UW’s president and provost refer to UW as a “T1” university, meaning an R1 that values innovative, evidence-based teaching. Because UW faculty members, teaching assistants, and staff educators care about whether and how students learn, they bring the same passion and resourcefulness to teaching that they bring to research. Teaching at a “T1” means applying scholarly skills to our work in and beyond the classroom.

Wherever we teach—in person or online, in theaters or labs—we’re no longer limited to teaching the way we were taught. Nor do we have to make teaching decisions based on panic. When students light up a classroom, an online discussion, or a study group with their ideas and enthusiasm, it may be a kind of magic. But it’s not a mystery. Students always learn, as Kathleen Blake Yancey writes. But they don’t always learn what we think we are teaching them. One way to close the gap between teaching and learning is to foster a culture of reflection and peer mentoring. UW instructors reflect on their work, observe each other teach, and talk with colleagues about practices that advance student engagement and achievement.

The CTL’s annual report highlights stories from a handful of intrepid and gifted teaching scholars at UW. This handful stands in for hundreds of UW instructors and thousands of stories of art historians and sociologists and chemical engineers who want students to experience the joys and challenges of learning. It’s an honor for those of us at the Center for Teaching and Learning to witness their dedication.

Enjoy!

Beth Kalikoff, Director, Center for Teaching and Learning
CREATING AN ENVIRONMENT OF PEERS

Committed to lifelong learning, Linda Martin-Morris (Principal Lecturer, Biology) never stops challenging herself as an instructor, even after doing this work for over two decades. Martin-Morris teaches biology courses with 150 to 180 students, from 100 level to 400 level, non-majors and majors.

Despite the large size of her classes, Martin-Morris has a fine sense of her audience and understands that a variety of approaches is crucial. “I’m extremely aware of diversity in our classroom—returning students who have children, first generation students who lack familial support. My teaching benefits from all those perspectives. And the diversity also means that in every class some students are going to miss the mark. For example, in classroom discussion, some students may want very much to participate—their brains may be very active, engaged in the discussion—but if required to speak, their brains almost turn off as they try to formulate what to say and when to say it. So I need to employ a diverse repertoire of strategies. My hope is that over the course of the quarter, I’m reaching everyone at some point, and that everyone can participate.”

“The strategies I employ depend on the class. Sometimes I use something called ‘silent discussion.’ Students respond to prompts by writing on the board. In some classes we engage in traditional, in-your-face debate; in some, we employ intimate debate, where students debate in their seats, one-on-one. I also use audience response systems to make sure that everyone’s really getting it, and I’m not misled by quick responders. For some classes, I’ll record lectures at home and have students view them before they come to class, which allows us to do activities based on that content once we convene in the classroom.”

Stretching Herself as an Instructor

A core teaching value for Martin-Morris is creating an environment of peers, where all can learn from one another. “I don’t intentionally make mistakes in front of my students!” she laughs, “But when mistakes inevitably occur, I purposefully own them. I see those moments as opportunities for breaking down barriers between instructor and student, for promoting that culture of peers, which is crucial for students to learn from one another as well as from the person at the head of the classroom. For some students, it is challenging for an instructor to own her mistakes; they are more comfortable with the notion of the infallible instructor, and they struggle to understand how an instructor’s mistakes can facilitate and enhance their own learning.” But part of the commitment to stretching herself as an instructor is a commitment to allow for the discomfort that leads to growth. And part of what makes that possible is the support and collaboration Martin-Morris finds at the CTL.

“How have I been involved with the CTL for a long time. I participated in quarterly forums to improve teaching which covered topics such as including veterans in the classroom and being aware of different learning styles. I’ve participated in and facilitated two professional communities and a large-lecture collegium, and been a long-time participant in the annual Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. I’ve participated in the TA/RA conferences to train incoming grad students and led sessions related to diversity in the classroom.”

Connecting with People Across Campus

As other instructors have observed, one of the biggest surprises and benefits of participating in CTL programs is connecting with people across campus. “The biggest surprise I’ve encountered in participating in CTL’s programs is finding colleagues among people from departments I never would have interacted with. I’ve been surprised by the parallels in teaching across different disciplines. I can really learn about implementation of different strategies, hearing instructors in different disciplines talk about their efforts to try various methods. It’s eye-opening to learn what other disciplines do.”

