University Teaching and Learning

An Instructional Resource Guide
for Teaching Assistants

The University of British Columbia
Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth
2005/2006

University Teaching and Learning

An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants

University Teaching and Learning: An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants is a publication of the UBC Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth.

UBC purchased the right to adapt and reprint this Resource Guide from:

Centre for Learning & Teaching
Dalhousie University
Halifax, Nova Scotia

The following institutions and individuals have graciously allowed us to adapt and/or use sections of their handbooks and/or resources in the current version of the Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants:

A Handbook for Graduate Student Teachers in the Humanities. Used with permission from Tonya Lambert, handbook editor, and the The Gwenna Moss Teaching & Learning Centre at the University of Saskatchewan.
http://www.usask.ca/tlc/gs_handbook/gsh_students.html

Designing and Using Visuals in the Classroom. Used with permission from the British Columbia Institute of Technology Learning and Teaching Centre.
http://www.lru.bcit.ca/resources/teachtest.shtml

Evaluating Internet Sources. Used with permission from Aleteia Greenwood, Reference Librarian at the University of British Columbia.
http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/evaluating/

Operational Definition and Goals of Effective Teaching. Used with permission from Marge Tebo-Messina, Professor of English and Director of the Teaching and Learning Center at Winthrop University.
http://www.winthrop.edu/tlc/defnadgoals.htm

TA Responsibilities. Used with permission from the Center for Teaching and Learning Services, Regents of the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities.
http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tasuper/respon.html

Teaching at Mizzou: A Guide for New Faculty, Graduate Instructors and Teaching Assistants. Teaching with Technology section, contributed by Educational Technologies at Missouri was adapted with permission from Dr. Pamela Benoit, Assistant Dean at the Graduate School, University of Missouri.
http://teachandlearn.missouri.edu/guide/chapters/technology.htm

Teaching Tips for International Graduate Teaching Assistants. Used with permission from Beth Snyder, English Language Institute of University of Texas at Arlington.
http://iep.uta.edu/ITA%20Program/Teachingtip.htm

The Dreaded Discussion: Ten Ways to Start. Authored by Peter Frederick. Reprinted with permission from College Teaching, 29(3), 109-114, Summer 1981. Permission granted by the Helen Dwight Reid Educational Foundation.

University of British Columbia * Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth *

Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund * Fall 2005

Design and Layout

Lynne Abbott, Program Assistant, Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth
Vicky Smith, Program Assistant, Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth

Contributions and Proofing Assistance

Sheryl Adams, Librarian, UBC Library
Lori Charvat, Equity Advisor, UBC Equity Office
Kele Fleming, Community of Practice Coordinator – Course Technologies, Office of Learning Technology
Aleteia Greenwood, Librarian, UBC Library
Kalev Hunt, Online Learning Specialist, The Faculty of Land and Food Systems
Peter Lane, Business Manager, CUPE Local 2278
Ann-Marie Long, Equity Advisor, UBC Equity Office
Janet Mee, Director, Access and Diversity
Jeananne Robertson, Academic Projects Coordinator, Office of the VP Academic
Karen Rolston, Associate Director, Centre for Intercultural Communication
Ellen Rosenberg, Senior Instructor, Botany
Jim Sibley, Manager, Centre for Instructional Support, Faculty of Applied Science
Craig Smith, Manager, Occupational and Research Safety
Rachel Speiran, Program Manager/Trainer, Centre for Intercultural Communication
Janet Teasdale, Director, and Staff at Student Development
Joe Zerdin, Course Technologies Support Liaison, Office of Learning Technology

From the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth

Lynne Abbott, Program Assistant
Luisa Canuto, New Faculty Support Coordinator
Judy Chan, Graduate Student Assistant
Isabeau Iqbal, Resources Developer
Jennifer Jasper, Facilitator and Instructional Developer
Janice Johnson, Facilitator and Instructional Developer
Desirée Mou, Facilitator and Instructional Developer
Gary Poole, Director
Vicky Smith, Program Assistant
Bjorn Thomson, e-Portfolio Project Liaison

UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund

The Editor and the staff of the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth wish to thank the UBC Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund for funding this Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants.

All URLs listed in this document were working at the time of publication. The printed version of this document will be updated regularly. Please visit **www.tag.ubc.ca** to download the most recent version of this document.

Welcome

Welcome to your position as a teaching assistant at the University of British Columbia!

This Resource Guide is intended to assist you with your teaching responsibilities. Many people have contributed their experience and time to its development. We trust that the ideas and recommendations presented here will help you to accomplish your tasks with increasing confidence. This is the third edition of the Resource Guide: it includes new material on the most recent developments in teaching with technology at UBC as well as entirely revised sections on teaching strategies, the creation of teaching dossiers, and several other topics. We encourage you to use it as a resource, consulting sections as you find them useful.

As part of our commitment to enhancing the teaching and learning experiences of the UBC community, we at the Center for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) offer support to all teaching assistants. We design and coordinate workshops, provide support services, and sponsor other activities specifically to meet your needs. Our job is to help you become a successful teaching assistant. We hope that this Guide will be an integral part of your progress.

Please visit us at TAG soon – we look forward to meeting you!

Janice Johnson and Luisa Canuto
Executive Editors
Center for Teaching and Academic Growth
The University of British Columbia
6326 Agricultural Road
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2

http://www.tag.ubc.ca

A Note from the Editor

As a former teaching assistant, I know how complex, demanding, and rewarding this position can be. Teaching assistants fulfill very important roles in university settings and the significance and impact of "good teaching" is evident to the students who attend our classes.

This Resource Guide offers practical information and strategies to help novice and experienced teaching assistants assume their instructional roles and responsibilities. I encourage you to use this Resource Guide as a complement to other teaching resources available on campus, such as those that may be found at the Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth or in your faculty. Please remember that the skills involved in teaching are acquired over time. Becoming more proficient at teaching involves risk-taking and a great deal of learning through practice and observation.

Best of luck with your teaching,

Isabeau Iqbal, Editor
Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth
The University of British Columbia
6326 Agricultural Road
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2

University Teaching and Learning

An Instructional Resource Guide for Teaching Assistants

Table of Contents

Responsibilities and Expectations

Teaching assistants are invaluable contributors to education at the University of British Columbia; their work includes classroom teaching, leading tutorials and laboratories, and marking.

Your job as a Teaching Assistant (TA) is both demanding and rewarding. As a TA, you will find yourself performing a variety of roles, which include teaching, facilitating, representing your department and acting as an intermediary.

Role of the TA

Teacher

Whether you instruct in classrooms, labs or tutorials, or mark essays, you are a teacher and you must help the students learn. Doing so involves much more than knowledge in your specific discipline. Teaching can be an exciting and interesting process, and there are many ways of doing it effectively. If you see your job as helping students develop their ability to learn, you will give them a different kind of experience than if you think you are just presenting subject matter or determining a mark for a test or exam.

Generally, teachers show respect for, and interest in, their students, as well as enthusiasm for their subject. TAs are still aware of what it is like to be a student; they appreciate the frustration involved in having to live by the rules of others, in being forced to meet deadlines even if they seem arbitrary or unrealistic, and in being judged by others when they are not in a position to criticize in return. Therefore, TAs are in an ideal position to treat each student as a unique and worthwhile individual. Whether in the classroom or while marking assignments, you will be helping to create the learning atmosphere for students. If you are enthusiastic, knowledgeable, helpful and fair, you will be serving your students well.

You will be teaching undergraduate students, either in classroom or laboratory settings or by marking student work. Although you are knowledgeable in your field, some aspects of the subject will be new and you will be expected to prepare carefully for each session. Don't underestimate the amount of work it takes to be well prepared. Allow yourself time to plan carefully and pay close attention to detail. The best teachers are often the ones who make the greatest effort. However, no teacher is perfect or knows everything, so don't be afraid to be wrong sometimes, or to admit it to students.

Role Model

Most graduate students are idealistic, enthusiastic, and have high standards. When TAs display these traits in their teaching, they can be ideal role models.

Representative from Your Department

Each discipline has its own methods and standards. Chemistry, for example, operates on different premises than does Philosophy. You are responsible, with the course supervisor, for establishing reasonable standards for the students, and for helping them meet these standards. This is a difficult job at the beginning, as you try to understand what you can reasonably expect of others.

Intermediary

TAs should not allow themselves to become "go-betweens" among faculty and students, although they may understand both perspectives. You can explain the rationale to the faculty member or to the students, but you must not counsel students when things are not going well. Advise the student to contact the faculty member or the department directly.

TA Relationships

The TA and the University

As a representative of the University, you are expected to maintain the standards of the University. This includes following all guidelines and rules established by the University. If you disagree with the policies of the University or the course supervisor you assist, you should discuss this privately with the supervisor and/or your TA Union representative, rather than doing so in front of students or refusing to follow the University guidelines.

The TA and the Department

TAs work as members of a department and of a faculty at UBC. They are obliged to follow the policies and the regulations within the department, and meet its standards and expectations. Make sure you are aware of, and understand, these departmental requirements.

The TA and the Supervisor

Generally, you will be working under the direction of a course instructor in your department who will determine the content and methods used for your teaching assignments: make sure you understand the faculty member's expectations. When you accept your teaching assignment, you share responsibility for this class.

The TA and the Students

Although you are hired by the University, you are ultimately responsible to the students. You must do your best for them.

You must be fair and honest and do nothing to exploit your position of power over the students. All students must be treated with equal respect. Private bias and disparaging remarks should never be tolerated.

Checklist for TAs and Course Supervisors

It is advisable to determine, as soon as possible, what your supervising faculty member's expectations are and to establish the range of responsibilities you will have for the semester. Responsibilities will vary from professor to professor and across departments; some individuals will have well-established roles and responsibilities for their TAs, while others may not.

The following checklist and subsequent pages can be used to help facilitate a discussion between TAs and their supervising faculty member. Its purpose is to help you clarify expectations and responsibilities. You can write 'N/A' where items do not apply to your position. Both the TA and faculty member may wish to keep a copy of the information.

Overview of Primary Responsibilities

The TA will be responsible for:

__ working ____(number of hours) per week See Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) 2278 Collective Agreement article 12.02 (a) at
http://www.cupe2278.ca/documents/agreement_02-05.doc

__ holding office hours

__ attending lectures

__ keeping class records

__ creating/selecting class materials

__ presenting new material/lecturing

__ leading discussions/answering questions

__ conducting review sessions

__ holding tutorial sessions

__ duplicating materials

__ preparing/collecting solutions to questions

__ grading/providing feedback on assignments and exams

__ assigning course grades

__ ordering, obtaining AV equipment/materials

__ setting up the lab

__ running recitation or lab section(s)

__ demonstrating procedures or setting up demonstrations

__ cleaning the lab

__ others (see following pages)

It is important that you determine how many hours you should allocate for class time, laboratories, office hours, preparation, grading and other duties. By reviewing the following pages, and determining which duties you will be taking on, you will be able to better plan your time and perform your responsibilities.

Course Overview

- What are the course goals/objectives?
- Who are the students (background with subject, level, class list, etc.)?
- What are the names/emails/phone numbers of other TAs assigned to this course?
- What is the procedure to follow if you are ill or must miss a class/lab?
- What is the workload distribution among TAs assigned to the course?

Initial Tasks

- What are you expected to do prior to the first class meeting?
- Are you expected to attend the first class meeting?

TA/Supervisor Meetings

- How frequently will you meet with the professor/supervisor?
- How can you be contacted by the professor/supervisor?

  __ office phone: _____

  __ home phone: _____

  __ e-mail: _____

  __ note on office door: _____ (office number: _____)

  __ note in laboratory: _____ (laboratory location: _____)

  __ note in box _____

- How can the professor/instructor be contacted?

  __ office phone: _____

  __ home phone: _____

  __ e-mail: _____

  __ note on office door: _____ (office number: _____)

  __ note in laboratory: _____ (laboratory location: _____)

  __ note in box _____

It is advisable to take home the contact info for the supervisor and other TAs (if there are any) so that you know who to get in touch with in case of illness or emergencies.

Materials

Textbook/laboratory manual:

- How can you obtain a copy?

Other materials:

- If you are responsible for putting materials on reserve, what procedure do you need to follow?
- Will the course have a WebCT or another Internet site? (If so, make sure you have access to it.)
  - Find out who maintains and monitors it and who to contact for technical problems.
  - In what way are the students expected to use it?
- Are you expected to read all class materials and answer student questions regarding these materials?
  - Find out who to contact for course content problems.

Class Meetings

- How often are you expected to attend class?

  ___ every class

  ___ exams only

  ___ not required to attend any classes

  ___ other

- If you are expected to attend classes, at what time are you expected to arrive?
- What responsibilities will you have with respect to the class meeting?

  ___ answer questions at the beginning, middle or end of class

  ___ distribute/collect assignments and/or handouts

  ___ take notes on the lecture

  ___ lead discussion(s), facilitate activities

  ___ notify students of class cancellations

  ___ set up/run AV/lab equipment

___ lecture/present material (will professor be available for assistance?)

___ clarify class/university policies (lateness, assignment/test make-up, cheating, etc.)

Office Hours

- Does the professor/instructor hold office hours? __ yes __ no
  - If yes, where and when?
- Are you expected to hold weekly office hours? __ yes __ no
  - If yes, where and when?
- How will students be notified of the location and times of your office hours?

Other Student Contact Responsibilities

- How will students contact you?
- If you are working in a lab, it is not always wise to give out your lab phone number. We *strongly recommend* that you *never* give out your home phone number. An email list or WebCT bulletin board is an easy mechanism for building community/answering questions.
- Are you expected to:

  ___ conduct review or help sessions?

  ___ tutor individuals or groups (beyond office hours)?
- If so, when and where?

Technology

- Are you expected to reserve, obtain and return AV, computer or laboratory equipment?
  - If so, what equipment will be needed and when will it be needed?
  - Where is this equipment located?
  - Is there a charge, form or project number that should be used when reserving equipment?

Photocopying

- Are you expected to photocopy materials for the course?
  - If so, what materials will need to be photocopied and where are they located?
- Are you expected to bring photocopied materials to class?

- If you are responsible for photocopying, where should it be done?

  ___ in departmental office?

  - Will you be provided with a code?

- Are you required to bring the photocopying to:

  ___ a departmental secretary?

  ___ a duplicating service on campus?

- How much lead time is needed?

- What is the procedure?

Assignments

- What kind of assignments are students expected to complete?

- Are due dates and late-acceptance policy specified in the syllabus?

- How can you obtain a copy of department policies on grading, plagiarism, and so on, and a copy of university policies that directly affect instruction?

- Find out who is responsible for marking schemes and grading rubrics.

- Make sure you know the mechanism for grade complaints and articulate this to your class.

- With respect to assignments, what responsibilities will you have?

  ___ preparing

  ___ collecting

  ___ grading/recording scores

  ___ giving feedback

  ___ instructing students about specific formats

Exams

- When will exams be held?

- Approximately how many questions and of what type will you be expected to create for each exam?

  - By when?

- Will the professor/ instructor review the questions you create?

- What resources are available to assist you in preparing questions (e.g.: sample questions, old exams, test banks)?
- Are you expected to score/grade exams?
  - By when?
- Who establishes grading criteria?
- Are you expected to proctor exams?
- Will the professor/instructor attend exams?
- Are you expected to bring exams to the exam session?
- Are you expected to bring other materials to the exam session?

Administration/Grading

- What responsibilities will you have with respect to administration and grading?

  ___ enforce academic misconduct rules

  ___ assign grades/make recommendations for grading

  ___ keep class records. If so, when must they be turned in?

  ___ tabulate grades. If so, when must they be turned in?

  ___ fill out and/or submit grade sheets. If so, when must they be turned in?

  ___ post scores /grades. If so, when and where?

TA Performance Evaluation/Feedback

- What manner of performance evaluation can you expect?

  ___ formal observation/evaluation from faculty/instructor

  ___ peer observation

  ___ student ratings

- When will evaluation(s) be given?

  ___ at mid-semester

  ___ at semester's end

  ___ at the TA's request

___ when there is a problem

___ informally during the semester as part of regular meetings

- Student evaluation of TA's performance will be:

___ When? Who will receive copies?

Course Evaluation

- What manner of evaluation will be conducted regarding the course and the instructor/professor?
- Who gets copies of the results?

Other

-
-
-

Reference:

The Center for Teaching and Learning Services. (2003). TA Responsibilities. Retrieved August 19, 2004, from Regents of the University of Minnesota website: **http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tasuper/respon.html**

Checklist Complete?

The Teaching Environment

Building a successful teaching environment depends on both teachers and students; however, the initial responsibility for achieving this state falls on the teacher – in this case, you, the teaching assistant. In your leadership position, you will be responsible for building an atmosphere of mutual respect among the students and between you and the students. This cannot be established instantly and requires hard work, a genuine interest in teaching, and a concern for others.

There are some general suggestions worthy of consideration as you engage in teaching:

- Do not forget what it is like to be a student. Try to remember the first time you entered a laboratory or stood in front of a tutorial group. This may help you appreciate some of the challenges faced by the students.

- Have realistic expectations of students. Most students are ambitious: they want to succeed, and they will respond to the challenges you present. Those students who truly don't care (and there are some) can only be encouraged to the extent that they allow.

- Remember your favourite teachers and what you liked about them; then try to identify which techniques made their teaching most effective. Consider how you can incorporate these techniques into your own teaching.

Characteristics of an Effective Instructor

An effective teacher is a scholar who encourages enthusiasm about the subject matter, shares knowledge, uses appropriate techniques, and shows a concern for learners. The effective teacher does all this in such a way as to leave learners with the assurance and belief that they have benefited from their instruction. No one-sentence definition, however, can truly depict the range of talents and efforts that go into effective teaching.

Nevertheless, effective teaching can be described and analyzed in four broad areas:

Course Development and Design

Effective teachers:

- Are goal oriented; they have well articulated goals which are clearly reflected in the course requirements. These goals can be articulated at several levels (long-term, end-of-semester, class-by-class).

- Provide course outlines which are clear and indicate that the content coverage is suitable to the goals of the course.

- Plan opportunities for students to use and develop critical-thinking skills that require them to synthesize, analyze, and evaluate a body of information.

- Develop course materials that enable students to learn important aspects or master particular skills of a discipline for both short- and long-term intellectual enrichment.

Course Conduct

Effective teachers:

- Keep current with new developments, not only in their own area of specialization, but also as a part of a larger discipline.
- Actively engage students in the material. Students regularly participate in discipline-specific activities.
- Are concerned about their students. They keep communication lines open through office hours and other formal and informal means of being available to the students. One faculty member put it succinctly: "Good teachers like their students".
- Are flexible and provide an appropriate variety of learning methods and experiences. They are willing to change plans, syllabi, and approaches to adjust to student needs and responses. They are able to do this without compromising the goals and quality of the course.
- Are enthusiastic about the material they teach and try to inspire enthusiasm in the students. Many faculty interviewed regarded this as the most important element of good teaching.
- Require students to use critical thinking skills.
- Have high expectations for student learning. They encourage students by setting challenging but achievable goals, and by showing respect for students and their opinions and abilities.
- Are able to perceive numerous student misconceptions, and teach in a manner that challenges them.
- Maintain a degree of humility. As one put it, they take their subjects seriously, but not themselves. Many adopt the role of fellow learners along with their students. Others point out that a teacher who "knows it all" can do students a disservice by keeping them from exercising their own minds.

Assessment of Student Performance

Effective teachers:

- Create discipline-specific tests and exams that require an appropriate level of mastery of the subject matter. These and other measures of learning require students to think critically and creatively about the course content rather than display mere memory of facts and concepts. Thus a good test, exam, or other evaluation can itself be a teaching device.
- Require a number and variety of assignments appropriate to the level and purpose of the course objectives.
- Require students to learn to read and discuss professional material in the discipline in the appropriate courses.
- Require students to use writing skills in appropriate courses.

Assessment of Course, Instruction, and Instructor

Effective teachers:

- Are self-analytical and can define areas of weakness as well as strengths in their teaching ("Why did I say that?" "How can I get this concept across more effectively?").
- Conduct systematic student evaluations of the course, reflect on this information, and take action appropriate to the recommendations and comments.
- Seek input from peer evaluations and use them to improve instruction.

Reference:

The Teaching and Learning Center, Winthrop University.. "Operational Definition and Goals of Effective Teaching". Retrieved August 19th, 2004, from **http://www.winthrop.edu/tlc/defnadgoals.htm**

Permission to use received from Marge Tebo-Messina, Professor of English and Director of the Teaching and Learning Center at Winthrop University.

Lesson Plan Elements

Whether you are leading a discussion in a tutorial, opening a lab with a presentation, or lecturing to a large group of students, a well-organized session can lead you on the road to success. Each element described below (and then elaborated on in the following pages) is important, and follows a natural order, but you'll notice when you start using them that there is flexibility too. You may be surprised to find that you already use many of these elements.

Pre-assessment: This element answers the question "what do the learners already know about this topic?" Pre-assessment is meant to identify learners' existing knowledge as well as to choose appropriate elements for your session. This should be done prior to planning the session. It should also be done throughout the session.

Learning Objective(s): This element answers the question "what is the point of the session?". It focuses the session, identifying what the learners should be able to do by the end.

Bridge: This element is also known as "the hook". It is intended to grab learners' attention, and provides them with some reason to be interested. The bridge is established at or near the beginning.

Body of Session: This element comprises the major portion of your session. It is the learning experience, designed to help learners meet the learning objective you have set out for them.

Close/Summary: This element summarizes the learning and provides closure for your learners. It is also important here to determine if your learners have understood your objective.

Pre-assessment

Preparing for a session must also include gathering information about your learners and their needs both prior to and during the session. The more you know and understand your learners,

the better you will be able to prepare (for example: opening with a question that they can easily relate to).

Learning Objective(s)

A learning objective is a statement indicating what students will be able to do by the end of your session. It is:

- Related to intended outcomes, rather than the process for achieving those outcomes.
- Specific and measurable, rather than broad and intangible.
- Concerned with your learners and what they will know or be able to do.

Lesson objectives answer the question "what will the students be able to do, know, or have experienced at the end of this lesson that they couldn't do or didn't know or hadn't experienced when the lesson started?".

Generally, an effective objective will be:

- Learner centered (for example, "By the end of this lesson, the students will (be able to …).
- Specific.
- Observable or action oriented.
- Stated explicitly to learners.

Benefits of a using an objective:

- Learners are clear with regard to what is expected of them. This means that they take on the responsibility of the session and keep it on track. You know where you are going with the session and so do they.
- Narrows selection of content, resources and materials.
- Allows you and the learners to determine if learning has been accomplished.
- Demonstrates a regard for your learners.

Bridge

This element is often known as the "hook". It is important that you engage your students so that they are fully engaged throughout your session. Let them know how attention to and participation in this session will benefit them.

Some ideas for hooking your audience:

- *Concrete image.* You can ask students to create a concrete image/scene/event/moment from the text that stands out.
- *Sentence completion exercise.* Students are asked to complete a sentence. You may ask them to write down their answers or to think on their feet. As students hear the others'

responses they jot down the ones they would most like to hear more about. After all responses are given, students begin by asking other students about the responses they wanted to hear more about.

- *Newspaper article.* Select a newspaper article that highlights a real-world example of the topic of discussion. Or, have your learners bring in related newspaper articles.

- *Strongly worded statement.* This can be taken from the public domain, or created by the leader or a student. The statement should be provocative, even inflammatory. It should challenge assumptions that students take for granted or cling to fiercely. It is important to tell the class not to assume that the person introducing the opinion agrees with its sentiments. After the statement has been made, the conversation begins with group members trying to understand the reasoning and circumstances that frame the statement. Students are asked to come up with evidence and rationales that are completely outside their usual frames of reference.

- *Tales from the trenches.* This works well with students who work in the field or are involved in some sort of internship or clinical practice. At the start of the class, students describe their most vivid recent experiences as practitioners. One of the best ways to provoke some good student tales is for the teacher to open the class with a brief tale of his/her own.

- *Hat full of quotes.* Prior to class, type out a number of quotes or short passages relevant to your discussion topic; these can be repeated. Then at the start of a discussion, have each student pick from the hat. Give them a moment to reflect on their quote or passage and write down their response. Then, ask each student to read their quote or passage and their comment on it. Those who have a quote or passage that has been read can either read their own comment or respond to one of the other comments.

Body

So your session is underway. All is right with the world and then suddenly, everybody stops talking. What can you do to deal with this situation? How can you prevent it?

Creative Grouping

The large scale of whole group discussions can inhibit some group members from participating. Sometimes, it makes sense to divide the large group into smaller ones.

- *Buzz groups.* Students gather in groups of four or five to discuss issues from a reading assignment. This can be relaxed and allow the group members to discuss the issues freely with no report back to the large group. It can also be more structured with group members having to answer a series of questions prepared by the instructor and report their answers to the large group (either the teacher summarizes or the group members summarize).

- *Snowball Technique.* Students respond to a question as individuals, then they pair up and discuss their responses. The group size continues to double every few minutes until the large group has been reformed.

- *Jigsaw.* Teachers and students begin by generating a short list of topics they would like to study. Each student becomes an "expert" on one of these topics, first individually and then in discussion with other experts. Later, these students become responsible again, through dialogue, for helping non-experts to become as knowledgeable as they are.

