Because issues of diversity in the classroom may not be visible, instructors should assume that they teach students who come from an array of socio-economic backgrounds and life experiences, both of which inform their individual perspectives. While some teachers bring their own life experiences to a course, we should all learn to consider and value the experiences and perspectives of students whose backgrounds differ from our own. In addition to personal diversity, teachers need to acknowledge that every classroom is filled with students who learn differently and who succeed through individual strategies. Below are some suggestions to help instructors choose materials for class, create a syllabus, select teaching and learning strategies, promote a class environment of mutual respect, and provide learning assessment and feedback that meet the needs of diverse students.

Planning for Diversity in Teaching

*Know your student population
Talk with others and read about student learning needs and successful strategies. Avoid stereotypical assumptions since every class is different.

*Plan for varied academic preparation
Provide students ways to review basic concepts before understanding new material.

*Plan for multiple ways of learning
Develop multiple approaches for difficult material so students can choose the method that helps them learn most effectively.

*Build on previous instructor's work
Use the expertise in your department as you plan a course to save time, avoid problems and select strategies which have been successful.

*Identify materials showing different perspectives
Include the contribution minorities have made to your discipline and choose materials that are relevant to student interests and career goals.

* Examine personal biases or prejudices with certain groups
Commit to learning more about and understanding the needs and perspectives of underrepresented groups.

Creating a Syllabus for Diverse Needs

*State relevance of course
Communicate your commitment to providing a respectful, helpful learning environment for all.

*Incorporate student choice
Encourage student interest, career goals and life experiences in selecting topics for papers and projects.

*Structure syllabus to be increasingly challenging
Build student confidence at beginning of course to maintain interest.

*Plan varied assessment of learning:
Provide students many ways to show you what they have learned.

*Have a grading policy that allows for recovery
Let students drop an exam or take a comprehensive exam.

*State rules for respectful classroom interchanges
Avoid value-laden language which descriminates against individuals or groups.

*Structure the course to include study groups
Provide flexible hours for peer tutoring, help sessions, web-based material and office hours.

*Include contacts for campus academic support
Provide a statement from Disability Services and, contact information for tutoring, writing support and organizations that support diverse student needs.

Selecting Strategies for Diverse Students

*Identify a variety of teaching approaches for stated objectives
Be willing to modify your approach and offer aternatives if students are having learning difficulties.

*Develop alternative learning methods for difficult material
Provide out-of-class opportunities in study groups, on line or with assigned readings and field experiences.

*Create a performance contract for students
Let students know when and what they will have to do or achieve to be successful in the course. Provide samples of various graded material to demonstrate different levels of learning.

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*Provide opportunities for students to rehearse ideas or master the material
Don't surprise students in testing. They should have frequently practiced the format and content.
*Provide opportunities for peer teaching
Organize study groups since most learning occurs outside of class.
*Use computers for self-paced learning
Course management systems that provide sample testing, audio and visual support of important concepts and peer interaction help students learn at their own pace.

Creating an Environment that Respects Diversity

*Provide direction and structure without instructor domination
Encourage new and diverse perspectives by having students discuss their understanding of the material.
*Learn student names and help class get to know each other
Address all students in the same way to avoid perceptions of different status.
*Use inclusive language
Try to use "we" and avoid terms which exclude some students.
*Be aware of body language
Give the same level of attention and eye contact to all students. Be careful of misinterpreting the body language of students from a different culture.
*Do not ignore inappropriate remarks about any person or group
Remind students of the dangers of stereotypes and bias. Treat an inappropriate comment as a learning moment by removing the comment from the student and treating it as an analytical question that must be supported by facts.
*Acknowledge own unfair or offensive mistakes and apologize
Try to learn from your mistakes and work on strategies to minimize those encounters.
*Prepare for controversial subjects
Encourage students to develop rules for respectful discussion and disagreement.
*Include collaborative learning
Help students learn from each other by rotating group tasks and encouraging individual insights as well as group cooperation and goals.

Providing Course Feedback that Meets Diverse Needs

*Schedule daily classroom assessment of student learning
Promote student preparation and self assessment by using frequent short low-stakes assessments.
*Measure different levels of expertise and ways of learning
Allow diverse students to demonstrate their understanding of the material by using a variety of assessment strategies.

