University of Toronto, Fall 2024
SOC6811H: Seminar in Teaching
Wednesday, 10am-1pm
Prof. Christian Caron

Course Description

The goal is to create and deliver meaningful courses on the one hand, and to develop the ability to articulate this meaningfulness to students, colleagues, and prospective employers on the other. A key to good teaching is reflection, so that one can be purposeful and deliberate with all pedagogical decisions, from course planning to course delivery. This is also a crucial element in communicating effectively the objectives of the course and our expectations to our students. As such, this seminar is organized to provide opportunities for discussion and reflection on the what, how, and why of different aspects of university teaching. Another key to good teaching is practice. As such, the seminar will provide opportunities and guidance for hands on practice in the development of various teaching materials and classroom delivery.

The course will benefit both graduate students with and without teaching experience. For those with no experience, the seminar will sensitize you to the many components of effective teaching and provide you with guidance as you go through the process of preparing a course. For those with classroom teaching experience, the seminar will encourage you to think systematically about your teaching and to consider alternative ways of teaching. For both, this course addresses current research and practice in teaching in higher education. The course is designed to assist graduate students to develop knowledge and skills from the existing research on teaching in a university setting.

The seminar challenges graduate students to discover and hone their teaching styles, to develop a personal philosophy about teaching and learning, to learn about the teaching resources that are available to them throughout the university and elsewhere, to experiment with designing engaging courses of study, and to discover that teaching can be a rewarding and stimulating element of an academic career. The seminar will discuss the major components of a course, including course objectives, being mindful of equity, diversity and inclusion, use of readings, use of class time, use of technology, evaluation of students, and evaluating yourself, dealing with various challenges such as the growth of generative A.I., among others. In each case, we will consider the options available and their strengths and limitations.

In the classroom, it is important that we create and maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to experimentation and personal development. We need to be able to be honest and supportive with each other. To this end, all comments, suggestions, and feedback will be presented and received in the spirit of learning and with a genuine intention to help each other improve. Being respectful of each other is of the utmost importance. It is my hope that throughout the semester each student develops her, his, or their "teaching voice" and that we have fun doing so!

My own view is that there is no single correct way to decide each of the issues one faces in teaching. How you use class time or evaluate students depends on the course objectives, content, size, your personal preferences, and other factors as well. Thus, this seminar is not designed to indoctrinate you to a particular style. Rather, the goal is to stimulate you to think about each of these issues and make decisions about how you would teach a particular course.

Course Objectives
Broadly the course has three aims.
1. To help make sure that you have a rewarding experience in your early days as a university teacher, including helping you:
a)   teach in an effective and engaging way so your students get a lot out of your courses and you enjoy them also.
b)   manage your time to minimize being overloaded as a junior teacher/faculty member. A key aspect of this is being well prepared to start teaching before you begin your first full-time teaching job.

2.   To help prepare you for job applications and interviews when you will be asked about teaching, and when you will want to produce evidence of your teaching ability and potential. In the job application and interview process, you may be asked to produce a teaching dossier, including a statement of teaching philosophy and other items. The teaching course aims to help you have these items prepared in advance, before you get your first job interview.

3.   To help you situate your teaching in research and theory. The course aims to move beyond a simple "how to" class on techniques, and provide you with the opportunities to reflect on the various objectives of your courses, and thus move to the "why" behind the host of decisions affecting teaching.

Specific Learning Objectives for the Course: Participants in this course will be able to meet a number of objectives:

1- demonstrate knowledge and comprehension of principles of learning, principles of teaching, and their application

2- develop an appreciation for the diversity of learning and teaching styles and show the ability to design meaningful curricula and learning activities, assignments and exams

3- design a course syllabus and curriculum that takes into account research on teaching and learning and be able to justify your pedagogical choices

4- create a teaching dossier that reflects your professional development as teachers

5- articulate a teaching philosophy, including an understanding of key aspects of the professional responsibilities of the university teacher, as well as being mindful of equity, diversity and inclusion principles related to university teaching

Weekly Topics

Week 1 – Sept 11th
Introduction to Seminar Structure & Objectives
Resources
CR/NCR
Purposeful Teaching
Content, Understanding, and Skills
Teaching Community

Week 2 – Sept 18th
Learning
What is Active Learning
How Learning Works
Helping Students Learn
Student Engagement and Motivation
Engaging Students in their Own Learning
Teaching Students to Become Self-Regulated Learners

Week 3 – Sept 25th
Understanding Our Students
Diversity, Language, Experience, Class, Gender, Race/Ethnicity, Sexuality, Religion, Politics, Accessibility, Aspirations
Different Students Different Challenges
Expectations of Students
Ethics of Teaching
Power and Teaching
How to Treat Students

Week 4 – Oct 2nd
Getting Prepared to Teach
Teaching in Context
In-Person, Remote, and Hybrid Teaching
Identifying Stakeholders
Performing an Environmental Scan
Designing Learning Outcomes
Syllabi as Document
Communicating Expectations

Week 5 – Oct 9th
Writing to Learn and Learning to Write
Low and High Stake Writing
Designing Meaningful Assignments

Benefits of Scaffolded Assignments
Assorted Assignments: Strengths and Limitations
Being Mindful of the Availability of Generative A.I.