- *Critical debate.* Learners are asked to explore an idea or take a position that they find unfamiliar, unsympathetic, even objectionable. They do this as members of a debate team. Students are asked to make the strongest possible case for a position that is diametrically opposed to their own. It is a highly structured and provocative process for reinvigorating discussions that may have lost some of their verve.

- *Stand where you stand.* The teacher shares a claim that references one side or another of an issue. Then students individually decide whether they agree or disagree with this claim and spend ten minutes writing down their position and their rationale for it, citing arguments, evidence, and quotes from readings. Then the teacher displays four signs around the room reading *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, *strongly disagree*. Students are asked to stand in front of the sign that most closely reflects their position and then students at each position take turns orally presenting arguments that support and justify the stance they have taken. They are then invited to move to another sign if the arguments they hear from their peers persuade them that another position is more accurate or defensible. The exercise ends by spending fifteen minutes discussing as a whole group how the activity altered their perspectives. (See also section on *Discussion Groups* and *The Dreaded Discussion*)

Close/Summary

Instruction can take group members in many different directions as they explore concepts, relationships and perspectives. It is essential that students leave with a sense of accomplishment and the main points. Some ideas:

- *Students write briefly on how their thinking has changed as a result of the discussion.* You can also ask students to put the session in the context of issues previously discussed. Have students turn in their paragraphs and review a sample to see what they have learned.

- *Return to objectives.* At the end of the session, have your students return to your objectives. Ask them, either orally or in writing, to evaluate the discussion based on these objectives.

- *Notes on transparencies.* This can be done by the session leader or by a designated listener. Take notes on a transparency. At the end of the session, put the sheet up on the overhead and have students review it with you. You may want to relate the points back to the objectives or categorize them according to a salient feature.

- *Drawing conclusions.* Have groups draw the development of the discussion using a chosen model (for example, a road map). Each group illustrates on flipchart paper the major points or ideas that were brought up through the course of the discussion. Students are then given the opportunity to view the work of other groups.

These activities are extremely useful in determining whether your objectives were achieved through the discussion.

Adapted from:

Leading Discussion Workshop Manual, Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth, UBC.

Marking/Grading

In your role as TA, you may need to provide students with feedback on their work, and/or to mark quizzes, tests, laboratory reports, presentations, debates, field trip notes, team projects, observations, or a variety of other student assignments. The principles below, on "good marking" and on giving feedback, are intended to provide you with some ideas that you may find helpful.

Marking - Why Bother?

Because it's required, but also …

- To guide improvement (of teaching and learning) through feedback.
- To motivate students.
- To provide statistics for the student, the course, or the institution.
- To classify or grade students.
- To add variety to students' learning experience and direction to our teaching.
- Above all, it's an opportunity for learning.

"Good" Marking

Good marking should be:

- *Valid* – it should assess what you really want to measure – and this should be clear to your students so that they know what is expected of them.
- *Reliable and consistent* – all assignments, for example, should be marked to the same standard – marks should not vary because assignments were marked by different tutors.
- *Fair* – students should have an equal opportunity to succeed even if their experiences are not identical; it should also be seen to be fair by students. In some cases, it may be appropriate to have students help you set criteria for evaluation and assessment.
- *Transparent* – students should be able to understand your marking scheme and standards.
- *Equitable* – vary the ways in which you perform your assessment so that you don't favour certain individuals or groups (different people learn differently).
- *Timely and incremental* – do it periodically, not just at the end of the course or project. This also gives students many opportunities to do well.
- *Redeemable* – there should be some opportunity for redemption (i.e. doing a project over again) if things go terribly wrong.
- *Formative* – it should point out to students how they can improve – they should be able to learn from the experience.

- *Challenging* – it should encourage students to excel.

Adapted from:

Brown, B., Race, S., and Smith, P. (1996). 500 Tips on Assessment. Kogan Page: London.

Giving Feedback

Giving and Receiving Feedback in a Constructive Manner

- Identify your own biases about what you believe, before giving feedback.
- Provide an opportunity for the individual receiving the feedback to critique his/her own behaviour first.
- Start with something that was well done – a positive.
- Use the sandwich technique – something positive, something to improve on, something positive.
- Provide concrete, specific examples of what you are talking about.
- Always include suggestions for improvement, when you identify things that did not work too well.
- Give feedback on things that are a concern to the receiving person.
- Be constructive in your feedback – focus on helping the person grow.
- Ask permission to give feedback, if you're not in a formal feedback situation.
- Be honest.
- Trust that the person receiving the feedback from you values it, whether or not they agree with it.
- Be humane and kind in giving feedback.
- Provide feedback as soon as possible after the behaviour – in a timely way.
- Focus on what the person did, not who they are – the behaviour, NOT the person.
- Give the person receiving the feedback an opportunity to respond – to clarify, to agree/disagree/explain.
- Be balanced in the amount of positive comments and suggestions for improvement that you provide.
- Suggest, don't prescribe.
- Don't overwhelm the person with too many suggestions.
- Remember – feedback is intended to be helpful and caring. Otherwise, it is not a gift.

Receiving Feedback Constructively

- Be prepared – talk about what you expect, what kind of feedback you may receive.
- Hear the positive comments.
- Be honest with yourself.
- Take all of the comments in first, then check that you understood clearly what the other person meant.
- Ask for specific examples and specific suggestions.
- Trust that the other person is trying sincerely to help you out.
- Be involved in making suggestions for improvements yourself.
- Try to separate feelings from content.
- Don't take it personally – it's what you did, not who you are.
- Listen and then decide what you think about the feedback – consider the source that it came from.
- Check out the feedback with someone else – ask that person if they agree with the feedback you were given.
- Say "hmmm – I'll think about that…" as a response to suggestions you need more time to consider.
- Maintain eye contact with the person giving you the feedback.
- If you disagree with the feedback, say so – either then or later.
- Make sure the things you want feedback on are discussed and responded to.
- Think of the feedback you are being given as a gift!

Reference:

Janice Johnson, Facilitator and Instructional Developer, Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth, University of British Columbia.

Ideas for Handling Nervousness

Remember: Most people who teach are somewhat nervous going into the classroom. A little nervousness can be a good thing!

Assume a Confident Attitude

- Tell yourself you're 'psyched', not nervous.
- Remember that audiences often see nervousness as dynamism or energy.
- Act 'as if' you're not nervous (and you will be less so).
- Your attitude will probably determine the audience's response.

Concentrate on the Ideas

- Focus on the ideas (the content) that you're excited about, not on your nerves.
- If you care about the ideas, you will be able to speak about them.
- Think about what the audience wants to learn from you.

Make a Strong Start

- Talk to a couple of people in the audience before you start – they're just people like you!
- Take several slow, deep breaths, and then begin.
- Start with an easy to remember introduction to help you and the audience relax.

Practice

- Practice out loud, under conditions close to the real thing, several times before the day, to build your confidence.
- Have a least one practice session in the room you will teach in – get used to the physical surroundings and equipment.
- Do at least one dry run in front of an audience, even if it's just one person.

Use Audiovisual Aids

- Put the key points you wish to cover on overhead transparencies or PowerPoint slides ahead of time.
- Put an agenda/outline for the class on the board – you and the students will both benefit – they'll feel better knowing what's coming next, and you will have some built-in 'don't forget' notes.

Visualize

- Visualize how your first class will go, as many athletes do before competing.

- Imagine what you will say, how you will say it, and the positive response you will get from your audience.

Adapted from:

Marincovich, M. (Ed.). (1987). Teaching at Stanford: An introductory handbook for faculty, academic staff teaching, and teaching assistants. Stanford, CA: The Centre for Teaching and Learning, Stanford University.

Surviving the First Day of Class

Since the first class sets the semester in motion, it is prudent to consider carefully what you want to do in that first meeting. Don't assume that a quick read-through of the course outline and early dismissal are enough to whet students' appetites for learning or that doing so gives a good first impression.

It's perfectly natural to be a little nervous before your first class (See section on *Ideas for Handling Nervousness*). However, don't let the desire to "get it over with" cause you to shortchange your students. Concentrate on making a good impression, showing the students that you are approachable and knowledgeable, and most of all that this is an important class with interesting material. Remember not to talk too fast!

Here are a few more tips to help your first day go well:

Before the First Day

- Make sure you know where the classroom is, visit it, and accustom yourself to its dimensions. For example, write something on the board, then go to the back of the class and see if you can read your writing. You may also want to find out where the washrooms are located, whether the windows open, and where to obtain any necessary equipment and materials (e.g. chalk, overhead projectors, LCD projectors, laptops, other A/V equipment).

- Familiarize yourself with the course outline and be prepared to explain rather than simply present the objectives to your students.

On the First Day

- On the board/overhead, write the course name, number, section, and your own name, office hours, and phone number, email address and other relevant contact information.

- Tell your students something about yourself and make eye contact with them; if you are nervous, admit it – many of them will be nervous, too.

- If the class is small enough, have the students introduce themselves aloud. If the class is too big for that, ask them to introduce themselves to a neighbour. Some instructors also have their students provide information about themselves on a 3" x 5" card that they maintain on file. Taking digital pictures is a good way to get to remember the students too.

- Talk about the text, the edition they will need, additional readings and where to find them. Is a second-hand copy of last year's text current or outdated?

- Be explicit about your expectations of the students. Explain clearly the preparations required for class, describe assignments, quizzes and tests, and outline the learning objectives for the course and how they will be evaluated.

- Discuss policies regarding attendance, participation, and meeting deadlines.

- Describe penalties for late submission of work, plagiarism, or missing assignments. If you are willing to make exceptions, specify the circumstances and criteria.

Other Ideas to get you through the First Day

- Find out what the class already knows about the subject by giving a short – perhaps light-hearted – "quiz" (also called a pre-test).

- Show the students the kinds of problems they will be able to solve at the end of the course.

- Discuss some of the current issues in the field.

- Show how the course can help students answer questions in other disciplines.

- Use the Lesson Plan Elements (see section on Lesson Plan Elements).

- Try an "ice-breaking" exercise. It is one way to establish rapport on the first day of classes and to get your students to think about the course and its place in their program. The exercise is presented below.

Step 1. Students read the course outline, then introduce themselves to a colleague, stating their major field of study and their interests in and concerns about the course. Then they present their partner's responses to the class. As the information is presented, note it in columns on the board labeled "Interests" and "Concerns," and respond.

By doing the above, you have created interaction among students, and between students and yourself. You have discovered your students' reasons for taking the class and made it easier for them to remember the goals and objectives of the class because they've been actively engaged in discussing them. You have also allowed the students to voice their concerns out loud and to one another.

Step 2. The second part of the process involves students in free-associating with a key word in the title of the course. Ask students to call out their associations, and then write them on the board without comment. Once the board is filled, work with the students to evaluate these words into positive, negative, or content-oriented categories. Then discuss them.

Remember, the first class meeting sets the tone for the semester, so show enthusiasm, demonstrate your knowledge of the course content and its usefulness, and show the students that communication, participation, and interaction are essential components of the class.

Reference:

Brodeur, D. (1991, June). Interests, concerns, and free associations. Workshop presented at the Eleventh Annual Conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Halifax, NS.

Encouraging Student Input

Getting students to express their ideas depends on the teacher's (your) perceived attitude or disposition. There is nothing wrong with "*being popular*" if your reputation has been earned by treating others with fairness and respect and not by awarding everyone in the class a high mark.

Students appreciate teachers who have a sense of humour, who are approachable and enthusiastic, and who show an interest in them. In short, students are no different from everyone else: they enjoy being treated with respect. This is the Golden Rule for establishing a productive relationship with students and should not be broken. Just as organizational skills can be developed, one can cultivate the appropriate attitude towards teaching, thus enhancing the experience for the student as well as the teacher.

Student involvement in learning, the culmination of organization and fostering the appropriate attitude, requires direct interaction between teacher and student, although student-student exchanges can be equally stimulating. Once students believe you are reasonable, they will talk to you. This can mean that the same students speak out, but the entire class will benefit. Students will visit you before presentations, and more will come afterward if you are approachable.

Achieving positive interaction with students takes a small amount of effort once organization and attitude are in place. It is productive to arrive at the teaching session early and to mix with people in different areas of the room. Students with problems seek you out if you are present before class, which saves a trip to your office and interruption of other work.

Students should know you are interested in their ideas. You can demonstrate this interest in any of the following ways:

- Stop the relentless flow of information and seek questions.
- Once you've asked a question, wait at least 10 seconds for a response and find something good to say about the comment as this reassures the student.
- Ask questions that can be partially answered from information just presented.
- Praise the answer if it is deserving, emphasize the positive in a poor response, and make the student feel good about contributing.
- Try posing questions for which you supply the answer almost immediately.
- In this case, the students have the satisfaction of answering to themselves, or at least of not responding incorrectly in front of the class.
- Another technique is to ask questions and present what seems like a logical answer but which is wrong. Reason your way to the correct solution out loud with the students. The students then feel as if they are helping you arrive at the final answer even if no member of the class speaks (See section on Question and Answer Techniques).
- Finally, be available immediately after class and, of course, have time away from formal meetings when students are welcome to visit.

Helping Students Become Better Learners

- Get to know your students' names and something about them. Students will often try harder, and consequently learn better, when they see that their teacher cares about them.
- Ask questions about your students' other classes and experiences, and help them connect learning in those situations to learning in your class, and vice versa.
- Praise students' efforts and remind them of their successes to encourage them. Sometimes students feel that they are failures if they have to come to the office for help.
- Accept and try to understand your students' feelings and opinions.
- Evaluate the students' progress in class, and give them specific suggestions for improving their performance.
- Ask your students about their study habits, and suggest ways in which they might study better both on a daily basis and for tests.

Effective Communication

> *The problem with communication is the illusion that it has occurred.*
>
> *- George Bernard Shaw*

Communication is inseparable from many of the recognized qualities of a good teacher. It has an impact on the way you present your material, create rapport with the students, and establish your credibility in and control of the class. Remember, communication involves receiving as well as sending – in other words, a good communicator is also a good listener.

Once you are comfortable with your knowledge of the content material you are about to teach, here are some skills to help you communicate it effectively:

- Know your students; doing so will make the whole communications process much easier.
- Don't be afraid of silence – it takes a moment to think before you speak.
- Use clear and precise terms.
- Avoid using jargon. If you must use it, write the word(s) on the board so students can see it, and give a clear definition to ensure everyone understands.
- Listen carefully to student responses.
- Be sensitive to student behaviour and non-verbal communication in the class. A lot of chattering or restless shuffling could indicate that the class does not understand something. Stop and ask for an explanation.
- Create a gender-sensitive classroom environment. Create equity in your classroom or laboratory. Use language which is inclusive and examples which are appropriate and comfortable for everyone in the class (See section on Human Rights).

- Lighten up. Humour is a great way of enlivening a class or engaging students (if you use humour, make sure it is neither tasteless nor malicious).

- Slow down. "Rapid fire" delivery often confuses the listener.

Rapport in the Classroom: Responses and Respect

- Students are often very hesitant to speak out in class. Questions frequently go unasked and unanswered. Generally, students remain silent because they are afraid to lose their self-esteem by being put down in front of their classmates.

Here are some hints for creating a more open, rewarding, and responsive classroom environment:

- Listen to what students say without comment. Use eye contact, non-verbal cues such as a nod, and facial expressions to indicate that you're interested.

- Don't dismiss student comments with a vague phrase such as "*uh-huh*," or "*okay*".

- Don't interrupt student comments or responses.

- Try to incorporate student comments and responses into your material.

- Encourage students to respond to each other by inviting them to comment on a remark a classmate has made.

- Write good responses or comments on the board to emphasize the value of student contributions to your class.

- If you are not sure what a student is asking, ask some questions which will help you clarify. Don't say, "I don't understand what you mean".

- If you cannot answer a question, be frank with the class. Ask for input from one of the other students. Encourage members of the class to help each other.

- Repeat and paraphrase student answers. This shows that you were listening, helps you check that you understood what the student meant, and ensures that everyone in class hears what was said.

- Never try to capitalize on students' confusion by ridiculing or joking about incorrect responses. "Humour" of that kind is bound to backfire and create the very kind of inhospitable climate that you are trying to avoid.

- Never deter questions by saying, "Well that was really straightforward. I don't suppose there are any questions, are there?" You can bet there won't be after that.

Learning & Teaching during Office Hours

Technically, office hours are those times during the week when you are expected to be in your office, and available to hold individual conferences with your students. Office hours provide opportunities for TAs and students to learn from and about each other, and can be a positive

experience for both. It is essential for students to feel they can come to you with concerns and questions relating to the class and to the course materials. Let them know that they are welcome.

Why Office Hours are Important

These individual conferences can provide opportunities:

- For you to find out, first hand, how the class is going, and what concepts are clear or unclear to one or more students.
- For you to get to know more about your students as individuals, and have an improved understanding of their performance in class and on assignments.
- To develop insights into the class that you might never gain from working with them in a large group.
- For students to get to know you as an individual.
- For students to explain a behavioural problem.
- For students to discuss grades individually, or to question the marking of an exam.
- For advising, tutoring, and reassuring or supporting students.

Let students know that they can use your office hours not only for problems, but also for questions, for clarification of material covered in class, for help with study habits, or just to talk about some of the fascinating material you have been exposing them to in class.

Tips for Encouraging Students to come to your Office Hours

- Invite them individually.
- Write a comment on a paper: for example, "Please see me about this."
- Stress the importance and value of office visits both to you and to them.
- Post answers to quiz or homework problems inside your office door.

However, remember that a teaching assistant is a teacher, and not a counselor. If students need assistance with a personal or financial matter, direct them to the appropriate agency (see Appendix B *Services for Students*).

The Logistics of Office Hours: When, Where and How Long to Schedule Them

- As well as meeting with students in your office, you have the option of meeting with them in a more informal setting like the SUB, or a coffee shop. If the conversation deals with a sensitive issue, meet in the privacy of your office.
- Keep your office door open during all office hours (unless you are discussing a sensitive issue with a student.)

- Vary the time for office hours – for example, have office hours Mondays, 10-11 am, and Wednesdays and Thursdays, 2-3 pm, not just Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 8-9 am.

- When you write your hours on a board or on a handout, be sure to add "and by appointment," so that those students who are unable to meet with you during your scheduled hours know that they can arrange a meeting at another time if they wish to.

- After you have scheduled your office hours, keep them. Show up on time, and remain for the full office hour period. If you must make a cancellation, notify your students ahead of time that you will not be in.

- Check with your department to determine the required number of office hours you are expected to keep.

- If you are sharing an office with other TAs, try to coordinate your schedules so that each of you has office hours at different times. That way you won't be disturbing each other, and you and your students will have more privacy.

Challenging Office Hour Situations: Dealing with Complaints and Problems

General Tips

- Adopt a positive mindset and approach each problem in a positive yet realistic manner.

- Remember not to take student anger or frustration as a personal attack.

- Don't be surprised if students do not visit you regularly during the semester. They are more likely to drop in before and after an examination, before an assignment is due, and the week prior to final exams.

Listen Carefully to Students

- Express honest concern about the difficulty perceived by the student and show them that you find their concerns important. Students often worry that they are wasting your time. By listening attentively and responding thoughtfully, you can help alleviate their anxiety.

- Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know, but I'll find out for you." You should realize that you won't always be able to provide all the answers to questions students may ask.

Personal Problems

- If the problem is personal, determine whether the student is asking for more than you are expected or able to provide.

- Sometimes support, encouragement, and being a good listener can help the student alleviate personal stress.

- If the problem seems to persist, or if you are concerned about the student's safety or well-being, refer the student to one of the counselling services on campus (See Appendix B *Services for Students*).

- Remember that you are not the student's personal counselor.

Course Problems

- If the problem is course related, guide the students to find solutions on their own.
- Ask probing questions to identify the students' difficulties and/or misconceptions, and to determine what information students need. Students often cannot articulate what they do not understand, and may give vague statements about not understanding anything, when that is not the case.
- Provide a framework or strategy for solution, and assist the student in practicing the solution.
- Use precise, specific vocabulary to help the student learn the steps to solving a problem. For example: "Do you have a specific question?", "How do you begin?", "Determine what you need."
- Suggest that the student rework the problem or topic when s/he gets home.

What Would You Do?

Listed below are some situations which you might face in your office. Think about how you would handle these situations ahead of time, so that you can deal with them positively should they occur. Discuss your ideas with an experienced TA or a TA coordinator in your department, or your supervisor, to get some feedback.

- A student challenges the course grade you gave him/her the previous semester.
- You are correcting a test (or paper), when you realize that you have seen that unique solution (or read that paper) before.
- A student requests a paper be re-graded because s/he is not proficient in English.
- A student objects to your assignment, claiming it is not practical, that there is not enough time to do it, or that it violates his/her values (ethics, beliefs).
- A student criticizes you (your English, your lack of clear explanations, your appearance, your choice of topic) in class or in your office.
- A student asks you for a date.
- A student suggests favours will be given if you reconsider a grade.
- A student wants a make-up test. S/he missed the first test due to illness or for other reasons.
- A student cries in your office because s/he is very upset over a grade or a personal tragedy.

Adapted from:

TA Guidebook, The Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan, 1991, and Handbook for Graduate Instructors & Teaching Assistants, Program for Excellence in Teaching, University of Missouri-Columbia, 1994.

Instructional Strategies

There are many instructional strategies. Which one you use will depend upon the size of your class, the content you are teaching, and the learning objectives for the students.

It is important that you feel comfortable when you are teaching – so don't try to adopt a style that makes you feel otherwise. On the other hand, by introducing a variety of appropriate strategies into your classes, you will be more likely to engage students and address their different learning styles.

Learning styles refer to a preference by which people learn and remember what they have learned. There are three main groupings of learning styles: visual, auditory and kinesthetic. At the foundation of learning style research is the belief that students learn best when they can "address knowledge in ways they trust" (Centre for Teaching and Learning, 2004). Teaching requires the same two essential things from the instructor – preparation and enthusiasm. Addressing your students' different learning styles gives you the opportunity to engage your students in a variety of ways, thereby helping to improve their overall learning experience and maximizing learning retention.

Studies suggest that the average attention span of students is 12 minutes or less – beyond this point, information is not learned effectively. The goal of higher education is to develop higher order cognitive capabilities. One way this is accomplished is by involving students in the learning process, and by varying your instructional strategy very frequently and even within each class period.

Lectures

Lecturing is the most frequently used teaching technique at the undergraduate level. Over the years it has developed a bit of a bad reputation because it encourages students to be passive learners who neither contribute to the class through discussion nor engage in critical thinking or problem solving. Many teachers and scholars would disagree with that criticism of the lecture; they argue that if it is used when it is appropriate, the lecture is a very effective technique.

When is it appropriate to lecture?

- When you want to impart some information or give instructions or details which the students can't find elsewhere.
- When you want to present and organize the material in a certain way or for a specific purpose.
- When you want to model enthusiasm for, and engagement with, a topic.

Lecturing Guidelines

Should you decide that lecturing is the appropriate technique, here are some guidelines to ensure that you use it successfully:

- Plan the lecture in advance.
- Establish learning objectives for the class and ensure that your lecture meets them. Present the learning objectives to your students at the beginning of the lecture.
- Organize the material appropriately so that your students can understand it clearly. Chronological order may be the best way, but consider alternative approaches:
    - Comparison and contrast.
    - Cause and effect.
    - Inductive.
    - Deductive.
- Create interest at the beginning of the lecture. Try a question, a powerful or popular quotation, or a dramatic or startling statistic (the "Hook").
- Review previous class or classes in summary before you build on that material in today's lecture.
- Never lecture for the entire class time. Twelve minutes is considered to be the maximum attention span you can expect from your students without varying your technique.
    - Break at points to pose a question – stimulate interest.
    - Ask students to work with a neighbour to resolve a problem.
    - Invite questions from the class.
    - Ask your students to write a one-minute paper on "The three advantages of . . . " or "The importance of . . . "
    - Invite the class to make up exam questions on the material you have just covered.
- Don't just stand and read notes! Make eye contact with your students; move around if you can; use gestures.
- Make sure that everyone can hear and understand your lecture:
    - Use vocabulary which all the students will understand.
    - Define complex terms.
    - Avoid jargon.
    - Don't talk too fast.

  - Write difficult words or concepts on the board as you introduce them.
  - Use overhead transparencies or PowerPoint to outline and clarify your lecture.

- Enliven your lecture with concrete examples, personal anecdotes, or current news.
- Within the context of information flow, it is helpful, as a way to maintain class attention, to build suspense into your presentation. If possible, save the main point until the evidence has accumulated, giving students an opportunity to deduce the conclusion before it is revealed.
- Summarize the main points at the end of every major section of your lecture.
- Summarize the entire lecture and build a link to the future. Reinforce and repeat the points you want to emphasize.
- Respect class time allotment. Keeping your students overtime is unfair. Monopolizing busy scheduled classrooms is discourteous to the next class and to the instructor.

Discussion Groups

We often use the word "discuss" in everyday language to mean "chat" or "talk about". A successful classroom group discussion, however, is much more than a chat; it is both planned and focused. The instructor should keep the discussion groups under control without obviously intruding into the proceedings.

General Guidelines

- Establish an objective for the discussion: to solve a problem, to offer alternatives, to set a policy. If you don't set goals, the session could deteriorate.
- Divide the class into groups of 3-6 students. In a large group, there are fewer chances for everyone to speak.
- Try giving one or two students in each group the responsibility for timekeeping, recording, and reporting the outcome of the discussion to the rest of the class.
- Ensure that all the students in each group have the opportunity to participate.
- Don't allow a few students to dominate the discussion.
- Walk around and listen in on the various groups; provide guidance, ensure their comments are relevant, but keep your participation to a minimum.

