

Practical Pedagogy for Biology, Fall 2017

1 credit Wednesdays, 7:20 – 9:10 pm Carr 222

Course Instructor(s): Christine Davis, Zach Emberts

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Course description and learning goals

This course is designed to prepare you for your work as a teaching assistant, and will help build a foundation for teaching throughout your career. Through discussions, workshops, personal reflection, and peer and faculty feedback, you will:

- 1) Develop practical teaching skills;
- 2) Learn how to organize yourself and teach to reach specific learning goals;
- 3) Learn how to evaluate students fairly and accurately;
- 4) Receive teaching mentorship;
- 5) Become familiar with fundamental modern pedagogical techniques supported by research.

Learning outcomes

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Follow the law and university procedures while teaching;
- 2) Discuss techniques to show concern for students and foster an inclusive classroom;
- 3) Organize your lesson plans;
- 4) Find resources and support for teaching;
- 5) Deliver an effective lecture and in-class activity, and lead productive discussions with your students;
- 6) Practice fair and accurate grading strategies and develop rubrics for grading students' writing and oral presentations;
- 7) Evaluate on the fly whether your students are learning.

How your success in the course will be determined

You will demonstrate proficiency in teaching by successful completion of these assignments:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage of grade</u>
FERPA training	10%
Teaching reflections	20%
Class participation - discussions	20%
Class participation - grading workshops	10%
Self-evaluation of teaching video	10%
Peer evaluation of your teaching	10%
Instructor evaluation of your teaching	20%

Description of assignments

FERPA training – complying with this federal law is absolutely required when teaching college students, but the nuts and bolts of the law are tricky. The University provides online training for this law, which you are required to complete successfully in this class. The training should take no more than a couple of hours of your time, and may save you a lot of trouble later on in your career.

Teaching reflections – Periodically, you'll participate in a Canvas discussion in response to a prompt. The prompt will ask you about your teaching experience that week and how what you've learned in this class applies

to your experience. You'll be able to view others' comments and will be able to respond to them, if you like. At the beginning of class the following week, we will choose a comment or thread from your Canvas discussion to continue in class. Reflections submitted after class begins will be considered late, and one point will be deducted.

Class participation – discussion – Attendance and participation will be noted each week.

Class participation - grading workshops – For this assignment, bring copies of student work (with names removed or obscured) to share with others in order to develop a common and effective strategy for assigning points and grades. Together you will develop rubrics and/or grading guidelines.

Self, peer, and instructor evaluations of your teaching – First, the course TA will digitally record you in the classroom with your students and provide you with the video. You will critically evaluate your own teaching using a rubric, then write a page describing your observations and suggestions for improvement. Your own observations will, in part, form the basis of the peer evaluation: later, the course TA will observe you live in the classroom and critically evaluate your teaching using a rubric. The TA will specifically address points identified in your self-evaluation, looking for improvements. The TA will provide you with feedback and suggestions for improvement. Finally, the self- and peer- evaluations will in part form the basis of the instructor's evaluation: later, he or she will observe you live in the classroom and critically evaluate your teaching using a rubric, then specifically address points identified in the self and TA evaluations, looking for improvements. The instructor will provide you with additional feedback and suggestions for improvement.

Guest addresses – During this course, we will welcome staff members from the Disability Resource Center and the Office of Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence to discuss on campus student and teaching resources. In addition, we will draw from Biology's teaching expertise during guest addresses on evaluating student learning on the fly (Gerlach), and delivering an engaging lecture (Palmer).

Tentative course schedule

Meeting	Topic	Assignment given (due the following class meeting)
8/23	Using Canvas, developing a positive classroom environment, campus resources for handling disruptive students	Complete FERPA training
8/30	Organizing content for learning - backward design; quiz writing workshop	Teaching reflection 1
9/6	Guest address – DRC staff: Resources for students - U Matter WeCare, DRC	Assigned reading
9/13	Questioning techniques that encourage critical thinking; grading quizzes fairly and consistently	Assigned reading, teaching reflection 2
9/20	Guest address – Dr. Nichole Gerlach: Evaluating student learning on the fly	Video and self-assessment of your teaching
9/27	Leading a discussion where everyone gets involved	
10/4	Guest address – Dr. Todd Palmer: Delivering a lecture that promotes learning and doesn't put students to sleep	Teaching reflection 3
10/11	Lecturing to engage your students workshop	Peer assessment of your teaching
10/18	TBD - open workshop	Teaching reflection 4
10/25	Grading workshop: tests and quizzes	
11/1	Grading workshop: oral and written presentations	Assigned reading
11/8	Best pedagogical practices	Instructor assessment of your teaching
11/5	Guest address - Jennifer Smith, Director, Office of Faculty Development and Teaching Excellence: Campus resources for teaching	Teaching reflection 5
11/29	TBD	
12/6	TBD	