



a place of mind

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Welcome to the Department of Political Science TA Training Program 2015 – 2016!

Facilitators: Richard Togman and Yana Gorokhovskaia





One-Day Intensive Workshop Schedule

- 1. Graduate Advisor: Prof. Bruce Baum.**
- 2. Professionalism in the classroom and out: The who, what, why, where and, most importantly, for what of it all.**
- 3. Preparing for your first class: Don't panic!**
- 4. Open forum and troubleshooting: How to start some conversations and deal with difficult classroom situations.**

LUNCH

- 4. Diversity in the classroom, with Prof. Barbara Arneil.**
- 5. The BOPPPS model of teaching.**
- 6. Grading and assessment.**



Teaching and Professional Standards

- 1. Duties**
- 2. Advice**
- 3. Benefits**



Duties

- **Be well-prepared, be on time, be accessible (within reason)**
- **Make a syllabus before the start of term. Outline expectations and responsibilities.**
- **Be reasonable, fair, and accommodating (within reason)**



Advice

- **Teaching and marking can be frustrating. Don't vent online via social media.**
- **Be friendly with your students. Don't be their friend.**
- **Don't put yourself in difficult, dangerous or uncomfortable situations.**
 - Don't hesitate to let the Prof handle difficult situations like students with serious medical/emotional problems, unresolved grading issues, harassment.
 - Don't hesitate to talk to your Union Rep about issues with your work load or disagreements with your Prof.



Benefits

- **You're being paid and the Dept. expects a certain level of performance.**
- **Your performance is evaluated.**
 - Student evaluations are important for the Dept. and for developing your Teaching Portfolio.
- **Skills you develop are important and transferable to other jobs.**
- **Teaching is personally rewarding.**



Questions?



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Preparing for your first session





Expectations and the First Session

Objectives:

1.Preparation

2.First Meeting

3.Question and Answer



Before the first session: Get informed!

1. Meet with your professor & other TAs

- clarify expectations, procedures and goals of the course
- establish an open channel of communication

2. Become familiar with the course material

- what is the central purpose and/or dominant theme of the course?
- what are the course requirements, assignments and due dates?



Before the first session: Get prepared!

- When and where are the lectures and tutorials?
- When is a good time to hold office hours?
 - Remember to pick a convenient time for you to be on campus.
- Get yourself all the keys that you will need. (Brock Hall Annex)
- Stock up on the teaching materials you will need.
 - White board marker, course reader, TA copy and print code, etc. The department office will provide this.
- Make and print sign-in sheets.
 - You will NOT remember each student's attendance record. Write it down.
- Relax! You know your stuff. Confidence is key!



Before the first session: Make a plan!

A syllabus will help:

I.To set boundaries: appropriate email etiquette, grade appeals, respect in the classroom policies.

II.Outline expectations: due dates, participation grades, reading and research materials.

III.With time management: which lessons to plan, when? Allow for review sessions and marking. Make YOUR life easier.



The first meeting

- **Get to the tutorial a few minutes early.**
- **Prepare the room: put your name and contact info on the white board.**
- **Greet your students enthusiastically.**
- **Pass around an attendance sheet.**



First Session: Content

Introductions

- **Start with yourself (Name, education, research interests, why you find poli sci interesting...a hobby or something fun)**
- **Ice breakers! Yes. Get to know the students and help them get to know each other. (Games, anecdotes, desert island picks, political heroes)**
- **Start trying to remember student names now. Use their names often.**



First Session: Content

Setting Ground Rules:

- **Housekeeping: Go over class policies together.**

- 1. When are assignments due?**

- 2. What are the policies on late work or illness?**

- 3. How is attendance and participation evaluated?**

- 4. Talk about the respect rule and the importance of open discourse.**

- 5. Explain your role as a TA.**

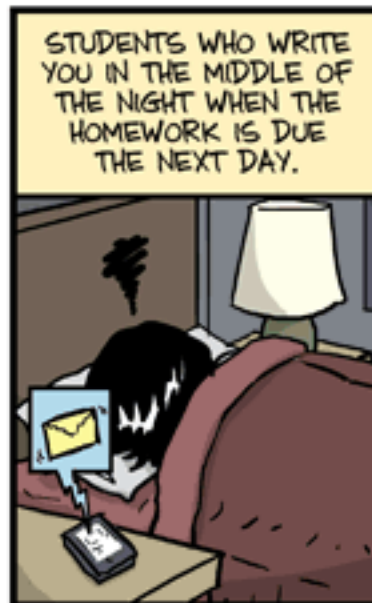


First Session: Impressions

- It is important to start building a rapport with your students from the first meeting.**
- You are an authority in the classroom but should be approachable.**
- For many undergrads, especially in the first two years, you may be the only point of personal contact in the course.**

Questions?

TEACHING PET PEEVES (PART 1)



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