Types of Group Discussions

After you have decided what the objectives for the discussion will be, choose the type of discussion that will best accomplish your goals.

Brainstorming Session

Brainstorming is an excellent way to generate discussion topics and encourage creative thinking. For example, if you have your students brainstorm on the advantages of free trade with Mexico, the quantity of ideas produced is, initially, more important than the quality. Once the groups have reported, work with the students to evaluate the responses; choose the best ones and develop your discussion from there.

Group Discussion

Each group discusses the same question or questions. When they report back to the class, note the differences and similarities in their answers. This format may develop into a debate.

Debate Discussion

This format is ideal for controversial issues where participants can take a 'pro' or 'con' stand. Ensure that the discussion remains as objective as possible and that each side is given equal time. A variation on this format which ensures more objectivity is to have participants argue against their personal stance; for example, those who support the environmentalists argue on behalf of the Forest Harvesting Company.

Buzz Groups

Give each group a different question (or questions) to consider. Students should be encouraged to question other groups when they report back. This is a good way to show students that they can learn from each other.

P. Frederick (1981) has categorized 10 ways to start "the dreaded discussion." His article, which adds to and expands on the ideas above, is presented below.

The Dreaded Discussion: Ten Ways to Start

> *The only privilege a student had that was worth his claiming, was that of talking to the professor, and the professor was bound to encourage it. His only difficulty on that side was to get them to talk at all. He had to devise schemes to find what they were thinking about, and induce them to risk criticism from their fellows.*
>
> *- The Education of Henry Adams*

The conspiracy of silence is breaking up: we are learning to talk more openly about our joys and fears as teachers, our achievements and frustrations in the classroom. As I have listened to my colleagues talk about their students and their classrooms, the one fear and frustration mentioned more than any other, as for Henry Adams, was in leading a discussion. No matter how many articles on technique we read, or workshops we attend, the dreaded discussion continues to bother us more than any other part of our daily teaching lives. Freshman seminar and discussion-based core programs continue to develop. Pressures not only to "do more discussion" but to do it well, reinforced by student evaluations and faculty development centers, do not go away. We are learning, alas, that to walk into class and hold up one's copy of the assigned text, asking, "How'd you like it?" does not necessarily guarantee an enthusiastic, rewarding discussion.

We need, first of all, to acknowledge our fears in facing discussion classes: The terror of silences, the related challenges of the shy and dominant student, the overly-long dialogue between ourself and one combative student, the problems of digression and transitions, student fear of criticism, and our own fear of having to say "I don't know." Worst of all, perhaps, is the embarrassment of realizing, usually in retrospect, that "about half way through the period I lapsed, again, into lecture." I suspect that our fears about discussion (and our lapses) have a great deal to do with the issue of who controls the classroom. Although psychologically rooted, the control issue is best dealt with as a nitty-gritty practical question of how to plan and how to begin.

My first assumption is that an effective discussion, like almost anything, depends upon good planning. The content goals for any given class period usually suggest employing different teaching strategies. We would like to be able to select from among many discussion possibilities with confidence. The purpose of this article is to expand the range of the options by describing very precisely several different ways of starting a discussion. Like Henry Adams, we "devise schemes" to find out what our students are thinking.

The following assumptions and principles about discussions guide my particular schemes:

- Because we have much to learn from each other, all must be encouraged to participate.
- It is important to devise ways in which each student has something to say, especially early in the class period.
- Students should be expected to do some (often highly structured) thinking about a text or issue before the discussion class begins.
- Students should know and feel comfortable with each other and with the teacher. As Carl Rogers and others keep reminding us, learning is aided perhaps most of all by the quality of personal relationships.
- Those relationships are enhanced by a climate of trust, support, acceptance, and respect: even "wrong" answers are legitimate.
- A student's self-image is always affected by his or her participation in discussions: feedback, therefore, is crucial for self-esteem.
- The primary goal in any discussion is to enhance the understanding of some common topic or "text" (in the broadest sense).
- Different kinds of texts, purposes, and faculty teaching styles suggest using different kinds of discussion schemes.

My hope and expectation is that other teachers will adapt these suggestions and devise schemes for their own texts, purpose, and teaching styles.

1. Goals and Values Testing

The students are asked to pair off and decide together what they think is the primary value of the particular text for the day, and how their consideration of it meshes with course goals. "Why are we reading this?" "Why now?" After five minutes or so, invite reactions. It is not necessary to hear from each pair, but hearing from a few provides a public reality test for the teacher's course goals ("is this text serving the purpose I had hoped it would?"), as well as

providing a mutual basis for further probing into the text. An alternative initial question for the pairs is to ask for a list of relationships (comparisons and contrasts) between this text and another, usually the most recent one. Make the instructions explicit: "identify three themes common to both texts"; "suggest the two most obvious differences between the two texts"; "which did you like best and why?"; "make a list of as many comparisons (or contrasts) as you can in ten minutes." In this case, in order to benefit from the richness of diversity, as well as to confirm similar insights, it is probably best to check in with each pair.

2. Concrete Images

It is obvious, of course, that discussions go better when specific references are made. Yet I think we often need help remembering the content of our text. A few minutes at the beginning can guarantee that the sophisticated analysis we seek will be based on specific facts. Go around the table and ask each student to state one concrete image/scene/event/moment from the text that stands out. No analysis is necessary, just recollections and brief description. As each student reports, the collective images are listed on the board, thus providing a visual record of selected content from the text as a backdrop to the following discussion. Usually the recall of concrete scenes prompts further recollections, and a flood of images flows from the students. A follow-up question is to invite the class to study the items on the board, and ask: "what themes seem to emerge from these items?"; "what connects these images?"; "is there a pattern to our recollected events?"; "what is missing?" This is, obviously, an inductive approach to the text. Facts precede analysis. But also, everyone gets to say something early in class and every contribution gets written down to aid our collective memory and work.

3. Generating Questions

We have our own important questions to ask about a text. And we should ask them. But students also have their questions and they can learn to formulate better ones. Being able to ask the right questions about a particular text may be the first way of coming to terms with it. There are many ways of generating questions:

- Ask students ahead of time (Wednesday for Friday's class) to prepare one or two questions about their reading. One can vary the assignment by specifying different kinds of questions: open-ended, factual, clarifying, connective and relational, involving value conflicts, etc.

- As students walk into the classroom ask them to write down (probably anonymously early in the term) one or two discussible questions about the text. "What questions / issues/ problems do you want this group to explore in the next hour about this reading?" Hand all questions to one student (a shy one, perhaps) who, at random, selects questions for class attention. Do not expect to get through all of them, but the discussion of two or three questions usually will deal with or touch on almost every other one. Students, like all of us, ask questions they really want to answer themselves, and they will make sure their point is made somehow.

- Same as above, except the teacher (or a student) takes a minute or two to categorize the questions and deals with them more systematically.

- Ask each student to write down one or two questions (either ahead of time or at the start of class), but in this case the student owns his/her questions and is in charge of leading the discussion until he/she feels there has been a satisfactory exploration of the issues. Start anywhere and go around the table. This obviously works best in smaller groups with longer periods than 50 minutes.

- Divide the class into pairs or small groups and charge each group to decide upon one salient question to put to the rest of the class.

4. Finding Illustrative Quotations

We do not often enough go to the text and read passages out loud together. Students, we are told, do not know how to read any more. If so, they need to practice and to see modeled good old-fashioned *explication de texte*. Ask each student, whether ahead of time or at the start of class, to find one or two quotations from the assigned text that he/she found particularly significant. There are many ways in which the instructions may be put: "find one quotation you especially liked and one you especially disliked." Or, "find a quotation which you think best illustrates the major thesis of the piece," or, "select a quote which suggests, to you, the key symbol of the larger text." After a few minutes of browsing (perhaps in small groups of three to four), the students will be ready to turn to specially marked passages, read out loud, and discuss. Be sure to pause long enough for everyone to find the right spot in their book: "start with the middle paragraph on page sixty one. Are you all with us?" Lively and illuminating discussion is guaranteed because not all students will find the same quotations to illustrate various instructions, nor, probably, will they all interpret the same passages the same way.

It is during this exercise that I have had the most new insights into texts I had read many times previously. And there may be no more exciting (or modeling) experience than for students to witness their teacher discovering a new insight and going through the process of refining a previously held interpretation. "Great class today! I taught Doc Frederick something he didn't know."

5. Breaking into Smaller Groups

No matter the size of a class, sixty or six or one hundred and sixty, it can always be broken down into smaller groups of four, five, eight, fifteen, or whatever. The purpose, quite simply, is to enable more people to say something and to generate more ideas about a text or topic. Also, groups lend themselves usually to a lively, competitive spirit, whether asked to or not. We are interested not only in the few people we are grouped with but also in "what they're doing over there." Furthermore, reticent students often feel more confident in expressing themselves in a larger group after they have practiced the point with a safer, smaller audience. There are three crucial things to consider in helping small groups to work well. First, the instructions should be utterly clear, simple, and task oriented. Examples: "Decide together which of the brothers is the major character in the novel." "Which person in the Iliad best represents the qualities of a Greek hero?" "Which person, the same or different, best represents a hero by your standards?" "Why did the experiment fail?" "What would you suggest changing?" "Identify the three main themes of this text." "What is Picasso's painting saying?" "Identify three positive and three negative qualities of King David's character." "What do you think is the crucial turning point in Malcom's life?" "If you were the company treasurer (lawyer), what decision would you make?" "Generate as big a list as you can of examples of sex role stereotyping in these first two chapters." "If you were Lincoln, what would you do?" In giving these instructions be sure to give the groups a sense of how much time they have to do their work. Second, I believe in varying the ways in which groups are formed in order to create different constituencies. Pair off ("with someone you don't know") one day; count off by fives around the room another; form groups of "about eight" around clumps of students sitting near one another on a third day. And third, vary the ways in which groups report out when reassembled.

Variations include:

- Each group reports orally, with the teacher recording results (if appropriate) on the board.
- Each group is given a piece of newsprint and felt pen upon which to record its decisions, which are then posted around the room.
- Space is provided for each group, when ready, to write their results on the blackboard.
- Each group keeps legible notes, which the teacher runs off and distributes to everyone for continuing discussion the next meeting.
- No reporting out is necessary, or reactions are invited from several groups, but not necessarily from all of them.

Further possibilities for small groups are described in the suggestions that follow:

6. Generating Truth Statements

This exercise develops critical skills and generates a good deal of friendly rivalry among groups. The instructions to each group are to decide upon three statements known to be true about some particular issue. "It is true about slavery that..." "We have agreed that it is true about the welfare system that..." "It is true about international politics in the l950s that..." "We know it to be true about the theory of relativity that...", and so on. I have found this strategy useful in introducing a new topic, slavery, for example, where students may think they already know a great deal but the veracity of their assumptions demands examination. The complexity and ambiguity of knowledge is clearly revealed as students present their truth statements and other students raise questions about or refute them. The purpose of the exercise is to develop some true statements, perhaps, but mostly to generate a list of questions and of issues demanding further study. This provides an agenda for the unit. Sending students to the library is the usual next step, and they are quite charged up for research after the process of trying to generate truth statements.

7. Forced Debate

Although neither one of two polar sides of an issue obviously contains the whole truth, it is often desirable to force students to select one or the other of two opposite sides and to defend their choice. "Burke or Paine?" "Booker T. Washington or W.E.B. Du Bois?" "Are you for or against achieving racial balance in the schools?" "Should Nora have left or stayed?" "Who had the better argument: Creon or Antigone?" "Capitalism or Socialism for developing nations?" Once students have made their choice, which may be required prior to entering the room for class that day, I ask them to sit on one side of the table or room to represent their decision. Physical movement is important and sides need to face each other. Once the students have actually, as it were, put their bodies on the line, they are more receptive to answering the question: "Why have you chosen to sit where you are?" Inevitably, there may be some few students who absolutely refuse (quite rightly) to choose one side or the other. If they persist, with reasons, create a space for a middle position. This adds a dimension to the debate and, as in the case of deciding between Burke and Paine on whether or not to support the French Revolution, those in the middle find out what it is like to attempt to remain neutral or undecided in heated, revolutionary times. I also invite students to feel free to change their place during a debate if they are so persuaded, which adds still another real (and sometimes chaotic) aspect to the experience.

8. Role Playing

This is a powerful learning strategy, guaranteed to motivate and animate most students and to confuse and make nervous many. Role-playing is tricky. It can be as simple (deceptively so) as asking two members of the class to volunteer to adopt the roles of two characters from a novel at a crucial point in their relationship, discussing how they feel about it, or what they should do next. Or two students can act out the President and an advisor debating some decision, or two slaves in the quarters at night discussing whether or not to attempt to run away, or a male and female (perhaps with reversed roles) discussing affirmative action or birth control. Issues involving value conflicts, moral choices, and timeless human dilemmas related to a student's world usually work best, but role playing need not be so personal. A colleague of mine in biology creates a student panel of foundation grant evaluators before whom other students present papers and make research proposals. Or, as students walk into class and sit down, they find a card in front of them which indicates the name of a character from a novel, or an historical personage, or even a concept. For the discussion that follows they are to be the role indicated on their card. Knowing this might happen is not a bad motivator to make sure students get their reading done.

Any situation involving multiple group conflicts is appropriate for role-playing. There are many simulation games for contemporary issues in the social sciences. But for history I like to create my own somewhat less elaborate "games" putting students into the many roles represented in some historical event or period. One of my favorites is a New England town meeting in 1779, in which a variety of groups (landed elite, yeoman farmers, Tory sympathizers, soldiers and riff-raff, artisans, lawyers and ministers, etc.) are charged with drafting instructions for delegates to a state constitutional convention. Another is to challenge several groups in 1866, defeated Confederates, southern Unionists, northern Radical Republicans, northern moderates, and Black freedmen, to develop lists of goals and strategies for accomplishing them. I play an active role, as moderator of the town meeting or as President Johnson, organizing and monitoring the interactions that follow group causes. Our imagination can create many appropriate examples for role-playing. You have, I am sure, your own. But because role playing can be traumatic for some students and because a poorly-planned or poorly-monitored role play can get out of control, I want to make a few cautionary suggestions that I have found helpful, if not crucial. First, except for finding the cards at the beginning of class which compel playing a role, in most role playing activities students should have some choice in how much to participate, either by deciding whether or not to volunteer or by being part of a group large enough to reduce the pressures on any one individual. Teachers should monitor carefully the unspoken signals of students who may find their role uncomfortable, and intervene, often by skillfully pursuing their own role, to extricate or reduce the pressures on an actor. Generally, however, I have found role playing to be an effective way for the normally shy student, who has said little or nothing in class, to unblock in the new role and participate more readily in conventional discussions afterwards. Second, give students some time (how much depends upon the nature of the particular role-play) to prepare themselves for their role. This might mean two days or more in order to do some research, or fifteen minutes in groups to pool information, or five minutes to refresh one's memory about a character in a novel, or a couple of minutes simply to get in touch with the feelings of a character and situation. Third, in giving instructions the definition of roles to be played should be concrete and clear enough for students to get a handle on who they are playing, yet open enough for the expression of their own personality and interpretation. If the roles are prescribed too clearly, students merely imitate the character described (although sometimes this is the requirement) and have difficulty going beyond it with anything of themselves. If the roles are described too loosely, without a clear context, students will stray too far from the actual situation to be experienced and learned. And finally, and most importantly, in any role-play experience as much (if not more) time should be devoted to debriefing afterwards as for the exercise itself. This is when the substantive lessons of the

experience are discovered, explored and confirmed. This is when those students who may have served as observers will offer their insights and analysis of what happened.

Above all, this is when the actors will need an opportunity to talk about how they felt in their roles and what they learned, both about themselves and about the substantive issues involved.

9. Non-structured Scene Setting

Most of the ways of starting a discussion described thus far involve a great deal of structure and direction. But inevitably, when teachers suspect that they have been dominating too much ("I blew it again, talked most of the hour!"), it is clearly time to give students an opportunity to take a discussion in their directions, and to do most, if not all, of the talking. The teacher, however, has a responsibility for setting the scene and getting class started. There are a variety of ways to do this, some more directive than others. Put some slides on a carousel and, without a word, show them at the beginning of class. Or, as the students walk into the classroom, the teacher plays a piece of music or a speech on a tape recorder. Or, on the board before class the teacher writes a quotation or two, or two or three questions, or a list of words or phrases or names, or even an agenda of issues to be explored. The only necessary verbal instructions are to make it clear to the students that until a defined time (perhaps the last five minutes) you, the teacher, intend to stay out of the discussion entirely. Even having said that, I have still found that I am capable of breaking my own contract and intervening or, more likely, affecting the class by non-verbal signals. I tell my students that I find it extremely difficult to stay uninvolved, and that I need their help in making sure I stay out of the discussion. They are usually happy to oblige. If possible, adopt an utterly non-evaluative observer role and take descriptive notes on the course of the discussion. To read your notes back to the students may be the most helpful feedback you can give them.

10. A Tenth Way to Start

As the term progresses students will have experienced many different exciting ways to start a discussion, most of which, we hope, enhance their understanding of a text or issue. Once the expectation of variety has been established there is even a legitimate place for the following strategy: stroll into class with your book, sit on the edge of the table, hold the book up, and ask: "How'd you like it?"

Although it has not been my primary purpose in this article to extol the many values of discussion, I assume that my basis has been implicitly clear. The key to effective retention of learning, I believe, is in owning the discovery. Emerson wrote in his journals that a wise person "must feel and teach that the best wisdom cannot be communicated (but) must be acquired by every soul for itself." My primary strategy as a teacher is to structure situations in which students have as many opportunities as possible to acquire wisdom for themselves; that is, to own the discovery of a new learning insight or connection and to express that discovery to others. In this way their substantive learning is increased and their self-esteem is enhanced. How we plan the start of class is crucial in achieving this goal. "Hey, roomie, I now know what Emerson meant by self-reliance. What I said in class about it today was that..." Which translated means: "Hey, I'm OK, I understand this stuff. I said something today others found helpful." Which translated means: "Class was good today: he let me talk."

Reference:

Frederick, P. (1981). The dreaded discussion: Ten ways to start. College Teaching, 29(3), 109-114.

Question and Answer Techniques

In the hands of the sensitive instructor, questions can be a steering wheel, a brake and a gas pedal. Now what other instrument could do so much for you?

Questions and answers are essential components of teaching and learning. You will ask questions of your students and answer questions from them. Asking a good question will help you motivate students' curiosity about the topic, and it will help you assess how well they understand the material.

There are two kinds of questions: closed and open. A closed question (sometimes called a "lower order" question) is usually used to check student comprehension. It requires a factual answer and allows little opportunity for dissent; for example, "What does 'x' equal in this equation?"; "Which of Henry VIII's wives survived him?" The answer will be either correct or incorrect. These are the easiest questions, yet the least valuable – a form of rote learning, focusing on memorization.

An open or "higher order" question offers the students much more opportunity to speculate, draw inferences, extrapolate from data, or contribute their own opinions; for example, "What do you think would happen if we reduced the temperature by 25 degrees?"; "Which of the two short stories provides the best description of adolescence?" When you ask a question, make sure to PAUSE and wait for a response. Open questions are frequently the springboards for lively class discussion. You might want to think of some possible answers to an open question before you ask it in class.

Remember these points concerning questions addressed to the class:

- Ask only one question at a time.
- Wait between 10 to 20 seconds for a response.
- If there is no answer, rephrase the question and ask it again. Asking a different question will confuse the students.

Answering student questions can be unnerving at first. If you do not know the answer, say so. It is better to be honest than to give an inaccurate answer which will have to be retracted later. Tell the students you will find out for them by next class; better still, invite the questioner to find the answer and report it at the next class.

Further guidelines for answering student questions include:

- Take a moment to think carefully before you respond to student questions. PAUSE!
- Listen to the question carefully. It may indicate that the student is having difficulty with the material. You may wish to answer with another question until you discover where the student's misunderstanding begins.
- If the question requires a very lengthy response or it appears that the questioner has missed some classes, you may wish to ask the student to stay behind after class or come to see you at another time to get the answer. Be tactful.

Other Instructional Strategies

Lectures, labs and demonstrations, and discussion groups are probably the three main instructional techniques.

Here are some things to try when you want yet a different approach – either for a short change of pace within a lecture or as an alternative for an entire class.

Pyramids

Students work alone, then in pairs, in fours, and in larger groups. The benefits of this method include encouraging interaction among students, especially students who are reluctant to speak out in class. Also, there is validation of students' ideas because they see that others in class have similar thoughts – although they may have reached them in different ways. As well, students increase their ability to manage difficult tasks. Each stage of the pyramid process should involve a slightly more complex task than its predecessor. This will ensure that students are building on the achievements of the previous stage (Northedge, 1975).

Drama

One way to emphasize the importance of crucial ideas is to dramatize them and so make them stand out from the rest of the material. Here are two ideas to get you started:

- In a poetry lecture on metre, an instructor beats a drum in rhythm with the metre of the poem.

- During a class on legal evidence, several people rush into the classroom, cause a disturbance, then leave. The students are surprised. However, when they are asked by their instructor to give evidence about the event which they have just witnessed, they realize that the teacher had planned the disturbance to illustrate the problems associated with obtaining evidence from witnesses (Gibbs, Habeshaw, & Habeshaw, 1984).

Pairs Problem-Solving

The students work in pairs to solve a problem assigned to the class. One partner reads the problem and thinks aloud while the other listens – constantly checking for accuracy. The listener works alongside the problem-solver, understanding each step and asking for clarification where necessary. If the problem-solver makes a mistake, the listener points it out but does not correct it. The constant vocalization in this method is important because it shows students that there are many valid ways to reach the solution.

Students Submit Questions

Ask your students to submit possible exam or essay questions, or questions about the course that they want you to answer in class. Either way you will get insight into what they understand from the class. If a number of students are asking questions about a particular point you thought you had covered well, maybe it's time for a review of that material. Respond to "typical" questions in class, perhaps write them on the board and encourage students to respond. This validates the importance of questions as a way to learn. One professor at the University of California at Irvine hands out 3 x 5 cards to his students and asks them to submit open-ended questions on the cards for credit. Although the cards are small, the questions are brief, and reading them takes very little time, the benefits of this technique are far-reaching.

This method encourages discussion, improves rapport, and shows students that it is perfectly acceptable to ask questions (Gallow, 1991).

Role Playing

This method is very useful when you want your students to gain greater insight into a person or situation. You do have to make sure that the "players" take their roles seriously and have defined the characteristics of their roles. The rest of the class, too, has to have clear responsibilities for observing and commenting upon the action.

Role playing can be used in classes to help clarify such things as patient-caregiver roles; or social worker-client interaction. Or try assigning your students the roles of different atoms, and then instruct them to link their arms to construct a DNA molecule (Gibbs, Habeshaw, & Habeshaw, 1984). (For more information about role playing, see also *The Dreaded Discussion*).

Assume a Persona

Become a character in your own presentation. Assume the role of Dr. Freud for your class on the id; become a visitor from the planet "X" who wonders why the earth looks so different from space these days; don a 'sou'wester' and be a fisherman at the turn of the century who explains why the fish stocks will last forever. The possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

For more Instructional Strategies, see

- Glossary of Instructional Strategies at **http://glossary.plasmalink.com/glossary.html** (though some of the instructions seem to be geared for children in school, they are easily adapted to students of different age/academic levels).

Help Students to Think

Ultimately, no matter what teaching strategy you choose to use, your ultimate goal is to help students to think.

Many students prefer to be passive, receptive learners. They want "just the facts," and more precisely just those facts which they require to pass the exam. However, simply stuffing students' heads with facts may not be the most efficient use of class time – students will likely forget many of the facts, and you won't be able to cover all the information anyway. For these reasons, it is advisable to spend some class time encouraging your students to obtain and practise the thinking skills they need to uncover and discover the rest of the facts. In other words, part of your role as a teaching assistant is to help your students think for themselves and to become active learners.

Most disciplines have key concepts and ideas which are fundamental (McPeck, 1981); they are the foundations of the discipline. The remaining knowledge and understanding derives from them. Students must learn these concepts. It is equally important that your students learn more.

Students should learn how the fundamental concepts in your discipline were established. Show your students the process by which these key concepts were reached. What questions were asked? What research was done? Which hypotheses were discarded and why? Why were these concepts accepted and why are they so fundamental to the discipline?

Students should learn the types of thinking and enquiry which your discipline values. Each discipline has its own types of valued thinking and enquiry; help your students learn these (McPeck, 1981). Students must learn not only what to think in Biology, Calculus, or History, but also *how to think like* a biologist, mathematician, or historian. Then, they can continue to engage in the enquiry of the discipline and reach a greater understanding of the material.

Students should learn that obtaining a correct answer is not the only goal.

Of course, answering a question correctly is very important, but students should learn how to transfer their understanding of a familiar problem, situation, or activity to a new one. In order to do this, students must be able to identify the process of reaching solutions in one instance, recognize the similarities between the familiar problem and the new one, and adapt the process to solving the new problem (Pestel, 1988).

The thinking skills which are prized in the disciplines are also valued in society in general: investigation, interpretation, evaluation, anticipation, extrapolation, problem solving, decision making, and creative thinking. Encourage your students to obtain and practise these skills.