*Allow students to draft and rewrite papers
Help students build confidence and writing skills. Encourage use of the writing center.
*Evaluate student work blindly
Avoid bias by having students put their name on the last page or by using a code to identify their work.
*Provide negative feedback on performance, not person
Structure assessment opportunities that help students improve and recover.
*Do a mid-semester assessment of teaching and learning
Adjust your strategies if students are having difficulty.
*Listen to what individual students need, and respond quickly and enthusiastically
Create strategies to meet an individual need and share with all students so they can also benefit from another approach.

Teaching Support Seminars Fall 2007
GRSC 7770 & ELAN 7768/69

University policy requires that all TAs receive support for their teaching. Check with your Graduate Coordinator for discipline-specific teaching support. If you have never taught at university level in the United States, you must sign up for one of the GRSC 7770 teaching support seminars or a departmental course specifically to help you develop your teaching.

If you are an international student who has not taken or achieved a score of 50 on the TSE/ SPEAK test or a 26 on the TOEFL/TAST you must sign up for ELAN 7768 where you will be given a language evaluation and placed in the appropriate teaching support seminar. You may review the full TA Policy Statement at:

http://www.isd.uga.edu/teach_asst/pdf/Fall07Policy.pdf

GRSC 7770 (96-271)
Tuesday, 9:30-11:30 am
POD contact:
Dr. Kathleen Smith
542-1355
ktsmith@uga.edu

ELAN 7768 (01-864)
Tuesday/Thursday
11:00-12:15pm

ELAN 7769 (41-866)
Tuesday/Thursday
11:00-12:15pm
Contact :
Dr. Linda Harklau
lharklau@uga.edu

**Graduate School
Excellence in Teaching Award Winners**

From left: **Floyd Shockley**, Entomology; **Ginger Rhodes**, Mathematics and Science Education; **Laura Moyer**, Political Science; **Emily Henriksen**, Microbiology; **Tarsem Purewal**, Computer Science

Every year, the Graduate School awards the Excellence in Teaching Award to five graduate teaching or laboratory assistants in recognition of their contributions to classroom teaching and to the scholarship of teaching at the Univeristy of Georgia. This year's winners have all excelled in working with undergraduates in the instructional setting and have also been active in support of teaching beyond their own classroom duties. All of them have mentored new teaching and laboratory assistants and provided leadership in encourageing others to teach well. The winners were recognized at the Honor's Day celebration at Hugh Hodgson Hall as well as at the Faculty Recognition Banquet where they received their plaques and checks for $1,000 from the Graduate School in appreciation of their dedication to teaching.

**Graduate School Teaching Portfolio
Certification
Fall Semester Deadline:**
October 26, 2007
http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teaching_assistant
Portfoliodeadlinef07.pdf

The Outstanding Teaching Award 2007

The Office of the Senior Vice-President for Academic Affairs and Provost recognizes teaching assistants throughout campus with the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Award. Each year, up to 10% of graduate students in a department are recognized for their contributions to the instructional mission of the University of Georgia. Winners are given a certificate of appreciation from Academic Affairs and are recongized at Honors Day.

Lydia Aletraris, Sociology
Edward Ashton, Mathematics
Ronita Bhattacharya, Comparative Literature
John Bishop, Language and Literacy Education
Jamie Boyd, Animal and Dairy Science
Kelly Campbell, Child and Family Development
Ariel Campbell, Foods and Nutrition
Ivy Campbell, Religion
Chandra Carpenter, Microbiology
Jien Chen, Statistics
Kelli Coleman, Crop & Soil Sciences
Christian Cotton, Department of Philosophy
Thomas Cox Hugh Hodgson School of Music
Melinda Cro, Romance Languages
Margaret DeLong, Comparative Literature
Jaime Dice, Child and Family Development
William Duncan, Institute of Ecology
Katrina Elliott, Department of Theatre and Film Studies
Michael Engles, Psychology
Joshua Enslen, Department of Romance Languages
Mark Evans, Elementary and Social Studies Education
Johnie Forsythe, Mathematics and Science Education
John Frye, Geography
Jaime Fuest, Entomology
Ruth Fung, Hugh Hodgson School of Music
Mauricio Garcia-Barrera, Educational Psychology and Instructional Technology
Todd Goen, Speech Communication
Alejandro Gomez-del-Morale, History
Daleah Goodwin, History
Angela Green, English
Martina Greiner, Management Information Systems
Tanisha Grimes, Health Promotion and Behavior
Marita Gronnvoll, Speech Communication
Sang-Deuk Ha, Cellular Biology
Bryan Hileman, English
Paul Hillier, Telecommunications
Seneca Holland, Geography
Joshua Hughes, Physics and Astronomy
Natalie Hyslop, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
Joshua Inwood, Geography
Rabia Jafri, Computer Science
Ryan Keen, Psychology
Dustin Kemp Institute of Ecology

