

History 3920hf: Colloquium on Teaching Practices

Academic Year 2008–2009

Fridays, 9:30–11:00 AM ~ Lower Library, Robinson Hall

<http://isites.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=historyphd&pageid=icb.page178369>

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Course Description

This course presents an introduction to teaching history, both at Harvard and beyond. Through practice, observation, reading, and discussion, you will gain familiarity with a range of techniques and styles of teaching. Class meetings will also provide an open forum for first-time teaching fellows and tutors to share ongoing concerns and experiences.

The course will meet approximately five times per semester. Each meeting will center on a specific aspect of teaching history, including discussion leading, lecturing, responding to student writing, and balancing teaching and research. At the end of the year, you will have the opportunity to reflect on your teaching experience and to begin assembling a teaching portfolio.

Course Requirements

- Attendance at the Bok Center Fall Teaching Conference and History Teaching Retreat, both in September
- Attendance and participation in course meetings
- Several reading assignments, drawn from current scholarship on teaching and learning*
- One videotaped section, to be reviewed with a Bok Center consultant
- Early course evaluations, to be reviewed with a Bok Center consultant
- Comment & grade for sample student paper, for the session on responding to student writing
- Draft syllabus
- Teaching philosophy statement, 1–2 pp.

Grading

Grading for this course is satisfactory/unsatisfactory (i.e. SAT/UNS). All first-time TFs and tutors are required to participate. Failure to complete all of the requirements listed above will lead to a grade of UNS and a requirement to repeat the practicum during the next year of residence in the program.

* All course readings are on reserve in the Department Library on the second floor of Robinson Hall. When possible, they will also be available online.

Course Schedule

Sep. 10–11 BOK CENTER FALL TEACHING CONFERENCE

All first-time teachers must attend at least the Wednesday sessions on “Fundamentals of Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences.”

Sep. 12 HISTORY DEPARTMENT TEACHING RETREAT

Assignment: Microteaching. Come prepared to teach a five-minute lesson of your choice.

Sep. 19 LEADING DISCUSSION, I

Reading: McKeachie, chs. 4–5; David Pace, “Decoding the Reading of History: An Example of the Process,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 98 (2004): 13–21; Peter J. Frederick, “Motivating Students by Active Learning in the History Classroom,” in Alan Booth & Paul Hyland, eds., *The Practice of University History Teaching* (Manchester, UK, 2000); Myra & David Sadker, “Ensuring Equitable Participation in College Classes,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 49 (1992): 49–56; Janis F. Andersen, “Instructor Nonverbal Communication: Listening to Our Silent Messages,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 26 (1986): 41–49.

Assignment: None.

Sep. 26 LEADING DISCUSSION, II

Reading: Bain, ch. 5; Richard J. Paxton & Sam Wineburg, “Expertise and the Teaching of History,” in Bob Moon et al., eds., *Routledge International Companion to Education* (New York, 2000), 855–864.

Assignment: By this meeting, you should have signed up to have a regular section meeting videotaped at the Bok Center. Soon after completing your videotaping, make sure to sign up for a viewing with a Bok Center consultant.

Oct. 3 & 10 LEADING DISCUSSION, III

Reading: None.

Assignment: During each of these two weeks, half of the class will meet in the Bok Center to participate in a videotaped microteaching exercise. The subject of your ‘class’ will be set for you in advance; it will be your job to come prepared to teach a 12–15-minute lesson out of the shared readings you have been given.

Oct. 17 TEACHING WRITING

Reading: Gaea Leinhardt, “Lessons on Teaching and Learning in History from Paul’s Pen,” in Peter N. Stearns et al., eds., *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives* (New York, 2000), 223–245; Kathleen McCarthy Young & Gaea

Leinhardt, "Writing from Primary Documents: A Way of Knowing in History," *Written Communication* 15 (1998): 25–68; Robert Blackey, "A Guide to the Skill of Essay Construction in History," *Social Education* (March 1981): 178–182.

Assignment: Comment on and assign grades to two sample essays. In class, we will discuss our assessments of these papers as well as efficient and effective techniques for grading.

Oct. 24 PROBLEM STUDENTS, PROBLEM SITUATIONS

Reading: Bain, chs. 4 & 6; McKeachie, ch. 21; David Pace, "Controlled Fission: Teaching Supercharged Subjects," *College Teaching* 51 (2003): 42–45.

Assignment: Read "The Delinquent Student" (handout). In class, we will discuss the case and how the TF handled it. Also: come prepared to share one dilemma you've encountered over the semester. We'll have time to discuss these "cases" in the second half of the class.