Vary your Teaching Methods

A practical way to foster thinking skills in your classes is to use a variety of teaching approaches to ensure that your students are more than passive, receptive learners, but instead are independent thinkers. Notice how the other instructional strategies discussed in this Resource Guide will help foster independent thought.

Ask Lots of Open-ended Questions

Open-ended, or higher order questions, cannot be answered with a simple yes, no, number, or date. They require a reasoned response. *When did Thomas More write his biography of Richard the Third?* is a closed question. *How reliable is More's biography of Richard?* is an open question. Questioning your students in this way will achieve two important goals. First, you will model the types of questions and the forms of enquiry which are important in your discipline. Second, you will encourage your students to engage in independent thinking and to "uncover" the process of that thought by justifying their own answers or evaluating the plausibility of others.

Ask Your Students to Assess Others' Thinking

For example, alert students to the assumptions, both implicit and explicit, in their own and others' thinking and writing. Have them identify these assumptions. Or ask them to evaluate the reliability of a textbook, article, or other source by looking for possible biases in the work and considering, for example, how, where, when, and by whom the information was gathered. Show students the types of flawed reasoning which weaken arguments: inferences based on unsound, or inadequate, observation; the assumption that an event which precedes another is its cause; oversimplification of complex relationships.

Reward Students' Independent Thought

If you want to impress upon students that independent thinking is important, then you must create a classroom environment where reasoned and informed disagreement with the instructor is encouraged and not penalized. Furthermore, look for, comment upon, and reward independent thought. Students will exploit a syllabus which extols thinking skills but rewards rote memorization.

Instructional Strategies to Extend Student Thinking

- Allow students to call on other students.
  - "Richard, will you please call on someone else to respond?"
- Ask 'follow-up'.
  - "Why?" "Do you agree?" "Can you elaborate?" "Tell me more." "Can you give me an example?"
- Ask for a summary (to promote active listening).
  - "Could you please summarize John's point?"
- Ask students to think about their thinking.
  - "Describe how you arrived at your answer." ("Think aloud.")
- Cue student responses.
  - "There is not a single correct answer to this question. I want you to consider alternatives."
- Play devil's advocate.
  - Require students to defend their reasoning against different points of view.
- Remember "wait time".
  - Ten to twenty seconds following a higher level question.
- Student questioning.
  - Encourage the students to develop their own questions.
- Survey the class.
  - "How many people agree with the author's point of view?" ("Thumbs up, thumbs down.")
- Utilize "think-pair-share".
  - Two minutes of think time, two minutes discussion in pairs, then class discussion.
- Withhold judgment.
  - Respond to the students in a non-evaluative fashion.

Reference:

Developed by the Language and Learning Improvement Branch, Division of Instruction, Maryland State Department of Education. Adapted from TA Guidebook, The Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching, University of Michigan, 1991.

Laboratories and Demonstrations

Being well prepared is the best insurance that your laboratory/class will run smoothly.

Prepare Yourself for Lab Sessions

- Consult your supervisor before your first laboratory about the nature of your teaching responsibilities, including the details of marking assignments and the class policy on cheating and plagiarism (see *Checklist for TAs and Course Supervisors*).

- Familiarize yourself with the laboratory timetable and schedule and be clear about the dates and times of your teaching responsibilities. Ask if you will need a key to the building or the lab. Find out where you can get a key request form and who will sign it. Keys are obtained from Parking & Access Control Services. They require a deposit.

- Introduce yourself to the lab technician and staff. Get to know their roles and how you can best work together.

- Know the emergency and safety procedures (see section on *Classroom and Laboratory Safety*).

- Familiarize yourself with any safety protocols that might be given to you, or posted in the laboratory, for example: list of emergency phone numbers, location of safety equipment, and procedure for handling chemicals.

- Familiarize yourself with the laboratory rules. All labs have some "do's and don'ts" such as where to return equipment, how to keep work areas clean, method of disposal of waste (animal/chemical).

- Know where equipment and supplies are stored. Check with your supervisor about replacing missing supplies. It is possible that your supervisor will sign you onto the course account at the appropriate store.

Prepare Students for Lab Sessions

- Familiarize your students with the laboratory rules and reinforce them in a firm but friendly manner.

- Indicate the location of first-aid kits and safety equipment such as emergency showers and eye washes.

- Explain to the students how their laboratory performance is to be marked and how the function of the laboratory relates to other parts of the class.

- Explain what preparation is expected of students prior to the lab, such as reading the lab manual.

- Indicate how attendance will be handled and the policy for make-up labs, if any.

- Explain to students what kind of reports, if any, are expected, including the format, marking scheme, due dates, and penalties for late reports, tests or exams.

- Explain to students the class policy on cheating and plagiarism as it relates to the preparation of laboratory reports. Where possible, collaboration with proper acknowledgment should be encouraged in the preparation of written reports, but it is important that the problems associated with referencing and acknowledgments (such as lab reports from previous years) be addressed (See section on *Conflicts and Resolutions*).

Plan Specific Labs

- Know the objectives and purpose of the lab so that you are familiar with what students are supposed to learn.

- If you're not familiar with lab exercises or procedures, or it has been a long time since you last performed them, complete them before the class so that you are familiar with problem areas.

- Complete data analyses/computations ahead of time so you are able to check student answers.

- Decide on an appropriate introduction for the lab including preparation of handouts, demonstrations, and background material. It is always preferable to demonstrate than to explain.

Conduct Specific Labs

- Start the lab after a brief introduction covering the purpose of the lab together with the demonstration of procedures or equipment emphasizing any specific safety precautions. Resist the temptation to lecture or talk too long.

- If a lab requires a longer introduction, it might be more appropriate to work with students in small groups rather than address the whole class.

- Check with students to see how the lab is proceeding. If results do not meet your expectations, encourage students to speculate about reasons for the deviations.

- As students leave the work area, make sure their workplace is clean and they have stored equipment properly.

- At the end of the lab, do a routine check with a written checklist: turn off lights; lock equipment cabinets; check air, gas, and steam taps; and then lock up the laboratory.

Interaction with Students during Labs

- Circulate among students during the laboratory so that you are able to answer questions or give assistance. Do not spend time chatting to other TAs or professors or spend too long assisting one student.

- If students look confused, do not wait for them to ask questions. Asking "What stage are you at?" or "How is it going?" will let you check how they are doing and give them an opportunity to ask questions. Do not intimidate or hover over students.

- If you do not know, or are unsure of, the answer to a student's question, advise them frankly and then try to find the answer by consulting a colleague or textbook. Never try to hide your ignorance by giving a confusing or muddled reply.

- Never give students the impression that you think they asked a stupid question (See section on *Question and Answer Techniques*).

- Show your students *respect* and cooperation. Being approachable is the best insurance that students will benefit from their interaction with you (See section on *The Teaching Environment*).

For more information, see:

Guidebook for Teaching Labs for University of Michigan Graduate Student Instructors by Beverly Black, Martha Gach, and Nancy Kotzian
http://www.crlt.umich.edu/crlttext/lab_guidebooktext.html

Classroom and Laboratory Safety

As the TA present in a classroom or laboratory, it is your responsibility to be aware of all safety rules and regulations. This is true even if you are not the formal authority (i.e. Instructor or Supervisor) normally present; make sure you can handle an emergency in the absence of the faculty member. Completion of the relevant safety training courses (Biosafety, Chemical Safety and Radiation Safety) is required in order to be a TA in a laboratory with any of these hazards. Courses are free to UBC students. Check the website **www.hse.ubc.ca** for course schedule and online registration.

See Article 19 "Health and Safety" of your TA Union Collective Agreement for more information.

Tips to help you ensure classroom and laboratory safety:

- Know where the nearest telephone is and know whom to contact in an emergency. UBC's 24-hour emergency number is 911. Know the civic address of your building.

- Know the locations of fire/emergency exits, fire alarms, and the best evacuation routes.

- Know the location of the first-aid kit and be prepared to carry out simple first-aid procedures.

- Know the location of fire extinguishers (Dry Chemical, CO_2 and H_2O), chemical spill cart and kits, emergency showers and eyewashes, and how to use them.

- In the event of fire, call 911 to report the details and pull the fire alarm. If the fire is small, fight it with the appropriate fire extinguisher. Your first responsibility is to ensure the safety of students and other occupants of the building. Only after ensuring the safety of these people should you attempt to fight a fire. Leave the area if you cannot control the fire with one fire extinguisher.

- In the event of a fire alarm, direct your students to evacuate the building by the fire exit or shortest safe route. Do not use the elevators. Give assistance to persons with disabilities and close the door after everyone has left but do not lock it. Do not return to the building until authorized.

- In the event of serious injury or illness, do not move the injured person unless it is a life-threatening situation. Call 911 and give as much information as you can. If possible, do not

leave an injured person unattended. Attendants will arrange for medical help and an ambulance, if required.

- In the event of a hazardous chemical spill or a hazardous gas leak, if you can safely do so, try to confine the leak or spill by shutting off the source of gas, closing the door, etc. If serious, pull the fire alarm so that evacuation of the building can begin. Call 911 and give as much information as you can. Contain and neutralize chemical spills with the chemical spill kit, and report gas leaks to trouble calls (604-822-2173).

In the laboratory, be sure you and the students:

- Refrain from smoking, eating, or drinking.
- Wear appropriate footwear (open toed shoes, sandals, bare or stocking feet are not permitted).
- Wear appropriate protective equipment such as safety glasses, goggles, gloves, masks and lab coats.
- Do not engage in horseplay and pranks: they are potentially dangerous.
- Confine clothing and long hair when working with chemicals and lab equipment.
- Develop a healthy respect for chemicals, know safety procedures (for example, use of fumehood, gloves, eye protection and how chemicals should be stored), and be alert for unsafe practices and techniques.
- Put all broken glass, used cover slips, or other sharp material in a specially marked puncture-proof container for disposal: do not put sharp material in regular garbage containers or sinks.
- Do not discard chemicals, radioactive materials, or animal tissues along with regular garbage.

For additional information on safety procedures, or instruction on use of fire extinguishers, first-aid, and treatment of chemical spills, see the website of the Department of Health, Safety and Environment, **www.hse.ubc.ca** or call the office at 604-822-2029.

Using Educational Technology in your Courses

Introduction

The University of British Columbia encourages the use of educational technology as a tool for teaching and learning. Using technology in learning environments should not be viewed as an end in itself. Rather, using technology well means you must carefully consider your skills, discipline area, and teaching style, as well as the characteristics of your students. Often, if you decide to use educational technology, you need to identify and implement some additional teaching strategies to facilitate an effective learning environment.

Depending on the expectations for TAs in your department, and whether you are making small changes or revamping an entire course, the tips and technologies described below may be

helpful. One of the goals of this document is to help you understand where and when a given technology may be appropriate.

As members of the UBC teaching community, we encourage you to consult with the appropriate learning technology resource people on campus if you are interested in using technology in your teaching. See *Learning Technology at UBC – A Quick List* in Appendix C and the **www.elearning.ubc.ca** page for contact information.

Useful Links:

- Resources for those teaching a WebCT Course with TA access: **http://careo.elearning.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/wiki.pl?DE_Instructor_Resources**

- Teaching Online: **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?menuClicked=5%2F&p=main/dsp_teach_index.cfm**

Using WebCT

WebCT (**http://www.webct.ubc.ca**) has become the most common course management system used at UBC. Whether it is used simply as a supplement to a face-to-face course or to facilitate online education, it has become a fundamental tool in course development and delivery. As a TA for a specific UBC course, you may play many different roles within a WebCT course. You may be responsible for developing the entire course, or for assisting the instructor in creating new course content, transferring existing content to an electronic format, or simply grading papers and quizzes. The following will help you to understand what tools are available in WebCT and discuss how you handle common tasks like grading in WebCT.

Determining Access in WebCT

There are three levels of access in WebCT: student, TA, and designer. It's a good idea to talk to your instructor or the department head to determine what you'll be doing before the course starts, so that you know what level of access you'll need (because there are some things you can't do using TA access).

TA Access

As a teaching assistant, you may be granted TA access in WebCT. With this type of access, you are able to do the following:

- Manage students: change their information, grades, and so on.

- Grade assignments and quizzes, including providing detailed feedback.

- View all course content, even content with a "Conditional" status set by the instructor. This gives you the ability to see what's coming up.

Designer Access

Depending on what is asked of you, in some situations you will need designer access. This type of access gives you the ability to add, delete, and change anything in a WebCT course. If you require the ability to add new content, discussion topics, or public calendar entries, you will need designer access.

Having designer access allows you to add new course content, manage existing files, create new quizzes, and make any changes needed to meet teaching goals.

Caution: When designer access is shared, all the designers 'share' the course instructor's name on all discussion topics and mail. The easiest way to minimize confusion for your students is to ensure that you let them know it is you, by adding your name to your posts. Your instructional support team members may also be able to suggest other ways to deal with this issue.

Also, having shared designer access means that you will be able to preview quizzes and assignments, but not take them, and that the My Grades tool is not available.

Common Tasks in WebCT

Grading Assignments (Assignments Tool)

The Assignments tool allows instructors to create and distribute assignments to students. It also provides a means for students to upload their completed assignments for grading. With TA access, you can download, evaluate, provide feedback, and assign a grade to a completed assignment. With designer access, you can set or modify options for individual assignments (due dates, maximum grade, etc.).

For more information on using the Assignment tool with your specific type of access, visit:

- TA Access View:
  http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/ta/ta_assign_grade.html

- Designer Access View:
  http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/designer/assign/assign.html

Best Practices for Using Assignments Tool

- Tell your students what type of file format they should submit their assignments in. It is often best to ask that they submit papers in RTF (Rich Text Format) or PDF (Portable Document Format), although for charts, spreadsheets and so on, an application like MS Excel may be more appropriate.

  - RTF and PDF formats allow the document to be viewed on any computer regardless of software and operating system. However, asking for assignments to be submitted in a Microsoft Word format (.doc) has its advantages too, including the ability for you to leave comments for the students within the original document, using the Track Changes tool (PDF also allows this, but in a more limited way). To see a detailed discussion on tools you can use to mark student papers, see **http://www.onlinelearning.net/InstructorCommunity/SelfPacedTutorial.html?s=326.p050n1435.142v122131**

- Managing Digital Assignments and Quizzes:

- **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/DirCMSSiteContent/documents/ubc_assessment.pdf**

Grading Quizzes (Quizzes/Surveys Tool)

The Quizzes/Surveys tool allows for the creation and administration of online quizzes/surveys in a variety of question styles (multiple choice, matching, calculated, short answer, and

paragraph). This tool enables the instructor to test students' knowledge by quickly, and in many cases automatically, grading responses (paragraph-style questions require manual grading). The quiz tool allows for the creation of question sets, selective release times, and automatic grading. Once students complete a quiz, their grades are entered into the WebCT gradebook, and students can then easily view their own grades only when they log into the course.

- If you will be required to create or modify any quizzes/surveys or individual questions, you will need (shared) designer access.

Creating Questions

- Questions can be added directly through the WebCT interface, as well as with Respondus, which is a software tool for creating and managing quizzes. Respondus is designed to help make quiz authoring simpler and to integrate with WebCT. Questions and quizzes created with it are uploaded directly to your WebCT course. Additionally, paper quizzes can be created using the same questions for in-class assessments. The University of British Columbia has a site license agreement that permits UBC instructors to use Respondus. To access instructions on where to download this application and how to install it, go to **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?p=main/dsp_respondus_index.inc** (Respondus is only available for Microsoft Windows, not Macintosh).

- For a step-by-step guide to creating questions, visit **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/designer/quiz/quiz_db.html**

Creating a Quiz

When creating a quiz in WebCT, there are essentially three types to choose from: quiz, survey and self-test:

- The Quiz tool can be used to test students' knowledge and grade their responses.

- The Survey tool is used when the instructor is looking for anonymous and ungraded responses.

- For instructions on creating a quiz or a survey within WebCT, click **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/designer/quiz/quiz_create.html**

- Self-Test: WebCT has a self-test tool, which allows students to take a practice test. This can be a great option, allowing students to interactively test their knowledge, as well as receive immediate feedback on their responses.

- For more information, visit **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/designer/pages/questions.html**

Depending on your responsibilities as a TA, your main role may be to mark quizzes by providing relevant feedback to answers and grading paragraph style questions.

- For step-by-step instructions on how to view and grade quiz submissions, visit **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/ta/ta_quiz_mark.html**

- For tips on providing feedback, see the section on *Time Saving Marking/Grading Strategies*, the section on *Giving Feedback in a Constructive Way*, and/or speak to the instructor you are working with.

- Managing Digital Assignments and Quizzes: **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/DirCMSSiteContent/documents/ubc_assessment.pdf**

Managing Students

The Manage Students area of the course gives you access to student information and grades in WebCT. With it, you will be able to:

- Delete students.
- View, add information to, and display student records.
- Calculate and enter grades.
- Create new columns for non-WebCT grades.
- Selectively release grades to the My Grades tool for students to access.
- For more information, see **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/ta/ta_stud_mgmt_index.html**

Bringing More Life (and Community) to a WebCT Course

There are many WebCT tools you can use to facilitate communication, such as the Discussion Tool, Chat Tool, and Mail Tool (for email within the course). Each tool has its own characteristics, providing various advantages and disadvantages.

Discussions (Discussion Tool)

The Discussion Tool provides an area within your course to carry on discussions on a series of topics or 'threaded conversations'. A discussion topic (or thread) is often initiated by an instructor who posts an introductory message. Students then post replies to that topic. This is a great tool to encourage discussions that require reflection, critical analysis, or collaboration. Most often, the Discussion Tool is used to establish an online learning community and is used to more closely replicate in-class discussions. It is not the best tool to use if spontaneous, immediate response is required. In that case, the Chat Tool (described on the next page) may be a better choice.

Common Uses & Advantages

- Lack of immediate feedback can be an advantage: the Discussion Tool gives students time to think, because they can respond to a post hours or days after it was made.
- In-depth discussion questions, case study analysis, role-playing or simulation exercises can provide a means for students to share their own real-life experiences.
- Useful for case study analysis, peer review, and editing.
- Useful for setting student expectations for interaction, and for modeling good interactive behaviour.
- Probably the most important WebCT tool for small group work.

- Public areas can be created where students post questions, comments, and feedback to the entire class.

- Discussions can be divided into different topics, focusing on particular items or issues.

- You can set access permissions to make some discussions private, that is, only accessible to a set number of students. This is essential for students doing small group work.

- Because students do not have to meet at a specific time, working on collaborative group projects can be easier.

- Students who are hesitant to speak up in a face-to-face classroom environment are often less reluctant to contribute in this type of environment.

- Discussion forums can be archived.

Disadvantages

- Instructor may need to monitor discussions closely to encourage and model appropriate use.

- Time consuming.

- If people don't keep up with reading and responding to the postings regularly, the number of them to review and respond to can become overwhelming.

- For detailed information, visit: **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/student/discussion/s_discuss_index.html**

Online Chat (Chat Tool)

The Online Chat tool can be useful in community building within an online course, if real time conversations among students, teaching assistants and instructors are wanted. The WebCT Chat tool requires Java software to operate (**http://www.java.com**), which most (but not all) computers will already have installed.

Common Uses & Advantages

- Chats are used for small group meetings, class review sessions, and guest speakers, or for online office hours, where 'live,' immediate response is needed.

- Chat fosters immediacy and social presence, and is useful for brainstorming activities. For online courses, chat can help students talk in a more natural way and increase a sense of bonding and community.

- Because WebCT's chat is a completely textual communication medium, classes may use them to focus on writing.

Disadvantages

- Successful chat sessions require detailed prior planning.

- Chat sessions work best with a small number of participants. Otherwise, the 'chat' can become very confusing.

- Using the chat tool: **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/student/chat/s_chat_about.html**

E-Mail (Mail Tool)

No doubt you've used email, so this tool will be familiar to you. The Mail Tool in WebCT allows you to send, receive, reply, and forward mail messages to others in the course. It is best for one-to-one communication and is a fast and easy way to send a message to someone in the course, or to a group of particular people within the course.

Common Uses & Advantages

- Students and instructors submit messages (e.g., questions, comments) individually.
- Students can exchange assignment files with other students, the TA or the instructor.
- Instructors can communicate privately with students regarding individual performance, grades, and other confidential matters.
- It is an easy and fast communication tool.
- You can send attachments such as graphics, as you would with any other email program.
- It is especially useful for students who take classes while traveling.

Disadvantages

- There are many instances when using the mail tool may not be the best choice for a course, unless it is combined with the Discussion Tool. For example:
  - If students email a question to the TA or the instructor using Mail, the whole class doesn't benefit from the answer.
  - Students are not able to assist each other, unless they create a long and complex web of mail responses.
- For instructions on using Mail, see **http://www.webct.ubc.ca/web-ct/help/en/student/mail/s_mail_index.html**

Best Practices for Communication in WebCT

The communication tools in WebCT can play a very important role in your course. They provide an area where students, teaching assistants and instructors can participate in rich and lively discussions. At times it can be challenging to get adequate participation using the communication tools, especially if the component is not a course requirement. The opposite can also be true – discussions can become large and overwhelming for students, TAs and instructors. Luckily, there are many resources available to help you manage discussions and encourage community-building, resulting in a better online learning experience for all. Here are some of them:

- Rubric for Student-led Discussions:
  - **https://verf.app1.itservices.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?p=documents/discuss_rubric.html**

- Preparing Faculty for Successful Synchronous and Asynchronous Discussions: Plan, Implement & Evaluate by Barbara A. Frey (University Pittsburgh) and Linda Wonjar (Duquesne University):

  - **http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/MAC0426.pdf**

- Increasing Community:

  - **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/DirCMSSiteContent/documents/ubc_community.pdf**

Reference:

The Teaching and Learning Council. (2004). Teaching at Mizzou: A Guide for New Faculty, Graduate Instructors and Teaching Assistants. Retrieved October 4, 2004, from the University of Missouri-Columbia website at **http://teachandlearn.missouri.edu/guide/index.htm**

Content Creation

When creating and putting content into a WebCT course, it is important to realize that the information should be in an accessible format. Accessible formats ensure that everyone will be able to access the information, regardless of computer platforms, software differences, or disabilities. The following link to the e-Learning site provides various resources that will give you a better idea of what to consider when creating online content:

- **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?menuClicked=5%2F3%2F&p=main/dsp_teach_accessibility.cfm**

It is always wise to consider your audience and the best file formats for your content. In most situations, documents in Microsoft Word or PowerPoint can be put into something more 'web friendly,' to make the online learning experience the best it can be for students. In Word 2000 or later versions, there is a "Save as Webpage" command which can be used to create concise web pages. This reduces download time for students using dialup modems at home.

We encourage you to consult with your instructional support team members for more information and assistance with creating and putting content into your course.

Other Tools to Consider

Digital Video and Audio

The use of video online (QuickTime, Real, Windows Media Video, MPEG, etc) can be a very effective way to demonstrate visual and auditory concepts that cannot otherwise be presented with still images. This is often the case in medicine, health related fields, or language classes, for example. With the tools available today, utilizing this technology has become as simple as using a digital camera. However, if many of your students use dialup modems to access their course, video clips can take too long to easily download.

WinZip

WinZip is a file archiving tool that will allow you to compress or extract .zip files. This is handy when you need to upload multiple files to WebCT. There are also many other tools that create/extract zip files, available for every computer platform, though WinZip is the most common. Note that WinZip is only available for PCs, not for Macintosh computers.

WebDAV

WebDAV allows you to conveniently manage WebCT files directly from a desktop folder on your computer. You don't have to zip, upload and unzip files within WebCT anymore. You can simply 'drag and drop' files from your computer to the My Files area of your WebCT course. WebDAV is available for Macintosh and PCs. For WebDAV setup instructions, see **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/plugin/index.cfm**

StudyMate

StudyMate is an authoring tool that lets you create Flash-based activities and games using three simple templates. The Flash activities are usable with any web server or can be published directly to WebCT courses. StudyMate will import items from MS Word files or the Respondus Test Bank Network, making it easy to create interesting, interactive activities from existing content. UBC has a site license that permits UBC instructors to use StudyMate. To access instructions on where to download this application and how to install it, go to **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?menuClicked=2%2F&p=main/dsp_webct_index.cfm** and click on **StudyMate** under the 'Instructors' column.

Emerging Technologies

There are also many other technologies that can both help you achieve your teaching goals and enhance the learning experience for your students. The use of digital technology can expand the learning experience by allowing you to go beyond the methods and tools used in the traditional classroom setting.

Weblogs

Weblogs (or simply 'blogs') are a very popular and easy-to-use technology which can foster online interaction and resource sharing (see Weblogs@UBC **http://careo.elearning.ubc.ca/weblogs/home/**). A blog is essentially a website that allows a user to post content, whether it is an article, a short anecdote, or an open-ended question, and then receive feedback from any of the website's "readers." All visitors to a blog can participate in the discussion surrounding each post, as well as read all the existing comments. This results in a shared, and open approach to teaching and building learning communities, but only the designated contributor(s) can post new content.

PhD students Mike Wells and Elizabeth Maurer have written an excellent article describing their experiences using blogs to help spark online discussion. They found that using blogs led to students being more prepared and confident for in-class discussions. Read the article here: **http://www.e-strategy.ubc.ca/news/update0408/040825-weblogs.html**

Wikis

'Wiki' is the Hawaiian word for quick. 'Wikiwiki' means really quick. There is no quicker way to get text online than by using a wiki. With the most basic wikis, anyone can post content from any internet-enabled computer, and there are no permissions required or passwords to remember. This makes wikis ideal for keeping an ongoing list of resources, posting meeting agendas and notes, or creating a space for collaborative brainstorming and composition. Wikis facilitate collaboration (for example, in a seminar group), as well as participation for a large class, and peer review. Wikis also retain previously saved versions of each document. This allows you to revert to earlier, better versions, if, for example, someone deletes or inappropriately modifies the content.

Wikis can either be totally public or maintained in a protected site such as a WebCT course (remember, if it is public, anyone can view or modify content, so do a little research on wikis before deciding how you'd like to use them). For more information and/or to start building a wiki, see UBC's wiki resource at **http://careo.elearning.ubc.ca/cgi-bin/wiki.pl**

e-Portfolios

e-Portfolios are online collections of your work that you choose to represent your skills and interests to diverse audiences. Highly customizable, e-Portfolios allow the user to assemble subsets of their work to present to instructors, potential employers, and others via login.

e-Portfolios have shown great potential to document individual learning and growth for UBC students and instructors. If you are interested in using learning e-portfolios in your class with your students, or in developing a personal teaching e-portfolio, see **https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm?menuClicked=4%2F1%2F&p=main/dsp_eport_resources.cfm**

Your instructional technology support team members can provide you with more information on these and other emerging technologies.

Final Considerations

The following list of suggestions and tips will help you reflect on some of the challenges you may encounter as a result of incorporating technology into your classes.

- *Test, and retest.* So many problems with online courses could have been avoided if the designers had done their testing before the course began. Make sure to test as many components of your course as you can using several different computers, browsers (Internet Explorer, Netscape, Mozilla), operating systems (PC, Macintosh), and if possible, connection speeds (some people still use dial-up modems). Also make sure you know what software students will need to participate in the course.

- *Set aside blocks of time.* Overload is a common challenge with using technology, particularly for novice users. Set time aside on your calendar each week for responding to student email. Be realistic about how much time you can devote to this each day. Be honest with students about the volume of email you receive daily and provide them with an honest estimate of when they can expect a reply from you.

- Be clear in your expectations and guidelines.

    - Tell students to be precise in creating subject lines, to keep messages short and to focus on a single topic. Hold students accountable to your guidelines.

    - Post to the group rather than responding to each individual student contribution. Respond to several student contributions at once by weaving them together and posting your answer using the discussion tool. Create an FAQ (frequently asked questions) document to address common questions.

    - Tell students to avoid fancy formatting such as tabs, tables and fonts unless you're certain all users can view them, or unless they are required for the information to make sense.

  - Model the kind of behavior you expect from students in your own messages, for example, making subject lines specific and keeping contributions short. Include information in your course site on how to get technical support.

- *Tell students how available you will and will not be*, and how much time they can expect you to spend in responding to them online.

- *Know where to go for help.* It's Thursday afternoon and the big final paper is due Friday morning. Do you know who to call for technical support if you don't know the answer to a student's question? Ensure that you know who to call – find out who your technical support person or team is before the course begins.

- *Try to anticipate issues before the course begins.* How will you handle offensive content, or a rancorous argument, in a discussion thread? What if a student claims he or she uploaded an assignment but you never received it? Who will troubleshoot students' technical questions? The more you have discussed these questions (and others) with your course team, and included the answers in your course syllabus, the greater your chances for a very successful course.

Use of Audiovisuals to Enhance Instruction

A good aid, like a window, should just let in the light.
It should not call attention to itself.

Why Use Audiovisuals?

Audiovisuals can be used for a variety of reasons that include, but are not limited to:

- Attracting attention.

- Developing interest.

- Adjusting the learning climate.

- Increasing understanding.

- Promoting acceptance (of an idea).

- Introducing hands-on activity.

Though instructional media can be useful in helping students remember important facts, enhancing the quality of discussion, or increasing students' ability to apply information, they should be used selectively and must fit your instructional objectives. Audio-visual aids require planning and skill in use.

Common Audiovisuals

Some of the more common audio-visual aids are:

- Overhead transparencies.
- PowerPoint.
- Films and videotapes.
- Chalkboards or flipcharts.
- Charts.
- Diagrams.
- Models.
- Illustrations.
- Audio-cassettes.
- 35 mm slides.

An instructor must determine which media, in what form, and at what time, will most effectively provide the most relevant experiences for learners. Used well, audiovisuals can aid communication and increase students' retention of information and learning. Furthermore, visuals such as overhead transparencies and PowerPoint can save instructional preparation time because they can be reused.

Creating Effective Visuals

When designing visuals:

- Carefully choose the material (present only one main idea per visual, include essential details and avoid irrelevant information).
- Use large font (24 point is minimum).
- Follow the general rule: no more than 6 words per line and no more than 6 short lines per overhead.

See Appendix G *An Audiovisual Checklist* for further details.

For more information regarding the use of audiovisuals see also:

- BCIT's Learning Resource Unit handout on Designing and Using Visuals in the Classroom (download at **http://www.lru.bcit.ca/resources/pdf/ht-visuals.pdf**).

Using Chalkboards

Basics to Begin With

- Try not to use poorly-lit boards, or boards with a lot of sun glare on them, which can't be corrected. This is something you should check before the first day of class.

- Start with a clean board. Always erase the board before you leave the room as a courtesy to the person teaching after you.

- Write legibly – dark enough and large enough. You may find your printing is more legible than your writing. Practise printing/writing letters that are parallel to the floor, and that are all the same size.

- Practise drawing pictures/diagrams before the class.

- In flat rooms with more than two rows of students, don't use the bottom quarter of the board. Students in the back rows will not be able to see.

During the Process

Remember that students will copy down exactly what you have written on the board

- Make sure you write solutions and definitions in a way which would be acceptable on an exam.

- Avoid abbreviations which students may later forget.

- Include critical words – for example, "If…,then…"

- If you happen to put an incorrect statement on the board (by accident) and then realize it is incorrect, try your best to ensure that the students know that the original statement is incorrect. Often, the students will forget to show the statement as incorrect in their notes.

- If, after you have written something, you identify a mistake, don't erase it. Instead, point it out to the class, put distinct lines through the erroneous material, and write a corrected version in above the old version.

- Be sure that you emphasize only those things which are important, using underlining, circling or coloured chalk. If everything is emphasized, nothing is important.

Face the class and don't block the board

  - Try not to talk with your back to the class. If you are writing something brief, write it down, and then turn and talk to the students. If you are using the board extensively, stand at an angle as you write and maintain some eye contact with students as you talk about what you are writing.

  - Once you have written material on the board, step to the side, so students can read it.

Organize material on the board

- Locate diagrams and their written descriptions together, and label them carefully.
- Show all of the steps of a solution, in a logical sequence.
- In courses with lots of board work (for example, mathematics), work from left to right, one panel at a time, and top to bottom. Don't erase until the full three paneled board is filled, then erase the leftmost panel to begin again. The day's objectives or assignments should be written on side boards and erased only when the class is over.
- Use triple layer boards in rotation, always pushing the just-filled board above the current board, so that students can still see it.

For courses requiring less board work, the arrangement below is one effective approach:

Title of Today's Class	
Key Vocabulary	Today's Outline
a.	1.
b.	2.
c.	3.
d.	4.

Erase carefully

- Erase panels completely, but not until they are needed for more material, to give students enough time to take notes.
- Don't erase mistakes on the board (see above).
- Wait to erase the board at the end of the class until students have time to ask individual questions about the work on the board.

Adapted from:

Program for Excellence in Teaching (1994). Handbook for Graduate Instructors & Teaching Assistants University of Missouri-Columbia.

Evaluating your Teaching Skills

Note: This section outlines two types of evaluation, summative and formative. Your TA Union CUPE Local 2278 is concerned about Summative evaluations and expresses concern over the use of evaluations in monitoring work performance. It has noted that difficulties might arise when Union members evaluate other members' work.

Summative Evaluation

When you think of evaluation of teaching, you probably think of end-of-term or year-end questionnaires which are distributed to students in the class. You have likely completed these for your own professors. The main purpose of such a summative rating of instruction is to provide information on your performance as a teacher. This type of evaluation is useful for both you and your supervisor to examine. It gives an overview of the students' impression of the entire course, their learning, and your teaching. The feedback from these questionnaires may help you prepare for the class you teach next term. However, the weakness is that you have to wait until the end of the course, and further, the questionnaires usually ask very general questions – in other words, they are not tailored to specific classes. How do you obtain feedback on your teaching now, so that you can continue to do what works and modify what doesn't?

Formative Evaluation

Mid-term formative evaluation is used for teaching improvement. It produces information which instructors can use for teaching improvement during a course. The instructor is in control of how and when the evaluation occurs, and the method of eliciting feedback can be crafted to match the needs of the course.

Sources of formative evaluation include information from:

- Yourself: perhaps videotape or audiotape your class.
- Students: questionnaires from your students during the course.
- Colleagues: feedback on your teaching.
- Supervisor: who best knows course content.

Formative evaluation means you can modify your teaching at once, long before the end-of-year evaluation forms are completed by your students.

Information from Yourself

How do you teach? How do you begin and end class? How do you emphasize main points? When do you change the volume or rate of your speech? How do you encourage participation? Try to discover the answers to these important questions by keeping track of your teaching for a few days, a first step to self-awareness of your teaching (Weimer, Parrett, & Kerns, 1988).

Another approach to reflection on our teaching suggests that instructors complete a check list to add a focus and a framework to their deliberations (Shears, 1982; Beaty, 1997). This checklist can be competed after each class session:

- Questions might include "How well did I…?"
- Capture students' attention?
- Summarize the main points of the class?
- Keep the material relevant?
- Build up student confidence?
- Handle student questions and responses?

Responses may be entered on a five-point scale from "very well" to "not applicable." You can build on this exercise by following it with student questionnaires or feedback from a colleague.

Information from Students

As an instructor, you constantly evaluate students and give them feedback on their work. There is also a real advantage to regular feedback from your students about your teaching. One way to do this is to have a Suggestion Box where students can drop their ideas. You can also collect valuable information on short forms of three to five questions which focus on aspects of your teaching you want to learn more about – perhaps issues you identified when you were trying to answer questions about your own teaching. Patricia Cross and Thomas Angelo (1988) developed a technique called the *Teacher –Designed Evaluation Mini-Form*. The technique allows instructors to ask students focused questions about the course at regular intervals.

How it works:

- Compile three to five questions which relate to instructional objectives or a specific issue.
- Develop an appropriate answer format: scale, multiple choice, or short fill-ins.
- Allow the students 10-15 minutes at the end of class to complete the questionnaire.
- Leave the room and ask a student to collect and deliver the competed forms to you.

Teacher-Designed Evaluation Mini-Form: One Example

Instructions: Please answer the following questions by circling the response you most agree with. You may add comments.

How useful are class discussions to help you understand the concepts we cover in class?

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never useful					Always useful

Suggestions for improving class discussion periods?

How helpful are the class outlines I project on the overhead at the beginning of each class?

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never helpful					Always helpful

How could I use these outlines more effectively?

How effective are the comments that I write on your papers and lab reports in improving your understanding of the course material?

0	1	2	3	4	5
Never effective					Always effective

Suggestions for improving the effectiveness of my written comments:

Thanks for completing this form. Your answers will help measure my teaching effectiveness. Your comments will help me improve.

Information from Colleagues

Another TA, sessional instructor or colleague who attends your class and comments on your teaching can provide valuable feedback on your teaching that you can use right away.

Before the Class

Meet with a colleague and give him/her a short list of instructional items to observe. Be precise: what do you want to find out?

Sample of Observation Items

In this example, the instructor wants information from a colleague about four areas of teaching: organization, presentation, rapport, and active learning. The items under each heading represent teaching behaviours which demonstrate effectiveness in that area. The colleague will evaluate what the instructor does well.

The following list is based on an evaluation form devised by Weimer, Parrett, and Kerns (1988):

Organization

- Clearly states the goals and objectives of the class period.
- Does not digress often from the main topic.
- Appears well prepared for class.

Presentation

- Responds to changes in student attentiveness.
- Communicates a sense of enthusiasm for the content.
- Selects teaching methods appropriate for the content.

Rapport

- Solicits student feedback.
- Requires student thought and participation.
- Listens carefully to student comments and questions.

Active Learning

- Clearly explains directions and procedures.
- Allows sufficient time for completion.
- Schedules time for discussion of results.

After the Class

Meet to discuss your colleagues' observations about your teaching. Make sure you understand the comments and how they were derived. Consider which suggestions you would like to act upon immediately, or use another source of feedback, for example, students, to cross reference the conclusions for another perspective.

Information from your Supervisor

Activities for feedback from a colleague could be used for feedback from your supervisor. You may also want to ask your supervisor to corroborate the evaluation of others – yourself, your students, or your colleague – by observing your teaching or by discussing others' evaluations with you. Your supervisor is the best source of feedback concerning the course content.

Videotape your Class

You may obtain from videotape, or audiotape, the answers to your question, "How do I teach?" Some teachers find this process unnerving, but it can be extremely helpful. If you are taped, be sure that you have a clear idea of the aspects of your teaching on which you wish to focus. Make a checklist similar to the one you would make if a colleague observed your class. Many instructors find it useful to invite a colleague to view the tape with them – both you and your colleague complete the checklist and compare notes afterwards.

Summary of Formative Evaluation Methods

All the efforts you make to improve your teaching through feedback are worthy of inclusion in your Teaching Dossier. (See section on *The Teaching Dossier*.)

Conflicts and Resolutions

It is almost inevitable that conflicts in the classroom will arise which require some response from you as an instructor. Some of the potential sources of problems are outlined below, with suggestions for dealing with them. Beyond these particular cases, the guidelines may be effective to handle other situations:

- If possible, discuss the problem with the course supervisor who not only bears ultimate responsibility for the class, but has more experience dealing with conflicts of this type.

- Be sensitive to the different ways in which students are experiencing the class, and to how they are approaching activities and assignments. By "keeping your ear to the ground," you can identify potential difficulties and take steps to find early solutions.

- Teachers exercise considerable power over students; even casual comments that might be fine between friends can be threatening to a student when expressed by a teacher.

- Students should be treated at all times with respect, and their rights as mature, autonomous individuals should be recognized.

Class Attendance

Students are given greater freedom at university and may initially need help making the adjustment. There is a direct correlation between attendance and grades, but students may not realize this. Three factors have the greatest impact on attendance:

- *Quality of classes.* Classes that are well taught and are clearly useful are usually well attended.

- *Frequent feedback.* This encourages students to attend and helps them improve their work. You can encourage regular attendance by giving small assignments. These assignments, worth only a few marks each, will encourage students to attend classes and help them improve their work. They will also give early warning of problems. Younger students sometimes don't have enough experience to predict the consequences of their actions. Many believe, to their subsequent chagrin, that they can skip classes and still catch up later.

- *Reduced anonymity.* It seems easy to skip classes at a large university like UBC. Try to be aware of attendance without obvious policing. If you make casual comments when a student has been absent, like, "Sorry you couldn't come last week." or "Do you need help with the work you missed?" you reduce the student's sense of anonymity and increase his or her sense of responsibility. However, irritated or sarcastic comments will accomplish nothing.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating and plagiarism are important concerns at any institution of higher learning. UBC's Policy on Academic Misconduct aims to minimize the occurrence of academic dishonesty by providing clear guidelines and procedures for assessing the occurrence of academic dishonesty.

Suspected academic dishonesty is neither easy to identify nor to deal with. Even if you feel sure you have evidence of cheating, it may be the case that there was no intention to be dishonest. What appears to be dishonesty may be caused by misunderstanding or inexperience. For example, it may appear that a first year student is guilty of plagiarism, when in fact, s/he is inexperienced and inflexible with language, may not understand what plagiarism is and why it must be avoided, or may not clearly understand the importance of and mechanisms for citation. Similarly, it may seem that one student has copied the lab report of another, when in fact, the students collaborated writing the report and simply neglected to acknowledge their co-authorship. It is important that, as teachers, we ensure that students clearly understand scholarly requirements for acknowledgement and citation. There is no intention to cheat in misunderstanding. We can prevent cheating by improving our teaching methods rather than by becoming better police officers.

As detailed in the UBC Calendar, there are three main categories of academic dishonesty that can occur in the context of scholarly submissions:

Student Discipline: Academic Misconduct

Ignorance of the appropriate standard of academic honesty is no defence to an allegation of Academic Misconduct. Academic Misconduct that is subject to penalty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- *Plagiarism.* Plagiarism occurs where an individual submits or presents the work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when excerpts are used in paragraphs or essays, the author must be acknowledged in the text, through footnotes, in endnotes, or in other accepted forms of academic citation. Plagiarism extends from where there is no recognition given to the author for phrases, sentences, or ideas of the author incorporated in an essay to where an entire essay is copied from an author, or composed by another person, and presented as original work. Students must ensure that when they seek assistance from a tutor or anyone else that the work they submit is actually their own. Where collaborative work is permitted by the instructor, students must ensure that they comply with the instructor's requirements for such collaboration. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. You should inform students that if they are in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, they should consult their instructor(s) before handing in any assignments.

- *Cheating.* Cheating includes, but is not limited to: falsifying any material subject to academic evaluation; having in an examination any materials other than those permitted by the examiner; and using unauthorized means to complete an examination (e.g. receiving unauthorized assistance from a fellow student).

- *Submitting the same, or substantially the same, essay, presentation, or assignment more than once* (whether the earlier submission was at this or another institution), unless prior approval has been obtained from the instructor(s) to whom the assignment is to be submitted.

Student Discipline: Warning

The disciplinary measure imposed for plagiarism or cheating is normally suspension from the University.

The laying of criminal charges, or the commencement of civil proceedings, does not preclude the University from commencing disciplinary proceedings or taking disciplinary measures against a student who has committed academic or non-academic misconduct.

Consequences for academic misconduct can be severe and have a dramatic impact on students' academic careers. It is of the utmost importance that, as educators, we encourage and promote academic integrity as a core value of the Institution and teach students appropriate ways to acknowledge their reliance on the work of others. Some suggestions follow.

Plagiarism

As teachers, our goal is to understand students' perspectives so we can help them improve their work (to educate, not to punish), and to provide an environment that promotes learning, rather than suspicion. Many students come to university knowing nothing about plagiarism. Many students do not intend to commit plagiarism and have no intention to mislead. Unless we explain in advance why copying is unacceptable, we cannot with good conscience enforce the rules. Therefore we should:

- *Educate.* Explain how to use the ideas of others correctly. It is *not sufficient* to circulate a threatening statement about plagiarism at the beginning of the year.

- *Set a good example.* Be sure you are not using the words and ideas of others without acknowledgement when you are teaching. There should be no double standards.

- *Recognize and acknowledge the difficulties of avoiding results that are similar in disciplines like science.* It is rarely possible to come up with valid and acceptable original ideas in scientific subjects. In addition, the languages of science are so specific that wording cannot be changed easily. There are clear and definitive sources in science, and it is hard to be original without violating disciplinary norms.

- *Recognize that students are still in the process of refining their language use.* They may have trouble rewording text and expressing it as clearly, or as eloquently, as the source. A student who awkwardly puts all ideas into his/her own words is likely to get a lower mark than one who copies but is not caught. When marking assignments, try to balance rewarding original efforts, even if ideas are expressed awkwardly, with rewarding clarity and eloquence of expression.

- *Give feedback in a non-threatening way, before major problems arise.* When you see a few sentences that have been copied, while marking, make a casual comment such as, "Be sure you always use your own words," or "This sounds like a quotation; be sure to use quotation marks." Equally, comment on the efforts made, "Good effort at reworking these ideas." If you can recognize efforts at originality, and catch small problems, plagiarism will not be an issue.

Copying Essays or Lab Reports Written by Other Students

Students are often unaware that this also constitutes plagiarism. If you think one student has copied the assignment of another, speak to both of them privately. Rather than making accusations, show them your evidence and ask for an explanation. If the case is serious, pass it along to the course supervisor.

This kind of cheating is more likely to occur if students believe their teacher does not read their work carefully. Mark carefully and make comments and explanations where appropriate. Similarly, there will be less copying if assignments are changed each year.

Cheating on Tests or Exams

If you face undeniable cheating, suit your punishment to the seriousness of the crime. It is appropriate to advise your course supervisor. Advise the student about the Ombuds Office (Student Union Building, Room 100B, 604-822-4846). If you are fair, the Ombuds Office will usually confirm this. If you make an error, admit it.

Submitting the Same Essay for Different Classes

Willingness to accept the submission of work that is also submitted for another course varies from one instructor to another. While in most cases students are expected to do original work for each class, they may receive permission to undertake research, writing, or projects which they submit for more than one class with the expressed knowledge and consent of all instructors. You should make it clear to students that, without such consent, work done for another class or institution is not acceptable. When such consent has been given, students should indicate, by way of citation, that their work has been previously submitted.

For more information, please see the following:

- UBC Faculty of Arts' "What is Academic Integrity?"
  http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Academic_Integrity.89.0.html

- UBC Library's "Criteria for Evaluating Internet Resources"
  http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/evaluating/

- VP Academic and Provost's Office information about Turnitin.com @ UBC
  http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/turnitin/

- UBC's "Policy #69: Student Discipline"
  http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/policies.htm

- UBC's 2004/2005 Calendar "Academic Misconduct"
  http://students.ubc.ca/calendar/index.cfm?tree=3,54,111,0

Disruptions in the Classroom: Dealing with a Difficult Student

Note: Your TA Union CUPE Local 2278 has noted that members can approach the Union for advice and counselling in confidence, especially if the member does not feel comfortable approaching his/her supervisor.

Disruptive behaviour can be defined as actions, either verbal or physical, on the part of one or more students which make the other students uncomfortable and which make it difficult for other students to participate in discussions or for the instructor to teach.

Preventing Disruptive Behaviour

The best way to deal with disruptive behaviour is to prevent it before it begins. During the first class, the TA should make it clear to the students exactly how the session will be conducted and what types of behaviour are and are not permissible. The students should also be made aware of the consequences if they do not follow the rules. When everyone knows the boundaries, it is easier to not overstep them.

Dealing With a Disruptive Student

Ask the student(s) to refrain from such behaviour. Explain that it is inappropriate in a classroom and why.

If the behaviour continues, you might try just staring at the student. Stop teaching. The other students will soon follow your lead. This quiet indication that the behaviour is unappreciated is sometimes enough to make the student quiet down.

If all else fails, you are within your rights to ask the student to leave the room for the remainder of the class. Also, insist that the student come to see you during your office hours before allowing him/her to return to the class.

It is a wise move to discuss the student's behaviour and the measures you took to deal with it in the classroom with the course supervisor before meeting with the student. The professor will likely have suggestions on how to deal with the student. Talking about the situation will also provide you with reassurance as well as a 'cooling-off' period.

However, remember, as Halvorsen notes, "This kind of situation is not a common one, and there is no reason to look for it every time you enter the classroom. But at the same time it is very possible that at some point in your teaching career you will have to deal with such a disruptive student. It is vital, therefore, to understand your obligation as teacher to maintain the integrity of the classroom, and your right to do whatever is necessary to that end."

Set the Boundaries. Be Firm. Remain Calm.

The Monopolizing Student

The monopolizing student is the opposite of the shy, quiet student. The monopolizing student is the one who has an answer for every question right or wrong (but often right). S/he blurts out the answer to every question before the other students have a chance. The answers can often be so thorough that there is little or no room for the other students to elaborate. How do you enable the other students to participate while still allowing the monopolizing student to do so, as well?

Possible Solutions:

- Ask questions that are directed towards a specific student (e.g. "Clara, what do you think?") rather than just questions that are thrown out to the group as a whole.

- Break the class into smaller groups. This provides most of the students the opportunity to talk since they will not be in the group with the monopolizing student in it.

- Ask some open-ended questions to which there are no right or wrong answers, just the opportunity to speculate. Allow the monopolizing student some time to state his/her

position but then redirect the discussion to someone else (e.g. "That's very interesting, Martha. John, do you agree?").

- Talk to the monopolizing student alone after class or during office hours. Praise his/her enthusiasm. If the answers are usually good ones, praise this as well. Then, point out the difficulty of having a group discussion when all members of the group do not have equal opportunity to participate. Tell the student that you value his/her participation and would like it to continue but remind him/her that the other students also need a chance to speak and ask the monopolizing student to please respect this.

The Quiet Student

A big part of university education in North America is learning to articulate our opinions and ideas in a constructive manner. Many teaching assistants provide incentives to encourage participation and/or rewards for those students who speak often. Most classes, however, also have at least one student who rarely, if ever, speaks.

Why Some Students are Quiet

It is very important for an instructor to realize that there is more than one reason why a student may be quiet.

Some students are simply shy; they do not feel comfortable in a large group. Such students tend to speak more freely when the class is divided into small groups. Other students may have been brought up in an environment where they were taught not to question authority, not to be argumentative. For such students, class discussions may be uncomfortable. Furthermore, some international students may not be accustomed to participating in group discussions in English and therefore find it difficult to participate. As a student becomes more familiar with the North American academic environment, he/she should find it easier to participate. (See section on *International Teaching Assistants*).

How to get a Quiet Student to Speak

Assign each individual student a different question to prepare for the following week. This allows plenty of time for preparing an answer which in turn boosts confidence. Each student becomes in effect the class expert on his/her question which can also create confidence. (NOTE: It is not necessary to give every student a question each week. Choose a few different students every week, making sure each student gets a turn.)