Week 6 – Oct 16th
Reading to Learn and Learning to Read
Choosing and Assigning Readings
Balancing Difficulty with Quantity
How to Get Students to Read
Reading as Active Learning
Help Students Get Most out of Reading

Week 7 – Oct 23rd
Teaching Inside the Classroom
Effective Lectures: Objectives
Effective Lectures: Content
Effective Lectures: Delivery
Technology in the Classroom
Classroom Conduct
Facilitating Discussion

Week 8 – Nov 6th
Teaching Outside the Classroom
Communication
Office Hours
E-mails
Using LMS (Leaning Management System) Effectively
Policies: Late, Make-Up, Accessibility Services, OSAI, Grade Appeals, Ad Hoc
Training and Mentoring of TAs

Week 9: Nov 13th
Designing Tests and Exams
Evaluating Tests and Exams
Purposes of Grading and Assessments
Grading Rubrics
Grading Best Practices
Formative and Summative Feedback
Grading Distribution

Week 10 – Nov 20th
Course Evaluations
What Students Value in Teachers
Assessing a Course: Students, Instructor, and Peers
Defining Success

Self-Evaluation and Growth

Week 11 – Nov 27th
Discussion of Annotated Course Outline

Week 12 – Dec 4th
Documenting Teaching Effectiveness
Putting Together a Teaching Dossier
Writing a Teaching Philosophy Statement
Preparing the Teaching Portion of a Job Interview
Professional Development Beyond
Conclusion

Course Requirements & Evaluation
This course will be run as a workshop, and is graded Credit/No Credit. To pass the course, and get credit on their transcript, students should attend all sessions, arrive to class prepared to participate, and engage thoughtfully in all activities and discussions. The five components to complete are (all of which will become part of your Teaching Dossier):

Statement of Teaching Philosophy (due Oct 2nd & end of term) – This statement will be a work-in-progress throughout the semester, whereas a first draft will be due on Oct 2nd, the polished version will be a component of your Teaching Dossier at the end of the semester.

Annotated Sample Assignment (due Oct 16th) – You will design the outline of an assignment that aligns with the articulated learning outcomes of your prospective course. You will annotate this assignment with reflections on the what, how, and why of this assignment.

Annotated Sample Lecture (due Nov 6th) – You will prepare a sample lecture on one of the topics of your prospective course. You will choose the readings for that week, walk us through the lecture outline, both in terms of content and format, what activities if any designed for the students, highlight the learning outcomes for that lecture, etc. You will annotate this lecture with reflections on the what, how, and why of the content and format of the lecture and the decisions you've made.

Annotated Course Outline (due Nov 27th) -- Each participant will be asked to develop a syllabus for a course of her or his choice. Choose a course that you hope to teach. I encourage you to select a course in your subject area or a foundational course which is widely taught. Accompanying the traditional course syllabi are annotations justifying the pedagogical decisions you made in designing your course. For example, why did you choose those learning objectives, those specific topics and readings, the assignments you will make, the exam and grading policies you selected, etc

Teaching Dossier (due end of term) -- As described by the Canadian Association of University Teachers, "a teaching dossier is a summary of a professor's major teaching accomplishments and

strengths. It is to a professor's teaching what lists of publications, grants, and academic honors are to research." The teaching dossier is a key factor in hiring, tenure and promotion decisions. At this early stage, however, you may have relatively little to put into a teaching dossier but you should start to build one and get into the habit of adding to it. A personal teaching dossier is something you will add to throughout your career. Details of how to create a teaching dossier will be presented in seminar and you will be expected to provide a draft at the end of the semester. Though most of you have not taught before, you can build your teaching dossiers with material from your teaching assistant and guest lecturing experiences and with materials developed in this course, so that you have one ready to go when you begin to apply for jobs.

Course Extensions – Extenuating Circumstances

Students are expected to submit course work on time. Occasionally, students may not be able to make agreed upon deadlines due to extenuating circumstances. Students are required to make arrangements with their instructors about how to submit late course work. The graduate office highly recommends that course work extensions remain within the term dates in which the course was taught.

Note: submitting work beyond the term end date (not the last day of instruction but the actual end of term, e.g., the last day of a winter term class may be April 3, but the term ends April 30) requires a discussion with the instructor and the graduate office, as well as completion of an SGS request for an extension of course work form. These forms will be considered by the graduate office and are not automatically approved.