Ellen Key, Political Science
Kyu-Bong Kim, Pharmaceutical & Biomedical Sciences
Ondra Krouse-Dismukes, English
Lisa Krueger, Plant Biology
John Andrew Lasater, Classics
Robert Lashlee, Physics and Astronomy
Allison Liljedahl, Animal & Dairy Science
James Martin, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
David Martin, Political Science
Megan McCarthy, Geography
Sean McGuire, J.M. Tull School of Accounting
Cheryl McLean, Language and Literacy Education
Suzanne Meers, Animal and Dairy Science
Carol Myers Flaute, Institute of Ecology
Steven Miller, ILSRE (Risk Management)
Nandita Mullapudi, Department of Genetics
Marina Nadal, Plant Pathology
Samuel O'Dell, Mathematics and Science Education
Kelly Orr, Anthropology
J. Stephen Pearson, Comparative Literature
Deborah Phillips, Social Work
Rachel Pinnow, Language and Literacy Education
Dave Powell, Elementary and Social Studies Education
Mary Elizabeth Purvis, Geology
Lucy Ray, Animal and Dairy Science
Heather Reel, Counseling and Human Development Services
Anne Rutter-Sekanina, Romance Languages

Lori Schnaiter, English
Matthew Schneider, Department of Philosophy
Kareem Shabana, Management
Sheree Sharpe, Mathematics
Esther Skelley, International Affairs
Todd Smith, Microbiology
Rachel Spigler, Plant Biology
Sara Steger, English
Teggin Summers, English
Drew Swanson, History
Steven Sykes, Cellular Biology
Johanna Takach, Plant Pathology
Rachel Tambling, Child and Family Development
Caitlin Teter, Hugh Hodgson School of Music
Umashanger Thayasivam, Statistics
Justin Tyson, Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
Catherine Ulrich, Mathematics and Science Education
Srividya Vasudevan, Cellular Biology
Jessica Walker, English
Julie Webb, Pathology
Yong Wei, Computer Science
Tamie Lee, Williams Language and Literacy Education
Brian Williams, Marketing & Distribution
Bradley Wimpey, Computer Science
Erin Winter, Sociology
Donald Wood, Romance Languages
Brandon Woodworth, Romance Languages
Hyunjae Yu, Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication

The Center for Teaching and Learning

The Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) is a support unit of the Office of the Vice President for Instruction. It is devoted to the advancement of instruction and faculty development at The University of Georgia. CTL sponsors a range of services and enrichment activities designed to assist faculty and teaching assistants with instructional matters. *Dr. Nelson Hilton* is the Director of CTL and *Dr. Jay Harriman* is the Associate Director. *Dr. Paul Quick and Dr. Kathleen Smith* are TA Program Co-Directors.

* Fall Orientation for GTAs and LAs
* GRSC 7770 - teaching seminar for credit
* Handbook for TAs
* TA Newsletter, semester publication on teaching
* Teaching Resource File
* Individual Consultation

* University Awards for Outstanding Teaching
* TA Mentor Program
* Instructional Technology Resources
* Teaching Seminars
* Web Resources on Teaching (http://www.isd.uga.edu/)
* Teaching Portfolio Samples and Consultation
* Certificate in University Teaching Support

GTA Newsletter is a publication of the Center for Teaching and Learning. Teaching Assistants are encouraged to submit articles for publication in this newsletter. Submissions should be forwarded to Kathleen Smith or Paul Quick, CTL.

Center for Teaching and Learning
Instructional Plaza
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602-3016

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**Teaching Support
http://www.ctl.uga.edu/**

Teaching Assistant