Nov.-Dec. As the semester draws to a close and your thoughts turn to the G-3 conference, make sure to complete your videotape consultation with the Bok Center.

Feb. 13 LECTURING, I

Reading: Joseph Coohill, "Images and the History Lecture: Teaching the History Channel Generation," *The History Teacher* 39 (2006): 455–466; Peter J. Frederick, "The Lively Lecture: 8 Variations," *College Teaching* 34 (1986): 43–50, Lauren Brown, "Giving the Guest Lecture," *Teaching Fellow Handbook*, 53–55.

Assignment (optional): Approach your advisor or course head about preparing and delivering a guest lecture.

Feb. 20 LECTURING, II

Reading: Goldsmith et al., chs. 6–7.

Assignment: None.

Mar. 6 MENTORING/ADVISING

Reading: Goldsmith et al., ch. 3; Heather Smith, "Writing Letters of Recommendation," *Teaching Fellow Handbook*, 55–59; *Handbook for Research Seminar Tutors*; Alvin Kernan, *In Plato's Cave* (New Haven, 1999), selections.

Assignment (optional): Sign up for a spring term videotaping at the Bok Center.

Apr. 3 SYLLABUS WORKSHOP

Reading: Todd Estes, "Constructing the Syllabus: Devising a Framework for Helping Students Learn to Think Like Historians," *The History Teacher* (2007): 183–202.

Assignment: Prepare a draft syllabus for a course you might like to teach. Your syllabus should include: a course description, a book list, lecture topics, and at least one paper assignment.

Apr. 17 TEACHING PORTFOLIOS

Reading: McKeachie, ch. 23; Peter Seldin, *The Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions* (Bolton, MA, 1997), 1–19, 33–46.

Assignment: Draft a 1–2 pp. statement of your teaching philosophy. During class, we will workshop these statements and reflect on your teaching experiences over the semester.

Bibliography of Course Readings

Andersen, Janis F. “Instructor Nonverbal Communication: Listening to Our Silent Messages,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 26 (1986): 41–49.

Bain, Ken. *What the Best College Teachers Do* (Cambridge, MA, 2004).

Blackey, Robert. “A Guide to the Skill of Essay Construction in History,” *Social Education* (March 1981): 178–182.

Boice, Robert. “Quick Starters: New Faculty Who Succeed,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 48 (1991): 111–121.

Coohill, Joseph. “Images and the History Lecture: Teaching the History Channel Generation,” *The History Teacher* 39 (2006): 455–466.

Estes, Todd. “Constructing the Syllabus: Devising a Framework for Helping Students Learn to Think Like Historians,” *The History Teacher* (2007): 183–202.

Frederick, Peter J. “The Lively Lecture: 8 Variations,” *College Teaching* 34 (1986): 43–50.

----- “Motivating Students by Active Learning in the History Classroom,” in Alan Booth & Paul Hyland, eds., *The Practice of University History Teaching* (Manchester, UK, 2000).

Goldsmith, John A. et al., *The Chicago Guide to Your Academic Career* (Chicago, 2001).

Kernan, Alvin. *In Plato’s Cave* (New Haven, 1999).

Leinhardt, Gaea. “Lessons on Teaching and Learning in History from Paul’s Pen,” in Peter N. Stearns et al., eds., *Knowing, Teaching, and Learning History: National and International Perspectives* (New York, 2000), 223–245.

McKeachie, Wilbert J. et al., *McKeachie’s Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*, 10th ed. (Boston, 1999).

Pace, David. “Controlled Fission: Teaching Supercharged Subjects,” *College Teaching* 51 (2003): 42–45.

----- “Decoding the Reading of History: An Example of the Process,” *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 98 (2004): 13–21.

Paxton, Richard J. & Sam Wineburg, “Expertise and the Teaching of History,” in Bob Moon et al., eds., *Routledge International Companion to Education* (New York, 2000), 855–864.

Sadker, Myra & David. "Ensuring Equitable Participation in College Classes," *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 49 (1992): 49–56.

Seldin, Peter. *The Teaching Portfolio: A Practical Guide to Improved Performance and Promotion/Tenure Decisions* (Bolton, MA, 1997).

Young, Kathleen McCarthy & Gaea Leinhardt, "Writing from Primary Documents: A Way of Knowing in History," *Written Communication* 15 (1998): 25–68.

Teaching Fellow Handbook.

Handbook for Research Seminar Tutors.