“While those experiences have positively impacted my teaching, the big deal for me about CTL is that it feels like a home away from home. When I walk through the doors, I feel respected and appreciated. Whether I’m working as a participant or a presenter, I’m with colleagues who get what I’m trying to do and feel excited about what I’m doing. Teaching can be exhausting; it’s a huge benefit to have the support of the CTL, which bolsters you through the challenges.”
ctl programs and services

for all uw educators

learning communities
annual symposium on teaching & learning
theater for change
in practice workshop series
teaching & learning workshops
including all students: teaching student veterans
consultations for instructors
consultations for departments and programs
online teaching resources

for faculty

faculty fellows program
large class collegium
technology teaching fellows institute
teaching awards

for tas & ras

annual ta/ra conference on teaching, learning & research
international ta program
graduate student courses on teaching & learning
teaching awards

summer 2015
grdsch 630: teaching & learning in higher ed—from campus to career
faculty fellows program
theater for change: uw bothell new faculty orientation
large class collegium
international ta/ra program
ta/ra conference on teaching, learning & research
microteaching sessions

autumn 2015
grdsch 615a: ta & ra preparation
learning community: contemplative pedagogy—bringing our whole selves to the classroom
including all students: teaching student veterans
theater for change: international programs & exchanges performance
teaching award nominations

winter 2016
grdsch 630: teaching & learning in higher ed—frameworks & practices
learning community: identifying and responding to microaggressions in the classroom
including all students: teaching student veterans
in practice workshop series

spring 2016
annual teaching & learning symposium
learning community: teaching & diversity—exploring critical pedagogies
theater for change: “#herewegoagain” performance

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university of washington box 351265 seattle, wa 98195
GROWING AS AN INSTRUCTOR

Anita Ramasastry’s passion for teaching comes through in the first minutes of conversation. A recipient of the UW’s Distinguished Teaching Award, Professor Ramasastry directs the Graduate Program in Sustainable International Development (SID) at the University of Washington School of Law (in addition to teaching international law and international business transactions in the regular J.D. degree program).

“I love running the master’s program. It brings together tremendously talented people from so many diverse places, with diverse perspectives. The SID program draws students from all over the world: the 25 students currently in the program—lawyers, judges, and academics, many from countries in transition, who bring a broad spectrum of experience—represent 15 countries, including Afghanistan, Kenya, Chile and Korea, among others.”

Lifelong Friendships

Professor Ramasastry was among the first cohort of Faculty Fellows and speaks warmly of the experience. “It was great! The program allowed me to form lifelong friendships with people in other departments.” Two summers ago, she participated in the Technology Teaching Fellows program, an intensive fellowship to help instructors innovate with technology. To participate, candidates submit an idea for a course to be taught either entirely online or hybrid. “Both the financial and technical support were amazing. Had it not been for the fellowship, I would not have spent time investing in developing a course in this way.”

Professor Ramasastry observed that, as with the Faculty Fellows, one of the most valuable aspects of the Technology Teaching Fellows (TTF) was the opportunity for networking—time without distractions to connect with people across campus. “Convening is a key part. If I just sat in my office and worked with the technology, I wouldn’t have gotten the benefit of what’s there.” Professor Ramasastry says that the TTF helped put her in the students’ shoes, learning about how students absorb information, for example, or how to format text for students with visual impairment. “We learn about the optimal tools for our specific instructional needs, such as what mic to buy or which tablets and tools are best for drawing. It’s so great to have people show me how to do what I want to do, and to get help figuring out how much time it will take me to do what I’d planned to do.” Beyond the fellowship programs, the CTL has helped Professor Ramasastry continually grow as an instructor. “Students constantly change—their expectations, their ways of learning. The CTL has been really helpful as I become an ‘old dog.’ It offers a safe space to discuss problems and challenges, and find ways to address them.”

FACULTY FELLOWS PROGRAM

This three-day program is designed to orient new faculty to the UW campus community by providing opportunities to meet with other instructors, staff, and students while attending workshops, discussions, and social events.

In September 2015, over 125 new faculty attended discussions and workshops—facilitated by UW faculty and staff—on multiple teaching topics:
MANY PATHS TO THE RIGHT ANSWER

Although Aj Boydston’s undergraduate organic chemistry class typically has 300 to 400 students, he’s able to create smaller settings in which to connect. Since working with students is a highlight of his work, it’s not surprising that Professor Boydston has pioneered solutions such as online office hours. “Interacting with students is really satisfying, hearing the different ways that students are solving questions, how they’re thinking. Over the years, talking with students in office hours, I’ve learned that there are lots of paths to get to a nominally correct answer. My view now is that the course material is just the fodder, and then we chew on it together. Every year that I’ve taught, it’s been a different experience each time because students change.”

Online Office Hours

In addition to holding in-person office hours, Professor Boydston holds online office hours twice a week in the Canvas learning management system. Often, those conversations will yield surprising ways of seeing the course material. “The anecdotes and analogies that I use in my lectures always come from students.”

“When students come in to ask questions, we end up distilling down to first principles, the nuts and bolts physics principles. This process is good for me because it brings me back to a beginner’s mindset. It makes me a little nostalgic too—remembering how thrilling it was to solve problems at that introductory level, when it seemed like I’d reached the pinnacle of success.”

Technology Teaching Fellows

As his office hours do for his students, the CTL’s Technology Teaching Fellows program did for him. “I was a member of TTF during the first summer a couple of years ago. Just going through that fellowship helped me shift gears entirely. It provided motivation and confidence for diving in more and re-designing the class—I knew I’d have help when I needed it.”