When dividing the class into small discussion groups, assign one person in each group to be the spokesperson for the group to report to the class. A quiet student who has been given the role of spokesperson may feel more comfortable speaking in this situation since the views he/she is expressing are those of the group and not necessarily his/her own.

As previously mentioned, role playing often gets many quiet students to speak. This is because they adopt a different persona and thus feel safer to speak.

It is important to take the aforementioned things into consideration when assigning participation marks.

Ways for a Quiet Student to Quietly Participate

If you have tried everything you can think of and just cannot get a student to talk even though you know he/she has done the readings for class, do not despair. Also, do not penalize such a student too severely. Tell the student that you recognize that he/she finds it difficult to participate vocally in class but that you recognize that there is more to participation than just speaking. Preparing for class by doing the assigned readings is also a form of participation. Tell the student that if he/she is more comfortable turning in written answers to the questions then he/she will be granted at least partial participation marks.

Reference:

Lambert, T. (2002). A handbook for graduate students teachers in the humanities [Electronic Version]. The Gwenna Moss Teaching & Learning Centre, University of Saskatchewan.

Used with permission by Tonya Lambert and the The Gwenna Moss Teaching & Learning Centre Retrieved July 20, 2004 from the University of Saskatchewan website: **http://www.usask.ca/tlc/gs_handbook/gsh_students.html**

Dealing with Grade Disputes

For students, grades are equivalent to pay cheques. They have a right to be graded fairly and also to know why they have been given a certain grade. You must be willing and ready to explain exactly why you gave the grade you did. Occasionally you may make a mistake; every teacher does. Acknowledge it gracefully and correct it. However, if you are sure you marked fairly, don't allow any student to push you into changing his/her mark.

Helping Students in Distress: Be a Friendly Listener

Some undergraduate students find various aspects of university life stressful, and a few of them experience circumstances or personal difficulties that lead to noticeable distress. Perhaps because they see the TA as a familiar and approachable teacher, some students will express their concerns to you.

TAs can help by listening in a caring and attentive manner. Let them know you understand what it is like for them. Focus on listening and providing factual information, but let them know that they must make their own decisions.

Advising and Counselling

When to Refer

When brief, friendly interactions are insufficient, or you think a student could benefit from help which you or the course supervisor cannot provide, encourage the student to contact the appropriate university service.

Be informed about services available (see Appendix B Services for Students for further information):

- Academic advising (**http://students.ubc.ca/current/advising.cfm**).
- Career services (**http://students.ubc.ca/careers/**).
- Counselling services (**http://students.ubc.ca/counselling/**).
- Study and research skills (**http://students.ubc.ca/success/study.cfm**).
- Health and wellness (**http://students.ubc.ca/health/**).
- Access and diversity issues (**http://students.ubc.ca/access/index.cfm**).
- Awards, fees and finances (**http://students.ubc.ca/finance/**).
- Advice relating to harassment and/or discrimination at the UBC Equity office (**http://www.equity.ubc.ca/discrimination/index.htm** or *Human Rights* section of this guide).

Find out about the services which are particularly relevant to your TA work. For example, if you are leading seminars or tutorial discussions, you may notice some students who could benefit from a public speaking anxiety reduction program (see the UBC Leadership and Involvement program at **http://students.ubc.ca/leadership/index.cfm**). Alternatively, you may notice that some of your students experience anxiety around written assignments in which case you could suggest they take a Writing Skills workshop (see UBC's Writing Centre at **http://www.writingcentre.ubc.ca/workshop/what.htm**).

How to Refer Students to Advising and Counselling Services

Be diplomatic, positive, and specific. Avoid saying things like "This sounds too serious for me to handle," or "I think you need professional help".

Use your judgment and knowledge of each particular situation. However, it may often be beneficial to:

- Ask if the student would like you to suggest who might help with such issues or problems.
- If their answer is yes, provide the name, location, and telephone number of the relevant person or service.
- Perhaps point out (as will usually be the case) that other students have similar concerns, and some benefit from counselling. Do not recommend or try to convince.

In addition to the students who express their concerns directly to you, there may be others whom you notice are in distress or difficulty. For example, the student may look depressed, or become overly emotional about some minor event, or act very differently than is characteristic for her or him.

Speak to the student privately, and objectively indicate what you have observed. Ask how things are going, or if s/he would like you to provide information about services available on campus.

Students have the right to privacy and independence, including the right to decline help and the right not to discuss things. However, offers of information about services are congruent with those rights, and can be an expression that the university cares about them as an individual.

If a student gives you reason to believe s/he is suicidal, dangerous, or seriously dysfunctional in some way, consult promptly with the course supervisor, who might then contact Health Services, Counselling Services, or other appropriate services listed in the Appendix B Services for Students. Again, do not put yourself in an advisor's position.

Note: Your TA Union CUPE 2278 has some concern with TAs dealing with students in distress and urges that you use extreme caution. You are advised that intervention may have legal ramifications and is usually best left to professionally qualified individuals.

Problems with Course Supervisors

Most problems you may have with the course supervisor can be settled directly by discussion, though a few may not be resolved. Approach the supervisor first; if you cannot come to agreement and feel you must go to another authority, such as the department head, inform the course supervisor of your intentions.

Note: Your TA Union CUPE Local 2278 has noted that members can approach the Union for advice and counselling in confidence, especially if the member does not feel comfortable approaching his/her supervisor.

Teaching Tips for International Teaching Assistants

Teaching in a foreign country using a second language can be a challenging experience. The expectations of North American students, methods of organizing material, and classroom format can be very different from what you have been accustomed to in your native country. With these issues in mind, the following teaching tips may be helpful to you as an international TA.

Communication Skills for the Classroom

- *Use visual aids as much as possible.* Writing on the board, using an overhead projector, presenting with PowerPoint or providing handouts are excellent ways to communicate with students. If students have difficulty understanding your pronunciation, they can read the information from the visual aid.

- *Organize your main ideas so that each teaching lesson has a beginning, a middle and an end.* A general outline for teaching in a North American context consists of: introduction (tell the students what you are going to teach them); body (teach it to them); conclusion (remind them of what you taught them). See section on *The Teaching Environment*.

- *Give students a basic outline of what you will cover in class.* List any key terms or difficult to spell words on the visual aid. Make it a habit to point to the key term or word the first several times that you say it. That way, the students can connect the way that you pronounce the word with the term that you want them to know. Also, point to each main idea on the outline as you begin to teach it.

- *Use transition words or phrases to let the students know when you're moving to the next important point.* For example, use phrases such as: "The second point I want to make is…" or "Now, let's move to the next idea…" Summary words to let the students know you are completing the lesson may include: "In conclusion…" or "The important points to remember are…" These verbal markers help to keep the students' attention focused as you move from one key idea to the next one.

- *Use plenty of examples to explain or demonstrate your main ideas.* Students need examples that they can relate to in order to really understand the material. Think about the activities and subjects that your students know about and use real life examples to illustrate your ideas. Make sure the students know you are giving examples by using phrases such as: "Let me give you an example…" or "To be more specific…" Whenever possible, use three-dimensional objects to demonstrate your main ideas.

- *Explain your jargon or field-specific vocabulary.* Every discipline has unique terminology that is referred to as jargon. Make sure that you explain in simple terms what you are trying to teach. Remember, you're not trying to impress your students with your terminology — you want to help them better understand the subject material. Teach them the jargon in simple terms and refer back to the simple terms when they seem confused.

- *Ask questions of the students throughout your teaching lesson.* Don't wait until the end of your lesson to learn if the students understood you. Pause at the end of each main idea

and ask them a few questions to see if they can apply what you've taught them. Ask them to provide an example, to work a sample problem or to supply some missing information.

- *Wait after you ask a question.* Don't expect students to respond immediately. Students need time to process your question, formulate an answer and then indicate their willingness to respond. So, after you ask them a question, wait at least 10-20 seconds for a response. Look around the room during this time. If they don't respond, then you might give a clue as to the correct answer or rephrase the question.

- *Encourage students to ask you for clarification if they don't understand your pronunciation.* Make them feel comfortable about asking you questions during the class. Say things such as: "Good question…" or "Who has another question?" If students know that you are willing to help them, then they will be willing to help you if you make pronunciation errors as you teach.

Asking Others for Assistance

- *Talk to experienced TAs in your field of study.* You can talk with Canadian or international TAs to get practical help with many of your questions about teaching. Most will be glad to help because they remember what it was like to teach for the first time. You might ask them to observe one of your classes and make suggestions on how you could improve.

- *Observe others who are teaching the same (or similar) subject as you are.* Ask other TAs or professors if you can attend their class for several days. Take notes on how they present the material, deal with student questions and use visual aids. Model the good teaching practices that you observe.

- *Ask questions of your supervising professor.* Prepare your specific questions in advance and make an appointment to see your professor. Don't be afraid to ask questions. Even your professor was a beginning teacher at some point in time.

Reference:

Snyder, B. (2003). Teaching Tips for International Graduate Teaching Assistants. Retrieved September 16, 2004, from English Language Institute of University of Texas at Arlington web site: **http://iep.uta.edu/ITA%20Program/Teachingtip.htm**

Adapted with permission from Beth Snyder, Developmental English Coordinator.

International Teaching Assistants Program

The Centre for Intercultural Communication offers a specially-designed seminar for international graduate students at the University of British Columbia who want to develop their teaching and presentation skills to ensure success as Teaching Assistants (TAs). Students and facilitators share experiences about cultural differences and work closely together to improve skills through structured group feedback.

In order to participate, you must be new to North America, speak English as an additional language and have the desire to excel as a Teaching Assistant at UBC.

This program addresses the following:

- Understanding Canadian faculty and students.
- Canadian teaching styles and presentation skills.
- How to effectively communicate in English.

As a participant of this program, you will:

- Be videotaped making teaching presentations.
- Discuss cultural differences/similarities using case studies as well as your own experiences.
- Practice communication and tutoring techniques for labs, small group work as well as one-on-one work with students and supervisors.
- Do advanced pronunciation work if necessary.
- Receive feedback in order to improve your teaching.

For more information, visit **http://cic.cstudies.ubc.ca**

To register, please call 604-822-1436 or email **ita@cstudies.ubc.ca**

Time and Stress Management

Your TA duties will increase your overall workload, which may be burdened with your own academic program. Moreover, TA duties may be more demanding when you are meeting deadlines with your own academic assignments. In order to do both well, and still retain balance in your own academic life, you must be an efficient time manager. Effective use of time usually results from careful planning and appropriate strategies.

Time Planning

Analyze How You Spend Your Time Now

Monitor and note your time use and accomplishments for a week. You may be surprised by the time you spend on some things. Compare your time use with your real priorities.

Plan the Year

Look at the year as a whole, noting times when your own academic work peaks as well as when you will be busiest with TA responsibilities. Determine what can be completed earlier than it is due in order to even out the workload over the term or year.

Identify tasks that occur daily or weekly and set regular times for them.

Plan the Week

Choose a system to plan your time.

- One system is to make a list each night of the tasks you want to do the next day. The "To Do" list can be ordered in priority.

- Another system is to construct a written schedule for the whole week, specifying your activities on an hour-by-hour basis. Initially construct a typical weekly schedule which includes your class schedule and regular minimum times set aside for weekly academic tasks, TA work, and leisure time. Plan each week by deciding how to spend the remaining time, with reference to long-term projects or special events.

Some Guidelines for What to do When

- It is most important to be realistic about what you will accomplish within the time allotted.

- Plan to do the difficult or non-preferred tasks during the times you work best.

- Plan time for leisure activities. Trying to work all the time eventually results in lower productivity. Moreover, setting aside non-work time allows you to enjoy it without feeling guilty.

- Be flexible. Unexpected things come up. When this happens, you can use your daily list of things to do or your weekly schedule to clarify your priorities. It is prudent to move a planned task to another time slot, not just drop it.

- Plan time each evening to relax before going to bed.

Concentration and Efficiency

Eliminate Distractions

- Avoid distractions by selecting a quiet, secluded place to work. Clear your desk of everything but the materials needed for the current task.

- Let others know when you will be busy and should not be disturbed, and when you will be able to do things with them.

Ways to Improve Your Concentration

- Set short, specific goals each time you work, with realistic time limits.

- Become actively involved in the task. Search for something interesting about it. Hold a pencil while studying to underline or to make notes.

- Plan breaks. You can sustain maximum concentration for only a limited amount of time. Fatigue will set in and you will become inefficient if you set unrealistic goals/expectations.

Overcoming Procrastination

People procrastinate for many different reasons. However, procrastination usually occurs at the beginning of large tasks, and/or when the person has doubts about being able to perform the tasks well enough or lacks motivation, and/or tries to attain perfection.

- Avoid feeling overwhelmed by large tasks by breaking them into smaller components. Focus your attention and your effort on the immediate small sub-task you are working on.

- Don't let perfectionism paralyze you with self-criticisms and self-doubts. Try to do your work well, not perfectly. So-called "perfectionism" ties people up as they overdo some components of their work while neglecting others, resulting in a low overall standard of real achievement.

- Don't wait until you "feel like it" to get started. Warm up by doing a small bit of work.

- Record your progress by checking off each task or sub-task on your list or schedule. Enjoy the satisfaction of accomplishing what you set out to do.

- When writing, it is often wise to churn out thoughts in a creative mode without considering any form of editing text or format. Only after all of your creative juices have ceased flowing should you return to edit your work.

Be sure to share this list of strategies for effective time management with your undergraduate students. It may help *them* meet *your* deadlines.

Some of the suggestions concerning time planning, concentration and overcoming procrastination are adapted excerpts from Studying Effectively and Efficiently: An Integrated System by Polly MacFarlane and Sandra Hodson of the Counselling Centre at Dalhousie University.

Time-Saving Marking/Grading Strategies

Some Practical Tips

- Test what you teach – your objectives should match your assessment, and vice versa.
- Establish and communicate standards – use rubrics and marking guides; show work done by previous students and tell how you marked it.
- Grade one problem in one session – only then do you remember how you graded earlier work – this will allow you to make comparisons.
- Grade 'sideways' – make a quick pass through the papers first, pre-sorting them into different piles. This way you are likely to encounter similar problems back to back, which means less searching later, and you get an overview of how your students performed before you start assigning marks.
- Limit comments – when providing comments on an assignment or examination focus on the main points you think are important for the particular student to improve. It is useless to overwhelm the student with suggestions; chances are s/he will take only the simplest suggestions and act on them, while disregarding the big picture. If you, for example, found grammar or spelling problems in addition to a misunderstanding of the literature, it would make more sense to point to the literature problems first, and mark the language problems in one paragraph only.
- Limit your scale – if an assignment is worth 10% of the total mark, it may not make sense to use to use a scale from 1 to 70…
- Be specific – in any feedback you give, don't just give an overall comment – try to show at least one example of how you feel your student's work could be improved and another of what was done really well. Respect privacy – never leave marked assignments outside your door, and never put marks on the top page of an assignment.
- Comment on work in progress – your comments make much more of an impact if students can use them to improve their work. Usually we tend to mark final products, and students often feel resignation because they realize they did not understand what was expected. Taking time to give feedback while students are still working on the project or assignment is more helpful than leaving all feedback until the task is over.

How to Avoid Burnout

Twenty helpful hints to handle your day:

- Get up earlier in order to allow yourself more time before you get to school.
- Before entering your office or classroom pause to look around outside – what kind of day is it? What kind of clouds are in the sky?
- Try to pay less attention to time – take your watch off, if you can. Learn how to pace yourself.
- Regulate how many items you put on your "To Do" list and prioritize them.
- During lunch or breaks: Avoid discussing school, eat slowly, and take your full lunch period.
- Go to lunch with an enthusiastic person – high energy can be infectious!
- Make a list of your "Hyper Habits" and share it with a friend to be sure you have included everything. Then, make a contract to alter some specific behaviours which will allow you to slow down.
- Find a specific place on campus where you can go to sit quietly for five minutes or pick out a brief walk nearby.
- Compose written reminders for yourself and place them where you will read them. For example: "I am going to slow down today and I will feel better because of it."
- Be willing to say "no" to other commitments when you need to.
- Ask for help!
- Focus on an immediate goal, especially one which you enjoy. Work on it until it is completed.
- Put yourself in a position where you have to "sell" an idea.
- Collect appreciation that is due to you – visit some people who help make you feel good about yourself and your work.
- When you are "down and out," make a list of all the reasons you do not need to be: the vacation you are planning, why you are in school and what you like about it, friends you have met, academic and personal successes, etc.
- Keep track of your "down" moods on a calendar; if cycles can be traced, prepare for them.
- Re-energize yourself through relaxation techniques or meditation.
- Talk to a "significant other".

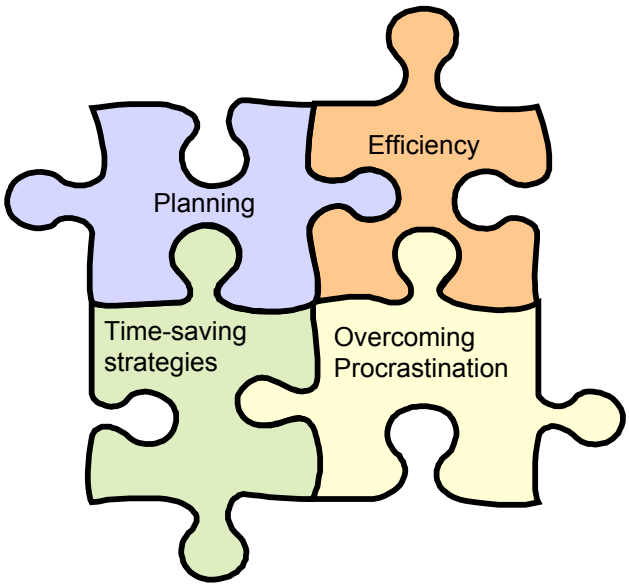
- Pay attention to your health, diet and sleep. If you "don't have time" ask yourself if you have the time to be sick.

- Exercise regularly.

Reference:

The Resident, January 1990 (Official publication of the Department of Student Housing and Conferences, UBC). Reprinted with permission.

For more information, see UBC Student Services Health and Wellness Web site:
http://students.ubc.ca/health/ and/or *Appendix B Services for Students*.



The Teaching Dossier

The teaching dossier, also called the teaching portfolio, is a comprehensive record of teaching activities and accomplishments drawn up by the university teacher.

Now more than ever, institutions and individual faculty members are being asked to provide evidence of the quality of teaching and learning which occurs on campus. At UBC there is a growing interest in the teaching dossier as a method to record the contribution of faculty members to the enhancement of the pedagogical process through their teaching activities.

While you, as a graduate or senior undergraduate student, may be just beginning your teaching, and your experiences in this area may be few, now is the time to begin recording your teaching accomplishments. Compiling a dossier may help you obtain a position in the future. Keeping documentation of outstanding work, letters of praise, and positive student evaluations of your teaching will help to build a comprehensive dossier, and perhaps give you some encouragement at times when it seems that teaching is not such a great way to make a living.

This chapter presents information on creating a teaching dossier in hard-copy (paper) format and in electronic format. Many of the steps are identical for both types of dossiers.

The Step-by-Step Creation of a Teaching Dossier

Though the compilation of documentation is an on-going activity, sooner or later you are faced with the preparation of an up-to-date dossier for presentation and review. This material, adapted from a guide published by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, simplifies the task by proposing a step-by-step approach to creating the teaching dossier.

Step 1. Clarify teaching responsibilities. There often exists an informal understanding concerning teaching responsibilities and criteria for judging teaching success. The first step in preparing the teaching dossier is to summarize these understandings in a short paragraph or two. Points covered might include specific duties, how students are to be evaluated, and the nature of progress expected by students. Where there is no informal understanding, the consequence can be arbitrary and shifting evaluation criteria; in such cases, you should include a brief statement of your own assumptions concerning responsibilities and obligations.

Step 2. Describe your approach to teaching. Keeping in mind the summary of teaching responsibilities outlined in Step 1, prepare a brief statement (1 - 2 pages) of your teaching goals and philosophy. This statement provides an explanatory framework for the information on your teaching accomplishments which follows. It gives you a chance to explain your approach to teaching and how this relates to your work with students.

Step 3. Select items for the teaching dossier. The list of possible items for a teaching dossier is examined. Paying particular attention to the statement in Step 1, the individual selects those items which are most applicable to his or her assigned teaching responsibilities. Item choice should also accommodate the individual's personal preferences and teaching style.

Step 4. Prepare statements on each item. Prepare a statement about activities, initiatives, and accomplishments in each area, referring to back-up documentation when appropriate.

Step 5. Order the items. The statements are arranged in the order which best fits their intended use. For example, if you are trying to demonstrate improvement in teaching, entries accenting improvements would be emphasized.

Step 6. Compile backup evidence. You should keep copies of all printed items referred to in the dossier. These would include such things as examination papers, original replies to course evaluation questionnaires or official summaries of summative evaluations, letters from professors with whom you cooperate and students you teach, and samples of student work. These materials are not part of the dossier, but are back-up information in case original documentation is required.

Step 7. Incorporate dossier into curriculum vitae, or prepare to submit it separately. Insert the completed dossier into the CV under the heading "Teaching" or "Instruction", or prepare to submit it as a separate document, depending on what your department requires.

Step 8. Append exemplary materials. The Teaching Dossier may be accompanied by material which constitutes evidence supporting claims: an exemplary course outline, a reading list, an examination keyed to objectives, a numerical summary of student course evaluations or unsolicited letters of praise from students. This step is likely to be especially important when you are applying for a position.

Reference:

Shore, B., Foster, S., Knapper C., Nadeau, G., Neill, N., Sim, V., & with the help of faculty members of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services, McGill University. (1986). The Teaching Dossier: A Guide to its Preparation and Use. Ottawa, ON: The Canadian Association of University Teacher.

The Teaching e-Portfolio

What is a Teaching e-Portfolio?

Essentially, teaching e-Portfolios are electronic portfolios meant to provide evidence of good teaching. Similar in concept to Teaching Dossiers, e-Portfolios are web-based and usually consist of a yearly and cumulative record of teaching activities and results. In order to build a successful e-Portfolio, you will need a collection of evidence of the quality of your teaching. However, putting this together and putting it online can seem like an enormous task. This section will help you take the first steps you need to get your e-Portfolio up and running.

Why Create an e-Portfolio?

The e-Portfolio's strength is to demonstrate, using documentation compiled over time, the full range of your abilities as a teacher. You can provide samples of student work, post videos of sessions you've taught, and outline your teaching philosophy, among other possibilities. e-Portfolios emphasize your teaching strengths and accomplishments over time and make a case for your effectiveness as a post-secondary teacher. Ideally, they contribute to good teaching by encouraging self-reflection, and by stimulating self-analysis, and self-development.

An important point is that e-Portfolios are not containers into which you drop everything that defines you as a teacher. By selecting and highlighting strengths and achievements, you demonstrate judgment and an understanding of the teaching process. Creating an e-Portfolio provides you with more insight about your own teaching approaches and values. When combined with student feedback that focuses on their learning and with broadly-based peer feedback, e-Portfolios become an important factor in assessing meritorious performance.

Evidence of teaching effectiveness and student learning are most often gathered through the use of student, peer and self assessment, using a set of agreed-upon teaching criteria. Self-analysis and reflection are the keys here, and the outcomes of that analysis are twofold: you make a strong case to others about your teaching competency, and you help yourself to understand and improve your approaches to teaching and learning.

The e-Portfolio can be as large or as modest as you want it to be: you can choose to release smaller parts of it to certain people and allow others to view most or all the material on your portfolio site; you may even pre-set a time span during which a given part of your portfolio can be viewed.

Some form of the e-Portfolio is either required or strongly encouraged in many post-secondary educational institutions for both reflection and assessment, and the number of institutions using this tool is growing.

How Do I Get Started On My e-Portfolio?

The e-Portfolio is your chance to make a case for your effectiveness as a teacher. Think about your portfolio in much the same way that you approach a research question, and build a case to support your 'effective teacher' thesis. First, you should think broadly about what the act of teaching means to you. Later, you can reflect upon and describe the sorts of evidence chosen to support your case. It is useful to have a set of widely-used effective teaching criteria against which to measure yourself. The TAG website (**http://www.tag.ubc.ca/**) contains a set of key teaching principles and practices adapted by a recent UBC Senate ad hoc committee (look under Senate Evaluation tools at **http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/evaluation/**).

Next, you will collect and analyze the evidence and create a document that uses the supportive evidence to make conclusions about your teaching. In doing so, you will want to look at the unique elements of your teaching role – for example, the sizes and levels of the courses you teach; the ways that you plan, conduct and evaluate the courses; and the goals, strategies and philosophy that underpin your efforts to help students learn. To support your thesis, you will wish to supply evidence to show that the course aims have been met, and that students have achieved the learning objectives. You will also want to document and highlight your involvement in all teaching-related activities, such as curricular revision, teaching evaluation or teaching award committees.

Where Can I Find Help in Developing My e-Portfolio?

The Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) Resource Room contains books, articles, sample paper-based dossiers and excerpts which provide key information and examples to aid in your dossier development; we also provide many links to sample e-Portfolios below. In addition, the Centre offers seminars for faculty and for graduate students, in which the development of Teaching Dossiers for all disciplines is discussed.

