the teaching units involved when in the Ombudsman's opinion a hearing appears necessary. It will be the responsibility of chief administrators or their designates to inform the instructor and to refer such unresolved complaints to the unit committees charged with hearing such complaints. A written report of the action or recommendation of such groups will be forwarded to the University Ombudsman, to the student, and to the instructor, normally within ten working days of the receipt of the complaint.

4. Students wishing to appeal a teaching unit action or recommendation may do so as outlined in *Academic Freedom Report for Students at Michigan State University*, *Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities*, *or* *Medical Student Rights and Responsibilities*.

Such complaints must normally be initiated no later than the middle of the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred. Exceptions shall be made in cases where the involved instructor or student is absent from the University during the semester following the one wherein alleged violations occurred.

Rights and Responsibilities of the Student

1. The student is responsible for learning the content of a course of study according to standards of performance established by the faculty and for adhering to standards of professional behavior established by the faculty.
2. The student has a right to academic evaluations which represent the course instructor's good faith judgments of performance. Course grades shall represent the instructor's professional and objective evaluation of the student's academic performance. The student shall have the right to know all course requirements, including grading criteria, and procedures at the beginning of the course. Course evaluation procedures are covered by the *Code of Teaching Responsibility*. (To overcome the presumption of good faith, it must be demonstrated that an evaluation was based entirely or in part upon factors that are inappropriate or irrelevant both to academic performance and applicable professional standards.)
3. The student shares with the faculty the responsibility for maintaining the integrity of scholarship, grades, and professional standards.
4. The student shall be free to take reasoned exception to information and views offered in the classroom, and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, without fear of penalty.
5. The student's behavior in the classroom shall be conducive to the teaching and learning process for all concerned.
6. The student has a right to be governed by educationally justifiable academic regulations and professional standards.
7. The student has a right to accurate, timely, and clearly stated information concerning general academic requirements for establishing and maintaining an acceptable academic standing, the student's academic relationship with the University and the details of any special conditions which may apply, and graduation requirements for the student's academic program. Students are responsible for informing themselves of University, college, department, and school requirements as stated in unit publications and in the University catalog. In planning to meet such requirements, students are responsible for consulting with their academic advisors.
8. The student has a right to protection against improper disclosure of information concerning academic performance and personal characteristics such as values, beliefs, organizational affiliations, and health.
9. The student has a right to be protected from personal exploitation and to receive recognition for scholarly assistance to faculty.

10 The student has a right to scholarly relationships with faculty based on mutual trust and civility.

Protection of Scholarship and Grades

The principles of truth and honesty are fundamental to the educational process and the academic integrity of the University; therefore, no student shall:

1. Claim or submit the academic work of another as one's own.
2. Procure, provide, accept or use any materials containing questions or answers to any examination or assignment without proper authorization.
3. Complete or attempt to complete any assignment or examination for another individual without proper authorization.
4. Allow any examination or assignment to be completed for oneself, in part or in total, by another without proper authorization.
5. Alter, tamper with, appropriate, destroy or otherwise interfere with the research, resources, or other academic work of another person.
6. Fabricate or falsify data or results.

Integrity of Scholarship and Grades

The following statement of University policy was approved by the Academic Council and the Academic Senate, and serves as the definitive statement of principle and procedure to be used in instances of academic dishonesty.