Academic Integrity
Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Students are expected to cite sources in all written work and presentations. See this link for tips for how to use sources well: (http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize).

According to Section B.I.1.(e) of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters it is an offence *"to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere."*

By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/code-behaviour-academic-matters-july-1-2019) and *Code of Student Conduct (http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm*)

which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

Generative Artificial Intelligence

Students are encouraged to make use of technology, including generative artificial intelligence tools such as ChatGPT or GitHub Copilot, to contribute to their understanding of course materials. Students may choose to use generative artificial intelligence tools as they work through the assignments in this course; this use must be documented in an appendix for each assignment. The documentation should include what tool(s) were used, how they were used, and how the results from the AI were incorporated into the submitted work. Any content produced by an artificial intelligence tool must be cited appropriately. Many organizations that publish standard citation formats are now providing information on citing generative AI (e.g., MLA: https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/). Course instructor reserves the right to ask students to explain their process for creating their assignment.

Equity and Diversity

The University of Toronto is committed to equity and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. As a course instructor, I will neither condone nor tolerate behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any individual in this course and wish to be alerted to any attempt to create an intimidating or hostile environment. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated.
Additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto is available at http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca.

Accessibility Services

It is the University of Toronto's goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council "Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities" at http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppnov012004.pdf.

In working toward this goal, the University will strive to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities, participate in the full range of activities that the University offers, and achieve their full potential as members of the University community. We take seriously our obligation to make this course as welcoming and accessible as feasible for students with diverse needs. We also understand that disabilities can change over time and will do our best to accommodate you.

Students seeking support must have an intake interview with a disability advisor to discuss their individual needs. In many instances it is easier to arrange certain accommodations with more advance notice, so we strongly encourage you to act as quickly as possible. To schedule a

registration appointment with a disability advisor, please visit Accessibility Services at http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as, call at 416-978-8060, or email at: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca. The office is located at 455 Spadina Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 400.

Additional student resources for distressed or emergency situations can be located at distressedstudent.utoronto.ca; Health & Wellness Centre, 416-978-8030, http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc, or Student Crisis Response, 416-946-7111.

Readings
We will be reading selected excerpts from the following sources (as well as additional sources to be determined later):

Ambrose, Susan A., et al (2010) How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching

Angelo, Thomas A. & K. Patricia Cross (1993) Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers

Bain, Ken (2004) What the Best College Teachers Do

Bain, K. (2021). *Super courses: The future of teaching and learning*. Princeton University Press.

Barkley, Elizabeth and Claire Howell Major (2016) Learning Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty

Barkley, Elizabeth F. (2010) Student Engagement Techniques: A Handbook for College Faculty

Bean, John C. (2011) Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom

Berdahl, L. (2021). *How to get students to read your syllabus*. University Affairs. https://www.universityaffairs.ca/career-advice/the-skills-agenda/how-to-get-students-to-read-your-syllabus/

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Brookfield, Stephen (2015) The Skillful Teacher: On Techniques, Trust, and Responsiveness in the Classroom

Brookfield, Stephen (2012) Teaching for Critical Thinking: Tools and Techniques to Help Students Question Their Assumptions

Brown, Peter, et al (2014) Making It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning

Cohen, L. (2018). *The power of reflection.* California Teacher Development Collaborative. https://catdc.org/the-power-of-reflection/

Fink, L. Dee (2013) Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses

Feldman, J. (2018). *Grading for equity: What it is, why it matters, and how it can transform schools and classrooms*. Corwin Press.

Fletcher-Wood, H. (2021). *Habits of success: Getting every student learning*. Routledge.

Freire, Paulo (1970) Pedagogy of the Oppressed

Gooblar, D. (2019). *The missing course: Everything they never taught you about college teaching*. Harvard University Press.

Gross Davis, Barbara (2009) Tools for Teaching

Grunert O'Brien, Judith (2008) The Course Syllabus: A Learning-Centered Approach

hooks, bell (1994) Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom

Nilson, L. B. (2016). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Nilson, L. B., & Goodson, L. A. (2021). *Online teaching at its best: Merging instructional design with teaching and learning research* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Palmer, Parker (2007) The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life

Stevens, Dannelle D. & Antonia J. Levi (2013) Introduction to Rubrics: An Assessment Tool to Save Grading Time, Convey Feedback, and Promote Student Learning

Strayhorn, T. L. (2019). *College students' sense of belonging: A key to educational success for all students* (2nd ed.) Routledge.

Suskie, L. (2018). *Assessing student learning: A common sense guide*. Wiley.

Svinicki, Marilla D. & Wilbert J. McKeachie (2014) McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers