



2008-2009 Future Faculty Program Participants

Fifteen award-winning graduate teaching assistants from across campus were selected to participate in the Future Faculty Program, which is designed to prepare TAs for careers in higher education and is coordinated by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) in cooperation with the Graduate School.

Before the fall semester began, the Future Faculty participants helped plan and facilitate the University-wide TA Orientation, an event which provided over 420 new and returning graduate students with the tools and resources they would need to begin teaching at UGA.

Throughout the fall semester, the Future Faculty participants met to discuss effective teaching techniques that foster student learning and to share resources and ideas about teaching to take back to their respective departments. In addition to building individual teaching portfolios, the participants interacted with experts from across campus who spoke about current and emerging topics in higher education. Sharon Claffey from Psychology, Janet Frick from Psychology, Peggy Brickman from Plant Biology, and Todd Goen from Speech Communications (and a former participant in this program) formed a panel to discuss ways to actively engage classes of 60 or more students. Jodi Holschuh, from the Division of Academic Enhancement, spoke about her research and the relationship between learning theory and the nature of the undergraduate learner and their epistemological beliefs. Sherry Clouser, from the Center for Teaching and Learning, combined an overview of Dreamweaver and WebCT



Front Row (left to right): **Michele Parker**, Child and Family Development; **Patti Davis**, Psychology; **Jennifer Malto**, History; **Michelle Samuel-Foo**, Entomology; **Sarah Jardaleza**, Plant Biology; **Shannon Whitlock**, English; **Tina Bell**, Genetics; **Carolyn Alford**, Music.

Back Row (left to right): **Adam Schneider**, Physics and Astronomy; **Pooya Shareghi**, Computer Science; **Neely Heidorn**, Animal and Dairy Science; **Mahamadou Diaby-Kassamba**, Romance Languages; **Daniel Bulger**, Geology; **Jeff Kilpatrick**, Linguistics; **Carly Jordan**, Cellular Biology.

with ideas for how to use these technologies in the classroom.

During these and other sessions, Future Faculty participants interact with guest speakers and with one another as they reflect upon how to improve their own teaching and the teaching environment for graduate students in their respective departments.

In the Spring, the participants will continue to develop a deeper understanding of teaching and learning in higher education but will also concentrate on other areas of professional development, such as the academic job search and the transition from graduate student to professor. The program will culminate with a retreat to Sapelo Island to explore what it means to be a successful faculty member. Recipients of the Outstanding Teaching Assistant and the Excellence in Teaching Awards are invited to apply for next year's program. More information about the program can be found at: http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/ta_mentors/ta_mentors.htm.

Best Use of Instructor-Supplied Lecture Notes

A frequent topic that faculty and teaching assistants often bring up at the CTL is whether or not they should post their lecture notes on the Web for their students. Some professors who have posted lecture notes on their course Web page or through WebCT complain that students subsequently either stop coming to class or stop taking notes when they are in class. Students seem to be overwhelmingly in favor of instructors posting their lecture notes online, but many instructors are ambivalent about "Webnotes" because they are uncomfortable with how students are using them.

There are legitimate reasons for giving students a copy of lecture notes before they attend class. In some disciplines, for example, giving students diagrams ahead of time frees them up to annotate the diagram and pay more attention to the instructor rather than simultaneously transcribing a diagram while also trying to listen to the lecture. Other times, the lectures themselves are so dense, or the PowerPoint slides have so much information on them, that students don't have time to copy what they see, much less listen and encode what is being said.

When preparing notes to supply to your students, remember a few important factors. First, you must determine how much in-

formation to give them. One rule of thumb is to give enough information to help them see what you consider important, but hold back on the details. These are often called, "skeletal notes." Leave it to the students to supply the elaborations and examples that you emphasize in class.

Second, organize the notes in a way that parallels your lecture. This may seem intuitive, but in one survey researchers found that one in four students had problems aligning the instructor-supplied lecture notes to the actual lecture (Pardini, Domizi, Forbes, & Pettis, 2005), causing some students to abandon the use of Webnotes in frustration.

The final and most important thing you can do as an instructor is educate your students how to use Webnotes effectively. Emphasize that relying on the supplied notes will not be adequate to succeed in the class, and that the important material will be the elaborations and examples that they will learn about in class. Better yet, incorporate activities into the lecture that will give them experience with the material in a way that they could never get through just reading the Webnotes or even the book.

Then make sure that your assessments reflect this emphasis. They will quickly learn that the class material is indispensable to their

understanding of the material.

One way to help students see what you consider important is to give them an example of one day's lecture notes, along with your own annotations and elaborations. In other words, begin with the Webnotes, and add to them as you would if you were a student in the class. This will give students a concrete example of the types of things you think they should be attending to and making note of during class. While you may think it is not your job to teach students how to learn, sadly many of them are coming from a system that has taught them that memorizing is learning. If you want your students to be able to use the material in meaningful ways, you must give them practice and model this kind of thinking. Taking good notes is a first step in this process.

Of course, posting lectures notes on the Web is just one component that can contribute to a good lecture. For ideas on how to manage the scope of lectures and how to most effectively use PowerPoint during class, visit: http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/presenting.html.

Pardini, E. A., Domizi, D. P., Forbes, D. A., & Pettis, G. V. (2005). Parallel note-taking: A strategy for effective use of Webnotes. *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, 35(2), 38-55.

Teaching Support Seminars for Spring 2009

GRSC 7770 and ELAN 7768/7769

University policy requires that all TAs receive support for their teaching. If you have never taught at the 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 speaking portion of the TOEFL Internet-based test (iBT), 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.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/TApolicy.html

GRSC 7770 (29-904)

Tuesday (9:30-11:30)
POD Contact Dr. Paul Quick
pauquick@uga.edu

ELAN 7768 (91-623)

Tuesday/Thursday (11:00-12:15)

ELAN 7769 (41-626)

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

Additional Offerings

This Spring semester, two additional teaching seminars will be offered. These courses are intended to provide opportunities for graduate students interested in further developing their teaching skills in preparation for teaching in higher education. These courses also count toward the Graduate School Interdisciplinary Certificate in University Teaching (for more information, visit: http://www.uga.edu/gradschool/academics/certificate_teaching.html).

GRSC 7770 (59-900) - Advanced: Helping Students Learn

Students will learn a variety of factors that influence teaching and learning in an attempt to discover and define what it means to be an effective college teacher. We will also discuss theory, techniques, and strategies for helping students become active learners.

(Pre-requisite: GRSC 7770 or Departmental equivalent).

Meets Tuesdays (2:00-4:45), 227 Milledge Hall

For more info and/or POD, contact Dr. Jodi Holschuh, holschuh@uga.edu

EDHI 9040 (62-115) - Using Technology in the College Classroom

The purpose of this course is to encourage participants to critically reflect on the use of instructional technologies in their fields and provide them with opportunities to develop skills in employing technology in the college classroom.

Meets Tuesdays (2:00-4:45) in different physical locations with some online meetings.

For more info and/or POD, contact Dr. Sherry Clouser, sac@uga.edu

Visit www.ctl.uga.edu for
descriptions of upcoming
teaching workshops!

Important Deadlines

Nominations for Outstanding and Excellence in Teaching Awards

Due January 16, 2009

http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/teach_asst.htm#awards

Graduate School Teaching Portfolio Nominations

Due March 17, 2009

http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/teaching_portfolio.htm

GRSC 7770 Teaching Seminar Assistantship Nominations

Due March 20, 2009

http://www.ctl.uga.edu/teach_asst/teach_asst_application.htm

The Myth of Multi-tasking

Multi-tasking has become a defining characteristic of the "Millennials," a term often used to describe students who grew up in the 1990s and 2000s (alternatively called "digital natives"). However, research calls into question whether multi-tasking, as most people understand it, is even possible. Instead of doing many things simultaneously, researchers suggest that what we are actually doing is rapidly switching our attention from one task to another (Cooper & Mari-Beffa, 2008). This task switching comes at a cost, however, because it takes time for your brain to switch back and forth between tasks. Each time the brain switches, time is lost.

A recent study looked at reading an online assignment when 1) answering a series of instant messages (IMs) first, then reading an assignment second, versus 2) getting occasional instant messages (IMs) while reading the assignment. They found that the students had similar comprehension for the material regardless of

whether or not they were breaking for IMs, but that those breaking for IMs took 50% more time to complete the reading task, even when taking into account the actual time they spent with the IMs.

You could invite your students to test this for themselves by encouraging them to try turning off all of their electronic gadgets and focusing solely on a task for a specified period of time. They may be surprised at what they can accomplish in a shorter period of time when they are not constantly breaking for emails, text messages, and Google searches.

- Cooper, S., & Mari-Beffa, P. (2008). The role of response repetition in task switching. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Human Perception and Performance*, 34(5), 1198-1211.
- Levine, L. E., Waite, B. M., & Bowman, L. L. (2007). Electronic media use, reading, and academic distractibility in college youth. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*, 10(4), 560-566.

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. Dr. Paul Quick is the TA Program Director.

- * Fall Orientation for TAs and LAs
- * GRSC 7770 - teaching seminar
- * TA Handbook
- * TA Newsletter
- * Teaching Resource File
- * Individual Consultation
- * University Awards for Outstanding Teaching
- * TA Mentor Program for Future Faculty
- * Instructional Technology Resources
- * Teaching Seminars
- * Web Resources on Teaching (<http://wwwctl.uga.edu/>)
- * Teaching Portfolio Samples and Consultation
- * University Teaching Certificate Support
- * WebCT Help Sessions

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 Paul Quick at pauquick@uga.edu or Denise Domizi at dpinette@uga.edu.

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Teaching Support
<http://wwwctl.uga.edu>