1. The principles of truth and honesty are recognized as fundamental to a community of teachers and scholars. The university expects that both faculty and students will honor these principles and in doing so protect the validity of University grades. This means that all academic work will be done by the student to whom it is assigned, without unauthorized aid of any kind. Instructors, for their part, will exercise care in the planning and supervision of academic work, so that honest effort will be positively encouraged.
2. If any instance of academic dishonesty is discovered by an instructor, it is his or her responsibility to take appropriate action. Depending on his or her judgment of the particular case, he or she may give a failing grade to the student on the assignment or for the course.
3. In instances where only a failing grade in a course is given for academic dishonesty, the instructor will notify the student's academic dean in writing of the circumstances.
4. The student who receives a failing grade based on a charge of academic dishonesty may appeal a judgment made by a department, school, or a college to either the University Academic Integrity Review Board, University Graduate Judiciary, or University Graduate-Professional Judiciary, depending on student level.
5. When in the judgment of the academic dean, action other than, or in addition to, a failing grade is warranted, the dean will refer the case for judicial review.
6. In instances of academic dishonesty where the instructor feels that action other than, or in addition to, a failing grade in the course is warranted, the instructor will report the case to his or her departmental or school chairperson and to the hearing board of the college within which the violation is alleged to have occurred, which shall have original jurisdiction.

MSU Policies on Graduate Assistants

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities (GSRR): Article 2.5

2.5.1 Colleges and departments/schools are responsible for establishing orientation and in-service training programs for all graduate students in teaching roles. Such programs shall include an introduction to course goals, grading criteria and practice, and classroom procedures as well as

periodic classroom visitation. The graduate student in a teaching role is held responsible for full and active participation in all such programs.

2.5.2 Graduate students who are involved in teaching roles are expected to fulfill effectively their assigned responsibilities at a high level of performance. To gain feedback for monitoring and increasing their teaching effectiveness, such graduate students shall use, where applicable, confidential instructional rating reports in each course that they teach. These reports shall be submitted to the unit in accordance with the stated policy of the Academic Council.

2.5.2.1 The coordinator of each course staffed by graduate students in teaching roles shall submit each semester to the unit administrator or to the appropriate unit committee a formal written evaluation of each of the graduate students in teaching roles. After notifying the graduate student, appropriate members of the department/school should visit and observe the student's teaching in the instructional setting, and information from these visits and observations should be used in the evaluation.

2.5.2.2 The graduate student instructional rating reports (or summaries thereof), formal written evaluations, and any supplementary information shall be placed in a confidential file for use by the student and by faculty members in accordance with 2.5.2.3. This material shall remain on active file until the graduate student's teaching role is terminated, after which a copy of the file becomes the graduate student's personal property upon request. If evaluations or summaries of them are kept beyond the student's tenure at the University, these records should be altered so as to be anonymous.

2.5.2.3 Evaluation material described in 2.5.2.2 may be used in overall evaluations and in determining such matters as renewal or assistantships, teaching assignments, recommendations, and the need for further training.

2.5.2.4 An evaluation of teaching shall be given to the graduate student who has a teaching role at least once each year.

Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities: Article 4

4.1 Classes of Support

4.1.1 Students receiving support through the University fall primarily into three classes:
(a) graduate assistants
(b) University employees
(c) fellowship, scholarships and grant recipients

4.2 Graduate Assistants

4.2.1 Graduate assistants are graduate students currently enrolled in degree programs who are appointed through established University procedures and according to University policy governing graduate assistantships. Duties assigned to graduate assistants may include (but not be limited to) classroom instruction, student advising, writing supervision, reading of papers and examinations, and research. The responsibilities delegated to a graduate assistant must be performed under the supervision of an appropriate faculty member or administrator.

4.2.2 With the participation of graduate student representatives, each unit appointing graduate assistants shall develop policies and make available current information covering, but not limited to, the following:
(a) criteria for selecting new graduate assistants
(b) criteria for renewing and/or continuing graduate assistantships

(c) stipends
(d) stipend advancement and promotion
(e) tax status of stipends (according to IRS policy)
(f) procedures for evaluating performance
(g) length of term of appointment, including continuance and renewal of graduate assistantships
(h) work load, duties, and vacation schedules
(i) grievance procedures

4.2.3 By April 15th of each calendar year, units shall advise each graduate assistant in writing of one (or more) of the following: (a) that the assistantship will be renewed for the following academic year; (b) that the assistantship will be renewed provided the assistant is able to meet certain specified conditions; (c) that the assistantship will be renewed provided the unit is able to meet certain specified conditions; (d) that the assistantship will not be renewed for the following academic year. If the assistantship is not renewed, the reasons shall be indicated. When citing (c) above, the unit shall include the date the student will be notified about its decision to renew the assistantship for the appropriate semester (s). Evaluative judgments about students should be communicated in accordance with guidelines in 2.4.8.(See all Sections 2.5.2.3-2.5.2.4.)

4.24 The Office of the Provost shall establish a campus-wide policy for graduate assistant stipends, taking into account (a) the amount of stipend adequate in relation to the current cost of living, (b) the need to be competitive with other universities, and (c) the availability of resources for graduate assistant stipends. (The Office of the Provost shall consult with the Dean of The Graduate School and the University Graduate Council on graduate assistant stipend levels.

4.2.5 Graduate assistants are entitled to all benefits normally accorded to full-time graduate students, except as specified under policies established in accordance with 4.2.7.

4.2.6 All graduate assistants are entitled to such clerical-secretarial help and supplies as are commensurate with their assigned responsibilities and the resources of the unit.

4.2.7 The Office of the Provost and the Office of the Vice President for Finance and Operations, in consultation with the Dean of the Graduate School and the University Graduate Council and other appropriate, duly authorized authorities, shall review and publish policies for graduate assistants relating to (a) sick leave, (b) parking privileges, (c) bus privileges, (d) travel off campus, (e) insurance, and (f) health care.

4.2.8 Within the constraints of their training, experience and responsibilities, graduate assistants have a right to the same professional respect as that accorded to regular faculty.

4.4 Fellowship, Scholarship and Grant Recipients

4.4.1 A graduate student supported by a fellowship, scholarship, or grant shall have a right to such information as (a) the responsibilities and performance required for retention of support, (b) the privileges and status associated with support, and (c) grievance procedures.

4.5 University Policies Relating to Graduate Student Support Recipients

4.5.1 Michigan State University and all of its units are Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employers. Therefore, (a) discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, gender, national origin, political persuasion, sexual preference, marital status, handicap or age is expressly prohibited; (b) employment appointment policies shall be consistent with anti-discrimination policies of Michigan State University.

4.5.2 Graduate students shall be informed of all employment policies when a position is tendered.

4.5.3 The University retains the right to demote, suspend, terminate or otherwise discipline graduate students receiving support through the University for cause and for failure to meet their responsibilities. The University also retains the right to terminate a graduate student's participation in an academic program, which in turn may terminate the graduate student's assistantship or other support. Graduate students who believe they have a grievance under this article may utilize the judicial procedures outlined in Article 5.

4.5.3.1 In cases where the graduate student contends that the action of the University may cause irreparable harm, the graduate student may appeal to the appropriate judiciary for an expedited hearing.

Policy on TA Relationships with Student Athletes

Michigan State University enrolls more than 700 student athletes who participate in 25 intercollegiate sports. The men and women who participate are not only competitive athletes in their respective sports but also students who are here to obtain an education. MSU has a strong commitment to their success, both on the field and in the classroom. To contribute to their success, we need to understand some basic facts about the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and the Big Ten Conference regulations governing athletes and the several MSU policies and practices designed to keep them within the regulations while recognizing the special burdens created by competition.

The NCAA and Big Ten Conference regulations cover all aspects of recruiting, academic eligibility, and treatment of matriculated athletes. From the standpoint of a TA, there are two guidelines to remember:

1. You cannot do anything for a student-athlete that you would not do for another student in a similar situation. On the other hand, you should not refuse to do something just because the student **is** an athlete, if you would do it for another student.

2. There are some things that you **can do** for an individual student that you **cannot do** for an individual student-athlete: for example, you can't buy the athlete a cup of coffee or give them a ride home. Anything that can be viewed as a perk, and is outside the bounds of acceptable scholarship aid, is prohibited when done by anyone affiliated with the University.