Please note that several departments and faculties have developed their own teaching documentation forms, and the relevant academic administrator should be consulted about dossier preparation in those departments. This dossier is not meant to replace those forms, but rather to augment and expand upon them.

Assembling Your e-Portfolio

Before you begin, remember:

- *Understand the context.* Consult with your peers, department head and promotion/tenure committee to determine the aspects of the e-Portfolio that suits your unit's and your own needs.

- *Know which teaching criteria your department and faculty use to assess instruction and keep the assessment framework in sight.* If no written criteria exist, check the TAG Centre's Web site under the heading "Senate Evaluation Tools." Prior to beginning the data collection process, think about the areas that you wish to highlight in your teaching practices.

- *The five aspects of teaching which are publicly accountable are:* your vision, your ability to design courses, materials, student opportunities; the interactive qualities of learning, within and outside of the classroom; student learning outcomes; and the analysis and reflection that takes place about your teaching. It is important to represent each of these areas in your e-Portfolio.

- *Think about documentation.* The exact nature of the supportive documentation will depend upon the kinds of work you do with students, colleagues and administrators. Make a list of the main things that you do in your job, and alongside each of these write down a few words about the sort of evidence you could collect to prove that you do it well. Each area that you choose to highlight will require supportive documentation, which will probably be scanned and uploaded to your e-Portfolio. For example, you may wish to show evidence of improving student knowledge and skills acquisition, or of moving away from instructor-centred and towards student-centred teaching, or provide evidence of your clearly-defined student learning objectives and the assessment techniques supporting the learning.

- *Assume nothing.* Begin now to collect any information pertaining to teaching, and err on the side of documenting and saving too much, since you will need to base your case on evidence. Organize your evidence systematically. You can, and should, discard some of the material later. For example, retain copies of all items referred to in this guide, including exemplary course outlines and learning objectives, innovative assignments, samples of student projects, and more. Check your updates annually, just as you do for your curriculum vitae.

- *Don't write the introduction too soon!* The introduction to a portfolio is extremely important. There is no second chance to make a good first impression. You can only write a really good introduction when you know exactly what you're introducing, so leave the introduction until you've more or less finished everything else in your portfolio. You can, of course, write a draft introduction, but this is probably best as a bullet-point list, or a mind-map sketch.

Now you may wish to follow, in whichever order or form works for you and your department, the procedures laid out in the e-Portfolio component section. If you have items which cut across teaching and another scholarship category (e.g. service), select the category that seems to fit best and cross-reference the items.

The e-Portfolio Components

Approach to Teaching

To introduce the reader to your views about teaching, learning and students, it is important to include statements about your goals and vision of teaching. You are charged with demonstrating to the reader your commitment to the practice of teaching.

Statement of Philosophy

While this statement is meant to reflect your talents, certain guidelines apply:

- Make the statement reflective and personal. For example: what skills and values do you bring to the instructional aspect of your job? What are your goals with respect to student learning? What qualities would you like to be remembered by as a teacher?
- The statement should be brief, from a few paragraphs to one or two printed pages.
- Use a straightforward narrative (first-person) style.
- Avoid technical language and use broadly-applicable language and concepts, since not everyone reading the document is an expert in your field.

These questions are to be used as a tool for approaching your Statement of Philosophy.

Discipline and Classroom Approach

- Within your discipline, which area do you regard as your strongest? What are areas that need improvement?
- What is your greatest asset as a classroom teacher? Your greatest shortcoming?
- Which teaching approach works best for your discipline? Why?
- How do you change teaching methods and strategies to meet new classroom situations? (Give a recent example)

Instructor-Student Rapport

- How would you describe the atmosphere in your classroom? How do you think your students would describe it?
- What is your primary goal with respect to your students? (Who are your students and what are their goals?)

Teaching Goals and Strategies

This can be a separate section, or can be combined with your statement of philosophy.

- How does your teaching help students to master concepts and promote understanding of theory and practice?

- How do you teach so that students master the knowledge, skills and new perspectives indicated in your course aims and intended learning outcomes?
- How do you choose or emphasize course content?
- How do your courses contribute to students' achievements in their post-secondary program, and after their return to the community?
- How do you nurture intellects in a setting where grades can be the key student motivator to learning?
- How do you help students to learn aims and outcomes?
- What steps do you take to encourage higher level learning (such as synthesis, analysis, application, problem-solving, etc.)?
- What is active learning and how do you use it in the classroom and in assignments?
- How do you test the learning outcomes?
- How do you evaluate student progress? What range of assessment methods do you use and why? How do you give feedback to your students on their assessment results? What are your classroom approaches?
- How have you used innovative practices in your teaching, and why?
- In which ways have you tried to improve instruction? What approaches worked or failed to work and why? How have you changed your approach over the years? How did you learn from this experience?

Remember, quantity is not synonymous with quality – you can select summaries of student feedback, brief examples of course outlines and outcomes, brief forms of activities that you have used to actively involve students in learning.

Questions about Teaching

- What is the one thing that you would most like to change about your teaching? What have you done about changing it?
- In which ways has your teaching changed in the last five years? Are they changes for the better (for you, for your students)? Explain.
- What would you like your students to remember about you as a teacher ten years from now?

* The above questions originated at Cornell University (with the exception of 'Teaching Goals and Strategies').

Sample Teaching Philosophy Statements

John R. Meyer, **http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/users/j/jrmeyer/www/philosophy.html**: from an Entomology professor.

Michelle Doney, **http://www.msu.edu/user/costabil/academic/portfolio/philosophy.htm**: a student-centered example from a Biological Sciences teacher.

Jeff Phillips, **http://www.physics.uci.edu/~jeff/phil.html**: a detailed and reflective statement from a Physics instructor.

Linda Baer, **http://lindabaer.efoliomn2.com/index.asp?Type=B_BASIC&SEC={FCE34538-5C7F-4FFD-82F0-DF9082E1EBEF}**: a short example from a Sociology instructor and administrator (includes video).

For UBC-specific examples, see
http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/components/aproach.php

Teaching Activities

Teaching Responsibilities

For the e-Portfolio, you may wish to provide a brief summary of course types and any revisions, together with the rationale for change, the types of teaching that you do based on such issues as class sizes, times, course goals (for example, are you providing information, coaching, encouraging self-direction?).

Teaching Responsibilities – Supportive Evidence

- Actual teaching methods used in the classroom (e.g., collaborative inquiry, problem-based learning, case studies, lecture, small group discussion, problem-solving, project-based, student presentations or other critical thinking pedagogies).

- Titles and numbers of courses taught, including graduate, undergraduate, and reading courses. You may wish to briefly highlight those courses that you have developed or substantially revised.

- Number of students in each course. Describe your workload including, where appropriate, the number of teaching assistants assigned to assist you in the course and the nature of their involvement.

- Details of other teaching activities such as seminars, advising students, supervision of a teaching or research practicum, athletic coaching, field placement supervision, and coaching or studio teaching in the performing arts as well as your general availability to students.

- Exemplify teaching practices such as the design of an unusual course or assignment, ways that course aims were adapted to meet needs of students, ways that you are accessible to students.

- Coordination of multi-section, sequenced, or interrelated courses.

- Teaching involvement outside your unit.

Sample Teaching Responsibilities Statements

Bruce H. Wagner,
http://orion.math.iastate.edu/wagner/Teaching_Portfolio.html#responsibilities - from a Math instructor, explains his grading and feedback procedures and states his availability.

Eduardo Bringa, **http://dirac.ms.virginia.edu/~emb3t/teaching/courses.html** - a straightforward list of courses taught in chronological order (includes total number of students taught).

Don G. Wardell, **http://www.business.utah.edu/~mgtdgw/teaching/prtfolio.htm** (click 'Courses,' then 'Teaching Responsibilities and Evaluations') - from a Business instructor, includes courses taught, a detailed statistical breakdown of student evaluations and much more.

For UBC-specific examples, see
http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/components/activities.php

Activities Engaged in to Improve Teaching and Learning

Professional development encompasses all steps taken to improve an instructor's effectiveness. The means by which you seek to improve your teaching and your students' learning follow quite directly from your philosophy and teaching strategy statements. This is your opportunity to focus upon your efforts to improve the classroom climate, to troubleshoot in problematic courses, and to solicit feedback from students about these issues.

Now is also the time to summarize your attendance in any teaching-related seminars, workshops or conferences, and to explain how you used new information in the classroom.

List of Activities Engaged in to Improve Teaching and Learning

- Steps taken to assess and respond to general problems arising in a course, which may necessitate redesign or refocus of course content and/or teaching methods.

- Results of student ratings or questionnaires designed by you to solicit assessments of your teaching effectiveness. You may also wish to indicate how often you request feedback from your students and what you do with the information.

- Description of efforts made to improve the classroom climate or your teaching methods. You may wish to consider items such as steps taken to ensure free and open participation and the comfort of all learners regardless of gender, ethnic origin, class, age, sexual orientation or ability.

- Seminars, Instructional Skills Workshops, and conferences on teaching and learning approaches and techniques (internal and external) attended.

Committee Service (Teaching and Learning Issues)

Many activities do not take place in classrooms but do provide important support for teaching. Some of these departmental, faculty and institution-wide activities which contribute to strengthening teaching are described below. Here you can note any professional training for TAs that you have participated in.

You may also be engaged, at the departmental level, in course and curricular revision, or in the development of new programs. You may wish to include a letter describing your committee work, written by a senior member of the curriculum committee.

A List of Committee Service that Pertains to Teaching and Learning Issues

It may be useful to include details such as names of committees, dates, and the nature of your contribution here.

- All activities concerned with teaching that you have undertaken as a member of a faculty, department, or cross-disciplinary committee, subcommittee, ad hoc committee, or task force.
- Teaching assistant professional training, orientation, or development.
- Attendance at professional training, orientation, or development sessions that introduce or raise consciousness about teaching techniques or learning technologies.
- Involvement in establishing, adjudicating, or administering awards or honours recognizing and celebrating student achievement.
- Observing others teaching as part of formal or informal evaluation and feedback regarding teaching effectiveness.
- Serving on accreditation committees, curriculum planning/review committees, task forces, program revision committees.
- Organization of retreats and strategic planning sessions (as they relate to teaching).
- Development of department teaching resources such as computer instruction projects, a teaching materials resource centre, a reference map collection, a visiting scholar program.
- Use of your teaching materials by instructors in other departments, faculties, colleges, institutes, or universities.
- Development of widely-used student ratings of instruction or other assessment instruments.

Samples of Committee Service

Glen Bull, **http://www.people.virginia.edu/~gbull/service.html** - a straightforward statement ordered by university, state and national levels.

Ann Nevin, **http://www.west.asu.edu/icaxn/Nevin/service.html** - called here 'Documentation of Service,' links to documents related to her service to the university.

For UBC-specific examples, see
http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/components/activities.php

Publications and Professional Contributions

Other activities taking place outside the classroom context include publications (such as curriculum materials or workbooks and conference papers that relate to teaching or student learning). You will also wish to discuss and provide supportive documentation about any

involvement you have had developing and teaching seminars or workshops. Any direct involvement in writing and/or running a Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund project should be described and documented here, as well.

List of Publications and Professional Work that Contributes to Teaching and Learning

- Workshops and seminars about teaching that you designed and instructed.
- Curriculum materials - details of published and unpublished curriculum materials, textbooks, workbooks, case studies, class notes, lab manuals, and other classroom materials which you have developed.
- Research and professional contributions related to teaching - books (including chapters in books, edited books, and special issues of journals); articles (indicate whether refereed, solicited, or non-refereed); papers in conference proceedings (indicate whether refereed or non-refereed); bibliographies; newsletters; unpublished conference papers.
- Funding related to teaching - internal and external teaching development grants, fellowships, including Teaching and Learning Enhancement funds.

In this section, you will also wish to describe any teaching awards received. Nominations for awards also enhance your reputation as a teacher.

Sample Publications and Professional Contributions:

Joseph A. Braun, Jr., **http://www.coe.ilstu.edu/jabraun/braun/professional/papers.html** - a list of conference papers, not hyperlinked.

Mike Barnett, **http://inkido.indiana.edu/mikeb/portfolio/researchpublishedpapers.html** - a list of publications and links to PDF copies.

For UBC-specific examples, see:
http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/components/activities.php

Assessing and Reflecting upon Teaching

Assessing and reflecting on your teaching contributes to your effectiveness as a teacher. You may wish to include the ways that you monitor and evaluate your own teaching and reflect on what the evidence gathered tells you about your teaching.

Ways to Assess and Reflect upon Teaching

- Departmental teaching evaluations (initiated by the unit).
- Peer evaluations or reviews based on visits to your classroom and/or scrutiny of your course materials. Note: before peer observations are undertaken, your department should be clear about the teaching aims and student learning outcomes that apply to your undergraduate or graduate program.
- Teaching awards received by you including departmental, faculty, and University of BC awards, and external awards (professional association, national and international teaching awards). Nominations for awards also indicate your reputation as a teacher.

- Unsolicited and solicited letters from students (initiated by the unit).

- Student-initiated feedback.

Examples of Assessing and Reflecting on Teaching

Mike Barnett,
http://inkido.indiana.edu/mikeb/portfolio/appendixC_qualityteaching_peerevaluations.html - peer evaluation statements from colleagues.

Paul L. Schumann,
http://krypton.mankato.msus.edu/~schumann/www/research/tportf2.html (scroll down to section 'Evaluating Teaching Effectiveness') - covers student evaluation, and peer feedback and teaching awards.

For UBC-specific examples, see:
http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/components/activities.php

Providing Evidence of Student Learning

When appropriate, discuss any objective indicators of student progress (such as students' standing on a nation-wide examination), or of teaching which has contributed to honours, awards or employment for students. In doing so, you may wish to describe the various types of learning which took place, such as knowledge, concepts, abilities, performance, skills, or new perspectives.

Types of Evidence of Student Learning

- Objective indicators of student progress, where available (proficiency tests, students' standings on nation-wide tests, etc.).

- Feedback from supervisors or employers of graduates.

Teaching Reflections

You may wish to make some concluding remarks that tie together the philosophy, approaches, evidence and evaluative sections. At this point it is also prudent to detail a plan for future actions, including your motivation and challenges, as well as short and long-term teaching goals. These remarks belong in the body of the Dossier.

Resources

The information in the section *The Teaching e-portfolio* has been adapted with permission from e-Portfolio Preparation: A Guide for Faculty Members at the University of British Columbia. See **http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/** for the original document.

Several publications were consulted during the preparation of the original document. We wish to acknowledge their contributions to the field:

O'Neil, Carol and Wright, Alan (1992). *Recording Teaching Accomplishments: A Dalhousie Guide to the Teaching Dossier.* Dalhousie University Office of Instructional Development and Technology, Halifax.

Ross, Dorene et al (1995). Guidelines for Portfolio Preparation: implications from an analysis of teaching portfolios at the University of Florida. Innovative Higher Education 20 (1), 45-62.

Seldin, Peter and Associates (1993). *Successful Use of Teaching Portfolios.* Anker Publishing, Bolton, MA.

Shore, Bruce M., et al (revised 1986, reprinted 1991). *The CAUT Guide to The Teaching Dossier.* Its Preparation and Use. Canadian Association of University Teachers, Ottawa, Ontario.

Teaching Documentation Guide, (1993). Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning. York University, Toronto.

Teaching Dossier: A Guide, (1996). University Teaching Services, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta.

Urbach, Floyd, (1992). *Developing a Teaching Portfolio.* College Teaching 40 (2), 71-74.

Weeks, Patricia (1998). *The Teaching Portfolio: a professional development tool.* International Journal of Academic Development, 3(1), 70-74.

* Several of the questions on teaching are adapted from Developing a Teaching Portfolio - Queensland University of Technology from materials originally compiled in the UK by Graham Gibbs.

All of the publications listed above are available for reading from the TAG Resource Room.

References

Beaty L. (1997) Developing your teaching through reflective practice. Birmingham: SEDA.

Brodeur, D. (1991, June). Interests, concerns, and free associations. Workshop presented at the Eleventh Annual Conference of the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Halifax, NS.

Brown, B., Race, S., and Smith, P. (1996). 500 Tips on Assessment. Kogan Page: London.

Centre for Research on Learning and Teaching. (2004). Strategies to extend student thinking. Retrieved September 1, 2004 from University of Michigan website: **http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/P4_4.html**

Centre for Teaching and Learning. (2004). Learning styles in higher education. Retrieved August 26, 2004, from Indiana State University website: **http://web.indstate.edu/ctl/styles/learning.html#LSHE**

Cross, P. and Angelo, T. (1988). Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for faculty. Ann Arbor, MI: NCRIPTAL.

Frederick, P. (1981). The dreaded discussion: Ten ways to start. College Teaching, 29(3), 109-114.

Gallow, D. (1991). One of my favorite teaching techniques. UCIDeaS. 6(1), Instructional Development Services, University of California-Irvine.

Gibbs, G., Habeshaw, S., and Habeshaw, T. (1984). *53 interesting things to do in your lectures.* Avon, U.K.: Technical and Educational Services Ltd.

Lambert, T. (2002). A handbook for graduate students teachers in the humanities [Electronic Version]. The Gwenna Moss Teaching & Learning Centre, University of Saskatchewan.

MacFarlane, P. and Hodson, S. (1983). Studying effectively and efficiently: An integrated system. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto, Guidance Centre, Faculty of Education.

Marincovich, M. (Ed.). (1987). Teaching at Stanford: An introductory handbook for faculty, academic staff teaching, and teaching assistants. Stanford, CA: The Centre for Teaching and Learning, Stanford University.

McPeck, J. (1981). Critical thinking and education. New York, NY: St. Martin's Press.

Northredge, A. (1975). Learning through discussion in The Open University. Teaching at a Distance, 2.

Pestel, B.C. (1988, September). Some practical distinctions between preaching, teaching and training. Journal of College Science Teaching, 26-31.

Program for Excellence in Teaching (1994). Handbook for Graduate Instructors & Teaching Assistants University of Missouri-Columbia.

Schramm, W. (1972). *Quality in Instructional Television.* Honolulu, HI: University Press of Hawaii.

Shears, P. (1982). Developing a system of appraisal of performance within a college of non-advanced further education. SRHE Evaluation Newsletter. 6(1).

Shore, B., Foster, S., Knapper C., Nadeau, G., Neill, N., Sim, V., & with the help of faculty members of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services, McGill University. (1986). The Teaching Dossier: A Guide to its Preparation and Use. Ottawa, ON: The Canadian Association of University Teacher.

Snyder, B. (2003). *Teaching tips for international graduate teaching assistants.* Retrieved September 16, 2004, from English Language Institute of University of Texas at Arlington web site: **http://iep.uta.edu/ITA%20Program/Teachingtip.htm**

The BCIT Learning and Teaching Centre (2004). Designing and using visuals in the classroom. Retrieved November 12, 2004, from **http://www.bcit.ca/files/ltc/pdf/htvisuals.pdf** at **http://www.lru.bcit.ca/resources/teachtest.shtml**

The Center for Teaching and Learning Services. (2003). *TA responsibilities.* Retrieved August 19, 2004, from Regents of the University of Minnesota website: **http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/teachlearn/tasuper/respon.html**

The Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (2004). *ePortfolio preparation: A guide for faculty members at the University of British Columbia.* Retrieved November 20, 2004, from the University of British Columbia website: **http://www.tag.ubc.ca/resources/teachingportfolios/eportfolios/**

The Teaching and Learning Council. (2004). *Teaching at Mizzou: A guide for new faculty, graduate instructors and teaching assistants.* Retrieved October 4, 2004, from the University of Missouri-Columbia website at **http://teachandlearn.missouri.edu/guide/index.htm**

Weimer, M., Parrett, J., and Kerns, M-M. (1988). How am I teaching? Madison, WI: Magna Publications.

Appendix A: Learning Resources

For more information, see **http://www.ubc.ca/academic/advise.html**

There is a wealth of information at each of the following sites. Visit sites of interest for more details on the programs and services offered.

Service	***Brief Description***	***Internet Address & Other Contact Information (when available)***
AMS Tutoring Services	AMS Tutoring Struggling with a course? Trying to keep your scholarship? Want to find out about campus resources? AMS tutors are UBC students trained by UBC faculty who know what you're going through because we've been there. South Alcove of the SUB	**http://www.ams.ubc.ca/content.cfm?ID=27** SUB 249O 604-822-9084 tutoring@ams.ubc.ca
Bookstore	UBC Bookstore	**http://www.bookstore.ubc.ca/** 6200 University Boulevard Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4 604-822-2665 bkstore@interchange.ubc.ca
Data Library	Ways to access data files at UBC	**http://data.library.ubc.ca/**
The Disability Resource Centre	The Disability Resource Centre works with the University to eliminate structural and attitudinal barriers to those with disabilities. We provide disability-related services to the students, staff and faculty of UBC. The DRC is also active in research, teaching, and program initiatives associated with disability.	**http://students.ubc.ca/access/** The Disability Resource Centre Access and Diversity 1203-1874 East Mall Brock Hall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1 604-822-5844 disability.resource@ubc.ca
ESL (English) Classes	Language Support Programs for International Students	**http://students.ubc.ca/international/involved.cfm?page=language** 1783 West Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2 ihouse.frontcounter@ubc.ca

Service	***Brief Description***	***Internet Address & Other Contact Information (when available)***
Exam Database	The AMS Exam Database is a compilation of final exams from a variety of graduate and undergraduate courses.	**http://www.ams.ubc.ca/services/exam_database/**
UBC Library	UBC Library is the second largest research library in Canada and includes 21 branches and divisions at UBC and at other locations: three branches at teaching hospitals and one at UBC's Robson Square campus in downtown Vancouver.	**http://www.library.ubc.ca/** Library branches and divisions: **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/branches.html** Contact the UBC library: **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/libcontact.html**
UBC Email, dial-up, webhosting and more!	ITServices offers e-mail accounts, dial-up Internet access and Web hosting to UBC students, faculty, staff and the community via its Netinfo and Interchange services.	**https://web.interchange.ubc.ca/** 604-822-2441
Roadmap to Computing	Along with an indepth reference manual and a set of short quick reference guides, we offer several engaging interactive courses. These courses cover a wide array of current topics and are sure to hone your computer skills.	**http://www.roadmap.ubc.ca/**
Student Services	Links to important information and useful resources for students such as health and wellness, diversity, counseling, study and research skills.	**http://students.ubc.ca/**
Study and Research Skills Workshops	Free workshops. Register online.	**http://students.ubc.ca/success/study.cfm**

Service	***Brief Description***	***Internet Address & Other Contact Information (when available)***
Teaching and Academic Growth, Centre for	A wealth of teaching and learning resources for all members of the teaching community.	**http://www.tag.ubc.ca/** 6326 Agricultural Road Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2 604-822-0064

For more information on Teaching and Learning sites at UBC, see:

Teaching and Learning Site	***Faculty/Department***	***Web Address/Contact Information***
Arts Instructional Support and Information Technology	Faculty of Arts	**http://www.arts.ubc.ca/index.php?id=230**
Centre for Instructional Support	Faculty of Applied Sciences	**http://www.learning.apsc.ubc.ca/** 604-822-9241 learning@apsc.ubc.ca
Children & Women's Health Centre Education Online	Children & Women's Health Centre of BC	**http://www.cw.bc.ca/onlinecourses/**
Computing and Media Services	Faculty of Education	**http://www.cms.educ.ubc.ca/**
Distance Education Resources	Distance Education and Technology	**http://det.ubc.ca/** det.queries@ubc.ca Phone: 604-822-6500
Educational Technology Lab	School of Nursing	**http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/resources/lrc.html**
eLearning Web Site	Office of Learning Technology	**https://www.elearning.ubc.ca/home/index.cfm**
Instruction Centre	UBC Library	**http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/instruct/welcome.html**
The Learning Centre	Faculty of Agricultural Sciences	**http://www.agsci.ubc.ca/learningcentre/**
Office for Faculty Development & Educational Support	Faculty of Medicine	**http://www.facdev.med.ubc.ca/**
Skylight: Science Centre for Learning and Teaching	Faculty of Science	**www.skylight.science.ubc.ca**

Teaching and Learning Site	***Faculty/Department***	***Web Address/Contact Information***
Technological Services	Sauder School of Business	**http://www.sauder.ubc.ca/tech_services/index.cfm**
Technology Support Team	Faculty of Dentistry	**http://www.tst.dentistry.ubc.ca/**
Video & Interactive Media Unit	IT Services	**http://www.telestudios.ubc.ca/**
Web-Based Learning Centre	Faculty of Pharmacy	**http://www.ubcpharmacy.org/wbl/**

Appendix B: Services for Students

The following information is from the Student Success website at **http://students.ubc.ca/success/index.cfm?page=services**. Please consult the website for detailed information on the services described below.

UBC provides a number of key services and programs designed to support student learning and success. These programs enrich learning and leadership potential, and the services help ensure that students can learn in a supportive and safe environment.

At the time of publication of this resource, the Student Development Office was creating a guide for faculty, TAs and advisers, which would include information on services for students. Please contact the Student Development office for further information on obtaining a copy of their guide (604-822-9818).

Workshops

Spanning issues of wellness, learning skills, leadership, citizenship, international, budgeting, or career planning, workshops will enrich your student experience and help you achieve academic success. Go to **students.ubc.ca/success** for an updated listing and to sign up online.

Student Development

Student Development works with the university community to support and enrich student learning. Student Development Officers provide experiential learning opportunities for students, as well as responsive and professional programs and services in the areas of leadership, learning skills, peer programs, international student development and advising, and orientation and transition.

Chapman Learning Commons

www.library.ubc.ca/chapmanlearningcommons

Located in the Main Library, the Chapman Learning Commons is both a comfortable study environment and a dynamic program supporting student learning. Stop by the Learning Commons to participate in learning skills workshops, share ideas with other students, and use wireless technology in your research and studying.

Career Services

students.ubc.ca/careers

Need help with your job search? Unsure what kinds of work are right for you? Want to learn how to network and access the hidden job market? Career Services can help. Try Future Mapping, a workshop series with a combination of online and in-class learning. Other services include the Careers Online job posting system, employer information sessions, career fairs, drop-in advising, and much more.

Disability Resource Centre

students.ubc.ca/drc

The DRC coordinates academic accommodations for students with disabilities at UBC including preferred parking passes, alternate format materials, adaptive equipment, and pre-screening for students who suspect they may have a learning disability.

International House

students.ubc.ca/international

International House (I. House) is a student and community centre providing advising, transition services, and programs for Canadian and international students. If you want to get connected to the international community, I. House is a great place to start.

Student Exchange Program

students.ubc.ca/exchange

Apply to spend an academic year or term at one of over 150 partner universities in more than 40 countries. Students on exchange continue paying tuition and student fees at UBC and remain eligible for UBC financial aid, awards, and scholarships.

Counselling Services

students.ubc.ca/counselling

Counselling Services provides a wide range of resources to help you achieve your goals for success. Meet with a counsellor to clarify your concerns and develop strategies to overcome barriers.

Student Health Services

students.ubc.ca/health

SHS offers comprehensive health care for students including care of acute and chronic conditions, complete physicals, sexual health and contraception, sports injuries and sutures, and wound care for minor injuries. Specialty services include psychiatry, dermatology, orthopedics, and plastic surgery.

Women's Student Office

www.women.ubc.ca

The WSO supports the development of women students' full potential and addresses systemic barriers, particularly for women experiencing intersecting inequalities.

Enrolment Services

students.ubc.ca

Visit the Student Service Centre at **students.ubc.ca/ssc** or drop by Brock Hall to request transcripts or to manage your registration, course schedule, fees, and more.

Student Financial Assistance and Awards Office

students.ubc.ca/finance

UBC offers a wide range of programs to recognize students who excel in academics, leadership, and community service. Financial assistance is also available in support of the UBC Board of Governors policy that no domestic student who is otherwise qualified should be prevented from attending the University for financial reasons alone.

Housing

www.housing.ubc.ca

UBC Housing and Conferences provides:

- Housing for single students, student families, faculty and staff.
- Conferences and Accommodation division to accommodate campus visitors.
- Child care services on campus.
- Many opportunities are offered to students through the residence life program.

Varsity Athletics

www.athletics.ubc.ca

UBC provides its athletes with top competition opportunities and world class coaching, and has developed a reputation for excellence, winning 49 National Championships across a range of sports. Support our Varsity athletes and check out your favourite sport.

Intramurals

www.intramurals.ubc.ca

The UBC Legacy Games creates a fun and dynamic university community, engaging individuals in creative sporting events and programs. Participation enriches the quality of life, enhances the educational process, and strengthens the bond between the university and its members. Join a drop-in activity, become a sports representative, referee, volunteer, or spectator at these events.

Appendix C: Learning Technology @ UBC – A Quick List

Advocacy Group/Helpful Contacts

The individuals listed below are contacts for most of the units at UBC. They may refer you to others within their organizations. Many (but not all) of these individuals are members of FATE (Faculty Alliance for Technology in Education). FATE members include professional representatives from units engaged in IT, Educational Technology, Instructional Support and Teaching and Learning within faculties, as well as representatives of IT Services, the Library, TAG and DE&T.

Faculty/Unit/Centre	***Location***	***Contact***
Office of Learning Technology Website under development	Room 566B Main Library 1958 Main Mall	Michelle Lamberson, Director Office of Learning Technology 604-827-5159 michelle.lamberson@ ubc.ca
Faculty of Land and Food Systems The Learning Centre **http://www.agsci.ubc.ca/learningcentre/**	Room 260 MacMillan Building 2357 Main Mall	Cyprien Lomas Director The Learning Centre 604-822-1919 cyprien.lomas@ubc.ca
Faculty of Applied Science Centre for Instructional Support **http://www.learning.apsc.ubc.ca/**	Faculty of Applied Science #2208-2324 Main Mall	Jim Sibley, Manager Centre for Instructional Support 604-822-9241 jim.sibley@ubc.ca
Faculty of Arts Arts Instructional Support and Information Technology Unit (Arts ISIT) **http://isit.arts.ubc.ca/isit.cfm**	Buchanan Building Room B118 1866 Main Mall	Ulrich Rauch Director Arts Instructional Support and Information Technology 604-822-0978 uli@arts.ubc.ca
Sauder School of Business **http://www.sauder.ubc.ca/tech_services/index.cfm**	Sauder School of Business 2053 Main Mall	Pat Darragh Senior Manager Technological Services 604-822-8398 pat.darragh@sauder.ubc.ca

Faculty/Unit/Centre	***Location***	***Contact***
Faculty of Dentistry Technology Support Team **http://www.tst.dentistry.ubc.ca**	217 - 2150 Western Parkway	Keith Munro Director TST Group Dentistry 604-222-6858 kethmun@interchange.ubc.ca
Faculty of Education Computing and Media Service **http://www.cms.educ.ubc.ca/**	Scarfe 1008B	Bob Bruce, Director Computing and Media Services 604-822-5248 robert.bruce@ubc.ca
College of Health Disciplines Educational Technology Resource Centre **http://etc.health-disciplines.ubc.ca/**	Woodward IRC #400-2194 Health Sciences Mall	Jennifer Smyth Manager Educational Technology Resource Centre 604-822-1798 jsmyth@interchange.ubc.ca
Faculty of Medicine Office for Faculty Development & Educational Support **http://www.facdev.med.ubc.ca**	855 West 10th Avenue 3rd floor	Yan Huang Program Associate 604-875-4111 Local 68607 facdev@interchange.ubc.ca
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences **http://www.ubcpharmacy.org/wbl/**	2146 East Mall	Simon Albon Senior Instructor 604-822-2497 trout@interchange.ubc.ca
Faculty of Science Skylight - Science Centre for Learning & Teaching **http://www.skylight.science.ubc.ca**	Faculty of Science Chemistry Building Room 150 6021 University Blvd.	Joanne Nakonechny Research Associate 604-822-4691 jnakon@nterchange.ubc.ca
Children's and Women's Health Centre of BC **http://www.cw.bc.ca/onlinecourses/**	4500 Oak Street	Peter Choi Online Education Consultant 604-875-2345, Local 6388 pchoi@cw.bc.ca
Distance Education and Technology **http://det.ubc.ca**	University Services Bldg 2329 West Mall	Michelle Lamberson, Director Office of Learning Technology 604-827-5159 michelle.lamberson@ ubc.ca

Faculty/Unit/Centre	***Location***	***Contact***
ITServices Video & Interactive Media Unit **http://www.telestudios.ubc.ca**	University Services Bldg 2329 West Mall	Mark Zuberbuhler Executive Producer Telestudios 604-822-0516 mark.zuberbuhler@ubc.ca
UBC Library **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/instruct/welcome.html**	Main Library 1958 Main Mall	Deborah Wilson Reference Librarian MacMillan Library 604-822-0295 deborah.wilson@ubc.ca
Centre for Teaching and Academic Growth (TAG) **http://www.tag.ubc.ca/**	6326 Agricultural Road	Janice Johnson Facilitator & Instructional Developer 604-822-6834 janice.johnson@ubc.ca

Appendix D: UBC Library Services

A Message from the University Librarian

> *"The UBC Library will be a provincial, national and international leader in the development, provision and delivery of outstanding information resources and services that are essential to learning, research and the creation of knowledge at UBC and beyond."*
>
> *- Furthering Learning and Research 2004-2007*

UBC Library is the second largest research library in Canada. In 2004, UBC Library ranked 22nd among members of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL), the highest rank UBC has achieved. UBC Library has 22 branches and divisions. In addition to many locations at the Point Grey campus, there are three branches at teaching hospitals (Children's and Women's Health Centre of BC, St. Paul's Hospital, and Vancouver Hospital and Health Sciences Centre), one at UBC's Robson Square campus in downtown Vancouver and one at UBC Okanagan campus in Kelowna.

UBC's newest campus – UBC Okanagan – has opened its doors on what was the North Kelowna campus of Okanagan University College. Planning is well underway to ensure that library collections and services are available to support the new and expanded programs at UBC Okanagan for 2005 and beyond.

The Library's collections are large and diverse, attracting researchers from around the world and contributing significantly to establishing UBC as a leading academic institution. Our collection includes 4.7 million books and journals, 5.0 million microforms, over 800,000 maps, videos and other multimedia materials and over 46,700 subscriptions. UBC Library has the largest biomedical collection in Western Canada and the largest collection of Asian language materials in the country. As well, it is a depository library for publications of the governments of BC, Canada, Japan and the United Nations.

The Library's online services and electronic resources complement the more traditional formats and are growing tremendously. Many Library services can now be accessed online and thousands of full text ejournals, ebooks, indexes and databases are available.

Collections of special and rare materials include the H. Colin Slim Stravinsky Collection, the largest collection of its kind in Canada; and the Wallace B. Chung and Madeline H. Chung Collection, containing more than 25,000 rare and one-of-a-kind items relating to the discovery of BC, the development of the Canadian Pacific Railway, and Chinese immigration to Canada.

> *The Library's role is expanding to keep abreast of new technologies, to strengthen the University's research focus and provide enhanced learning support. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions or comments.*
>
> *- Catherine Quinlan, University Librarian*

Reference:

Quinlan, C. (2005). A Message from the University Librarian. Retrieved August 12, 2005, from the University of British Columbia website: **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/about.html**

For detailed information about UBC Library, see **http://www.library.ubc.ca/**

New to UBC?

A few facts:

- UBC Library is a large multi-branch library with millions of print resources and thousands of electronic resources. See **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/about/branches/map.html**
- Journals, magazines and newspapers in the UBC Library are for library use only and do not circulate.

NEW PIN for Returning Students:

As part of the implementation of a new library system, your Library PIN has been reset to the last FIVE digits of the barcode number on the back of your UBCcard.

Basic Information

Many services are available to you as a graduate student, including longer loan periods, as well as interlibrary loan (free) and document delivery (fee). See
http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/grads.html

UBC/Library Card

Your UBCcard is also your library card. The barcode number on the back is your library ID and gives you access to your borrower information and off-campus access to databases licensed by UBC Library.

Authorization Card

If you are a research assistant, a faculty member can arrange for an authorization card to be issued to you. This enables you to check out UBC Library materials and handle other library functions under your name separately from your own personal Library account. For more information, call 604-822-2406.

Short-term Loan Materials (Course Reserve)

Instructors and teaching assistants may request that library materials and personal copies be placed on short term loan at the appropriate library branch for the duration of a course. Fill in the Course Reserve Book request online form at
http://riondel.library.ubc.ca/EForms/forms/rbr.cfm

Note that Canadian copyright law restricts the number of copies that the Library may make of an article (2) and the percentage of a book which the Library may copy (one chapter only, not to exceed 10% of the whole book).

Videos and Films

You can show your class any of UBC Library's films and videos and any of the films and videos available in BC's Electronic Library Network collection. You may also show a video or DVD from your personal collection or a rental store provided that title is covered in UBC's Institutional Film Public Performance licence. Films and videos held at Education, Koerner or Woodward library or the ELN can be booked to guarantee availability on a particular date. The $5 booking fee will normally be paid by your department. More info about film, video and DVDs is available at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/about/services/gtvid.html**, including links to lists of titles covered by licence and an online booking form for titles in the UBC/ELN collections.

Library/Information Orientation and Assistance for your Students

What your students may already know:

- A comprehensive library guide is produced each year and distributed to all students.
- Library and research instruction is integrated into many courses at all levels, including in the more than 150 sections of English 112, Biology 112 and Biology 140.

Refer students to:

- Librarians at reference desks throughout the library. Please assure students that their questions are very welcome!
- eRef: chat with a librarian in real time (linked from home page).
- The How to . . . page at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/howto.html** (off the home page) for resources including:
    - Compact guides to MLA and APA citation formats.
    - The Plagiarism Resource Centre for Students.
- The Instruction page at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/instruct/welcome.html** (linked from the blue bar across the Library's home page) for resources including:
    - A schedule of workshops for graduate and undergraduate students on library research, study skills and more.
    - A general online tutorial that includes how to find books, articles and an introduction to the publishing cycle at https://www.webct.ubc.ca/public/library_225/index.html
    - A lively webpage demonstrating how and why to evaluate websites critically at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/evaluating/**
- Resources by Subject links to subject pages, which include a list of links to article indexes, full text databases and reference materials and web resources for each subject at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/subject-resources.html**
- Branch pages (linked from the blue bar across the top of the Library home page and from Resources by Subject), that feature instruction, guides and tutorials about subject-specific information resources at **http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/branches.html**

Contact the appropriate subject librarian:

- To arrange an instruction session for your students in the classroom or in one of the library's classrooms or computer labs.
- For advice on designing assignments that incorporate use of print or electronic materials.
- To request a course or assignment-related webpage. For examples, see Forestry 424 (**http://toby.library.ubc.ca/ereserve/er-coursepage.cfm?id=1888**), and Anthropology 404 (**http://toby.library.ubc.ca/ereserve/er-coursepage.cfm?id=1764**).

Reference:

Appendix D was written and contributed by Sheryl Adam, Librarian, University of British Columbia.

Appendix E: Academic Advising

For more information, see:

http://www.ubc.ca/academic/advise.html

or

http://students.ubc.ca/current/advising.cfm

Program	Address	Telephone	Website/email
Commerce (B.Com.)	#102 2053 Main Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2	604-822-8333	bcom@sauder.ubc.ca
Computer Science	#201 2366 Main Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4	604-822-3061	undergrad-info@cs.ubc.ca **http://www.cs.ubc.ca/ugrad/info/planning/advising.shtml**
Engineering	#2006 2324 Main Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4	604-822-6556	students@apsc.ubc.ca **http://www.apsc.ubc.ca/student_info/Engineering/Index.html**
Faculty of Agricultural Sciences	#270 2357 Main Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z4	604-822-9702	agsci@interchange.ubc.ca **http://www.agsci.ubc.ca/agroecology/advise_agro.htm**
Faculty of Arts	Buchanan A201 1866 Main Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1	604-822-4028	**http://www.arts.ubc.ca/Arts_Academic_Advising.229.0.html**
Faculty of Science Undergraduate Advising & Information Office	A150 6221 University Boulevard Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1	604-822-3820	science.advising@ubc.ca
Human Kinetics	War Memorial Gymnasium 210 - 6081 University Boulevard Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1	604-822-4512	hkin-advising@interchange.ubc.ca **http://www.hkin.educ.ubc.ca/School/index.htm**

Program	Address	Telephone	Website/email
Nursing	School of Nursing T201-2211 Wesbrook Mall Vancouver, BC V6T 2B5	604-822-7474	**http://www.nursing.ubc.ca/program/contacts.html**

Appendix F: Evaluating Internet Sources

The World Wide Web offers a great wealth of information, as well as the opportunity for people to express themselves and exchange ideas. This makes it a potentially great place to accomplish research on many topics. But putting documents or pages on the Web is easy, cheap or free, unregulated and unmonitored. If you are using a Web-based source for a research paper, you will need to develop skills to evaluate the credibility and appropriateness of what you find. The following checklist presents questions to ask to help determine whether a Web page is a suitable resource for a research paper, or not. Don't expect to be able to answer all the questions, all the time, for all Web sites you look at. Rather, try to use the questions as a tool to help you look at Web pages critically.

Author ***or*** ***Source***	• Is there an author of the work? If so, is the author clearly identified? • Are the author's credentials for writing on this topic stated? • Is the author affiliated with an organization? • Does the site or page represent a group, organization, institution, corporation or government body? • Is there a link back to the organization's page or a way to contact the organization or the author to verify the credibility of the site (address, phone number, email address)? • Is it clear who is responsible for the creation and/or maintenance of the site or page?
Accuracy	• Is this page part of an edited or peer-reviewed publication? • Can factual information be verified through footnotes or bibliographies to other credible sources? • Based on what you already know about the subject, or have checked from other sources, does this information seem credible? • Is it clear who has the responsibility for the accuracy of the information presented? • If statistical data is presented in graphs or charts, is it labeled clearly?
Currency	• Is there a date stating when the document was originally created? • Is it clear when the site or page was last updated, revised or edited? • Are there any indications that the material is updated frequently or consistently to ensure currency of the content? • If there are links to other Web pages, are they current?

Objectivity	• Is the page free of advertising? If the page does contain advertising, are the ads clearly separated from the content? • Does the page display a particular bias or perspective? Or is the information presented factually, without bias? • Is it clear and forthcoming about its view of the subject? • Does it use inflammatory or provocative language?
Coverage	• Is there any indication that the page is incomplete or that it is not still under construction? • If there is a print equivalent to the Web page, is there clear indication of whether the entire work or only a portion is available on the Web?
Purpose	• What is the primary purpose of the page? To sell a product? To make a political point? To have fun? To parody a person, organization or idea? For examples of web site parodies see: ▪ Dihydrogen Monoxide **http://www.dhmo.org/** ▪ Feline Reactions to Bearded Men **http://www.improbable.com/airchives/classical/cat/cat.html** • Is the page or site a comprehensive resource or does it focus on a narrow range of information? • What is the emphasis of the presentation? Technical, scholarly, clinical, popular, elementary, etc.

Want to explore more sites about evaluating internet resources?

- Evaluating Internet Resources from the University at Albany Libraries
  http://library.albany.edu/internet/evaluate.html

- Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply and Questions to Ask from the Berkeley Libraries **http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html**

- Critical Evaluation of Resources on the Internet from the University of Alberta
  http://www.library.ualberta.ca/guides/criticalevaluation/index.cfm

- Checklist for Evaluating Web Resources from the University of Southern Maine
  http://library.usm.maine.edu/research/researchguides/webevaluating.html

See also Criteria for Evaluating Print Resources
http://www.library.ubc.ca/scieng/PrintEval.html

Reference:

Greenwood, A. & Steyn, D. (2004). Criteria for evaluating internet sources. Retrieved March 11, 2005, from the University of British Columbia Library web site:
http://www.library.ubc.ca/home/evaluating/

Used with permission from Aleteia Greenwood, Science and Engineering Reference Librarian University of British Columbia.

Appendix G: An Audiovisual Checklist

Use the following checklist to ensure your visuals are effective.

Content – I have

- Checked the learning outcomes to establish what is needed.
- Carefully chosen the material and included essential details only.
- Presented only one main idea per visual.
- Applied for permission to reproduce copyrighted material.

Format – I have

- Oriented the visuals to be wide (landscape) rather than tall (portrait).
- Used templates where possible (effective design features built in).
- Placed most important points at the top right or bottom left.
- Use plenty of white or blank space, especially around images.
- Presented numeric data in graph form with very clear formats.
- Placed overhead transparencies (OHTs) in frames to make them easier to handle.

Text – I have

- Used simple, clear language.
- Used key phrases rather than long sentences.
- Used no more than 6 short lines per slide or OHT.
- Used no more than 6 words per line.
- Considered using a series of slides or OHTs rather than a single one containing more than 36 words.
- Used upper and lower case text, not all capitals.
- Used a simple and consistent sans-serif font throughout (e.g., Arial, Verdana, or Tahoma).
- Used different font sizes for emphasis and contrast, selecting a minimum font size of 24 point.
- Used special effects like bold and drop shadows for emphasis, when appropriate.
- Used bullet points as anchor points.

Graphics – I have

- Used graphics rather than text when possible.
- Chosen simple, clear images.
- Labelled all important parts of each graphic.
- Shown a scale if the size of an object is hard to gauge.
- Avoided showing only part of an object.
- Used clip art sparingly (e.g., every third or fifth slide).
- Stayed away from clip art for presentations that include charts, photographs or drawings.
- Used no more than one clip art image per slide.

Colour – I have

- Used colour sparingly to highlight key features.
- Used colours that are clearly visible and readable.
- Limited meaningful colour coding to five colours.
- Used strongly contrasted colours rather than similar ones.
- Used colour for separating, defining, and associating information.

Background (PowerPoint) – I have

- Chosen a background to enhance information, not overpower.
- Reserved multicolour, highly textured, or complicated backgrounds for text slides only.
- Used a consistent background throughout the presentation.
- Selected a light or dark background, based on the amount of light in the room (light backgrounds and dark text in well lit rooms; dark backgrounds and light text in rooms with lots of lighting control).

Transitions (PowerPoint) – I have

- Avoided using a different transition for every slide, using special transitions here and there for effect and emphasis.
- Set the transition speed to fast to give my presentation a snappier feel and pace.

Sound and Animation (PowerPoint) – I have

- Used special effects sparingly for maximum impact.
- Used sounds to serve a specific purpose – to complement and further instruction.

Reference:

The BCIT Learning and Teaching Centre (2004). Designing and using visuals in the classroom. Retrieved November 12, 2004, from **http://www.bcit.ca/files/ltc/pdf/htvisuals.pdf** at **http://www.lru.bcit.ca/resources/teachtest.shtml**

Audiovisual Checklist	
Content	☑
Format	☑
Text	☑
Graphics	☑
Colour	☑
Background (PowerPoint)	☑
Transitions (PowerPoint)	☑
Sound and Animations (PowerPoint)	☑

Appendix H: Evaluating the Effectiveness of Instructional Videos or Television Programs

Objectives

- Are the instructional objectives as stated or implied in the lesson clear to the viewer?
- Does the content of the program relate to the main objectives, or are there many irrelevancies?

Content

- Does the amount of time taken to develop each concept, procedure, or example seem appropriate or inappropriate for the intended audience?
- Is the content organized and so structured as to facilitate learning?
- Is the material based on expert, up-to-date professional information?
- Is the vocabulary level appropriate for the intended audience?

Presentation of Material

- Does the presentation provide for optimum repetition of the main ideas (e.g., summaries of main points from time to time and at end, repetition with variation)?
- Does the program effectively use appropriate pictures, film clips, demonstrations, diagrams, and other graphics? (Number and kinds of visuals are not as important as the way in which they are used to support the instruction.)
- Is the video-photographic presentation clearly perceivable by use of good lighting, appropriate camera shots, sharpness of details, pointers, suitable back ground, etc.? (This does not require a highly technical or engineering evaluation but rather a judgment as to whether or not the program or film is perceptually clear.)
- Is the audio intelligible?
- Is there an appropriate integration of visual and audio?
- Does the presentation give the impression of authenticity?
- Do the personality and appearance of the teacher or teachers add to or detract from the effectiveness of the presentation?
- Do the characteristics and quality of the instructor's or commentator's voice add to or detract from the effectiveness of the presentation?
- Does the teacher appear on camera for an appropriate amount of time?

Learner Stimulation

- Does the presentation motivate the student to do supplementary work and study on the problem?

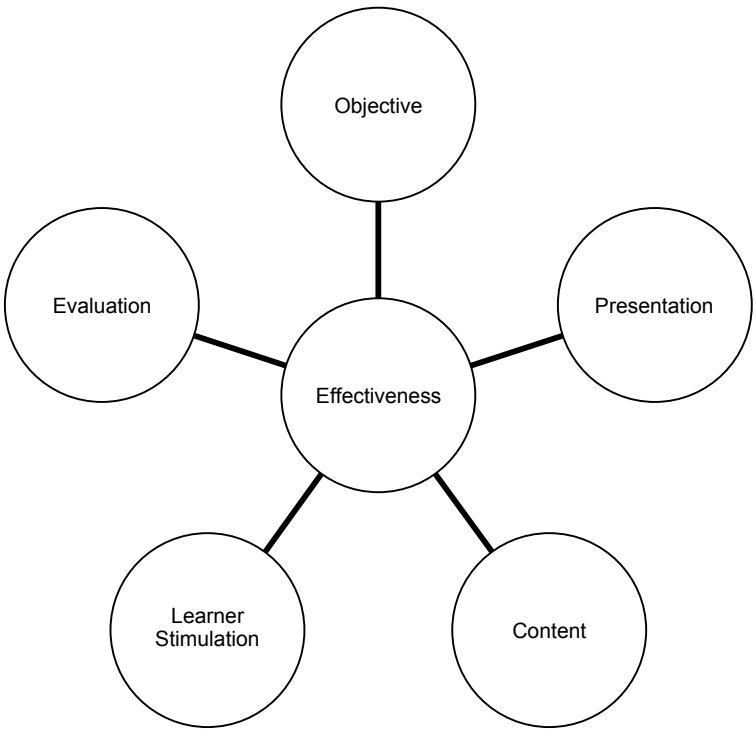
- Is any testing incorporated into the presentation or presented by the classroom instructor to the students following the telecast to measure the learner's understanding?

General Evaluation

- What is your overall evaluation of the program?

Adapted from: Schramm, W. (1972). Quality in Instructional Television. Honolulu, HI: University Press of Hawaii.

Audiovisual – a teaching or lecture aid that combines sound and vision, for example, in the form of video equipment, software programs, or slides accompanied by sound recordings.



Notes