SOME ACADEMIC "DO'S" FOR ATHLETES:

ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORTS: These reports are sent by the Registrar's Office three times per semester. If you are responsible for teaching a course and receive the forms, please respond as fully as possible. The Student-Athlete Support Service Office is charged with monitoring academic progress for athletes, and needs the information in a timely way. If you are assisting in a course, and have concerns about a student-athlete, inform the assigned faculty member who can recommend assistance.

ACADEMIC ADVISING: Intercollegiate Athletics does not provide academic advising. Students are advised by advisors in their majors or in the University Undergraduate Division or by the assistant/associate dean of the college and should be referred to these sources. However, student athletes can receive additional academic support from Student-Athlete Support Services and the Department of Intercollegiate Athletics, e.g., assignment to a study hall, a tutor or referral to additional services on campus.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: Student athletes are permitted to miss class in order to compete in official events or games. Athletic Council has recommended that competition schedules be so constructed as to limit the number of missed days to seven per semester. (This may not always be possible.) Each student should bring a team schedule to you or to the faculty supervisor at the beginning of the semester to verify the excused absences. However, an excused absence does not excuse the student from completing the work assigned.
[Student-athletes are frequently advised to schedule classes with mandatory attendance policies in their off-season or in summer.]

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT CONTACTS: Coaches are not permitted to call instructors or TAs assigned to courses. Student-Athlete Support Services or the college/department/UUD academic advisor may appropriately contact you about student progress, attendance, or behavioral matters. However, any undue attempt to influence your judgment or secure a particular action on behalf of a student-athlete should be reported immediately to your faculty supervisor and the department chair.

INCOMPLETES: A student-athlete must make up the coursework and have the grade entered before the first day of classes in the next semester if the course is necessary for eligibility. Administrative Action forms for changing I-grades to letter grades must not be back-dated. This eligibility-related rule is more stringent for student athletes than the University rule for all students, and can be crucial
for competition.

SOME ACADEMIC "DO'S" FOR ALL STUDENTS, INCLUDING ATHLETES:

REGISTRATION: Students must be officially registered (i.e., enrolled with fees paid) in your course. They may not just sit in. If you have any questions, please call the MSU Help Line in the Office of the Registrar (353-4678) for confirmation of enrollments. If students seem to have major problems, they should be referred to the Ombudsman (phone 353-8830).

ACADEMIC PROGRESS: If you have a concern about a student in your class, encourage the student to use office hours or to seek extra assistance from you, from faculty, or from Student-Athlete Support Services Office (355-2204). Students academically at risk probably need special attention.

PRIVACY OF RECORDS: The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) prohibits dissemination of any information about a student's academic progress to anyone but the student, the student's advisor, the Student-Athlete Support Services Office and the Intercollegiate Athletic Office. This includes Mom and Dad; no information is given unless the student has provided a written provision to do so. As a graduate student, your rights to privacy are protected by that same law.

EXAMINATIONS: If you must give a make-up exam, talk with your faculty supervisor and discuss the process with the student. The make-up exam should be parallel in terms of content and expectations, though the particular format and questions may be different.

WITHDRAWALS: All students may withdraw until the middle of a term. Withdrawal beyond that point requires approval from the Assistant Dean, based on extenuating circumstances. Failing a course or the failure to complete assignments is not a valid reason for dropping the course past the halfway point of the semester.

GRADING POLICIES: Grading practices and procedures are governed by University policy (see the Academic Programs book, Pages 50-53). Instructors are responsible for informing students at

the beginning of the semester of the bases for grading in their classes and for assuring that the assessment is related to the student's academic performance. Any "options" offered (e.g., extra credit) must be available to all students. After grades are recorded, the only basis for submitting a grade change is instructor error. No "extra credit" nor additional tests or assignments can be given once a class is over to produce a different grade.

Remember, student athletes are under tremendous pressure to perform athletically and academically. They are governed by NCAA and Big Ten Conference rules that set strict standards for them and for the universities in which they are enrolled. These students deserve to participate in all of the academic opportunities that MSU has to offer. As an MSU TA, you are in a position to assist these students, and all students in your courses, to achieve academic excellence.

Thank you for your important role in providing quality undergraduate education at MSU. And, we wish you success in the pursuit of your own graduate program.

Policy on Conflict of Interest in Educational Responsibilities Resulting from Consensual Amorous or Sexual Relationships[1], [2]

An amorous or sexual relationship between a student and a faculty member, a graduate teaching assistant, or another University employee who has educational responsibility for that student may impair or undermine the ongoing trust needed for effective teaching, learning, and professional development. Because of the faculty member, graduate assistant, or other employee's authority or power over the student, inherently conflicting interests and perceptions of unfair advantage arise when a faculty member, graduate teaching assistant, or other employee assumes or maintains educational responsibility for a student with whom the faculty member, graduate teaching assistant, or other employee has engaged in amorous or sexual relations.

It is, therefore, the policy of Michigan State University that each faculty member, graduate teaching assistant, and other University employee who has educational responsibilities for students shall not assume or maintain educational responsibility for a student with whom the faculty member, graduate teaching assistant, or other employee has engage in amorous or sexual relations, even if such relations were consensual. Whether such amorous or sexual relationships predate the assumption of educational responsibility for the student, or arise out of the educational relationship, the faculty member, graduate teaching assistant, or other employee shall immediately disclose the amorous or sexual relationship to the relevant unit administrator, who shall promptly arrange other oversight for the student.

Policy on Religious Holidays

It has always been the policy of the university to permit students and faculty to observe those holidays set aside by their chosen religious faith. The faculty and staff should be sensitive to the observance of these holidays so that students who absent themselves from classes on these days are not seriously disadvantaged. It is the responsibility of those students who wish to be absent to arrange in advance with their instructors. It is also the responsibility of those faculty who wish to

[1] The Board of Trustees Approved this policy statement on November 8, 1996. The Board of Trustees adopted a subsequent motion which emphasized the view of the Board that consensual amorous or sexual relations between faculty and students are discouraged.

[2] Other relevant policies include "Supervision of Academic Work by Relatives" and "Conflict of Interest in Employment."

be absent to arrange in advance with their chairpersons, who shall assume the responsibility of covering their classes.

APPENDIX C

Selected Online Resources

By Topic
For a much larger list see the TA Program Website:
http://tap.msu.edu/nvgt/rescs/teaching_res.htm

Active Learning Site/Bibliographies
http://www.active-learning-site.com/bib1.htm

Berkeley Compendium: Teaching With Excellence
http://teaching.berkeley.edu/compendium/

Case Studies in Science (NSF supported Clearinghouse)
http://ublib.buffalo.edu/libraries/projects/cases/case.html

Cooperative Learning
http://www.clcrc.com/

Critical Thinking
http://www.sjsu.edu/depts/itl/

Listserve Resource
http://ctl.stanford.edu/Tomprof/index.shtml
(Absolutely one of the best sites available for current publications concerning the Academy, Teaching and Learning Issues, Professional Development, and Academic Professional Life.)

Periodicals, Resources on College Teaching
http://php.indiana.edu/~nelson1/TCHNGBKS.html (Craig Nelson's outstanding list of books and sites, How to Find out More about College Teaching and Scholarship.

Teaching (Examples of Centers' Ideas, and Tips)
http://tep.uoregon.edu/index.html
http://www.ou.edu/idp/tips/index.htm
http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm

Technology and Teaching[1]
http://www.tltgroup.org

[1] See Bates, A. W., and Gary Poole, *Effective Teaching with Technology in Higher Education: Foundations for* Success. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2003, A. B. Keating and J. Hartigai. *The Wired Professor: A Guide to Incorporating the World Wide Web in College Instruction.* New York: New York University Press, 1999, and R. Conrad & J. Donaldson, *Engaging the Online Learner*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2004.