TTF also allowed connections to form and relationships to grow. “Participating in the TTF helped me feel more rooted in the UW community. I did it during my pre-tenure period, when I was still pretty new. I got to meet other people from across campus. I still see them in my neighborhood and the coffee shop. The university opened up for me, got a little smaller.”

Of course, the TTF program includes a lot of learning about technology as well. “By hearing from a few dozen other faculty what’s possible to do with Canvas, we learn what works best in practice—that influences my ideas. Just the way that reading chemistry journals influences what I do with research, TTF has influenced the way I teach. It kind of made me want to race back to my computer and see how to implement something in Canvas. And I really appreciated the commitment from the university to support our teaching.”

TECHNOLOGY TEACHING FELLOWS

From 2013 to 2015, 56 faculty from 25 departments took part in the program.

Participants:

- Spent a week at the TTF institute working with colleagues and facilitators to redesign their traditional courses into hybrid or online format.
- Presented their transformed courses to fellow TTF participants for feedback.
- Shared-out their findings and experiences with colleagues across campus.
- Taught their redesigned courses the following academic year.

As a result over 40 traditional courses have been redesigned into a hybrid or online format.

TTF is sponsored by the Office of the Provost, UW-IT, and the Center for Teaching and Learning.
Each spring the Center for Teaching and Learning hosts the annual UW Teaching and Learning Symposium. This forum provides everyone with an interest in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) the opportunity to learn of their colleagues’ work and engage in discussion. This year’s symposium highlighted the scholarship of UW instructors who use race and equity to inform their teaching and research.

**Keynote Speakers:**

- **Wayne Au**  
  Associate Professor, Educational Studies, UW Bothell

- **Christine Stevens**  
  Associate Professor, Nursing & Healthcare Leadership, UW Tacoma

- **Joyce Yen**  
  Director, ADVANCE Center for Institutional Change, UW Seattle

12th Annual Teaching & Learning Symposium  
“Doing Race and Equity Pedagogy”

**Co-Sponsors:**

- Office of the Provost  
- Graduate School  
- UW Libraries  
- Undergraduate Academic Affairs  
- UW Information Technology

- Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity  
- Simpson Center for the Humanities  
- Teaching & Learning Center, UWB  
- Teaching & Learning Center, UWT

Two poster sessions with 38 posters representing the scholarship of teaching and learning from over 90 faculty, staff educators, and students.

Nearly 50 UW departments and units were represented.
SELF-REFLECTION ON LEARNING AND TEACHING

Huatong Sun (Associate Professor, Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences) teaches in the Communication Program at the UW Tacoma School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences. She primarily teaches skill-based courses such as web and print design, and in Spring 2016 taught two 400-level courses: Advanced Web Design (AWD) and Cross-Cultural Communication Design. In the former, students work with clients from different cultural backgrounds to design websites that reflect their values. Each time the course is offered, students work with a different minority community group.

UW Tacoma provides ample opportunity to practice awareness about the needs and values of differing cultures, as it is among the top 50 culturally diverse institutions of higher education in the United States. “I see students coming from Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Nepal.” Huatong explains that in the AWD course, culture is not necessarily synonymous with national identity. “Culture may signify a group made up of people from various Native American tribes, or Vietnamese business people, or people who like skateboarding.” A significant part of what Huatong does in the AWD course is to help students see “the invisible ideologies” implicit in technology or interface design. Critical thinking is key, “We want to make technology usable and meaningful. It might be usable, but if it isn’t meaningful it doesn’t reflect the client’s identity. We want people who use technology to feel empowered.” Even the way elements are labeled can carry invisible cultural assumptions. Reflecting a shift in the design industry, Huatong’s courses strive to combine critical thinking and design thinking to better respond to the particular needs of specific users.

Building a Support Network

The CTL (and UWT’s Teaching and Learning Center) has supported Huatong with this and other teaching challenges. “It’s very helpful to build a support network,” she notes. She has worked with Karen Freisem, CTL instructional consultant, on how to refine teaching and assessment methods, and how to obtain meaningful feedback from students. Sometimes a small change in how a question is phrased will lead to better results. “I also participated in the Faculty Fellows when I first came [to Tacoma, five years ago]. It was helpful to see how much teaching was supported and how many resources are available.” In particular, Huatong recalls the syllabus workshop. “Even though I had taught for several years, it was refreshing to look at syllabi again. As I reflect now, the stakes are so high when teaching in a quarter system. I have to set things up well from the beginning. The syllabus workshop was really helpful for giving me a sense of this.”

In addition to teaching, Huatong serves on the Executive Council of Faculty Assembly, UWT’s faculty senate, which is currently using a best practices document created by the CTL on how to evaluate teaching in tenure and promotion cases. “As teachers, we need to know what we’re doing and the direction we want to go.”

CONSULTATIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS

During the 2015-16 AY, the CTL averaged 44 individual consultations per academic quarter. Most of the instructors who sought consultations were faculty members or graduate students.

Whatever the question or topic, individual consultations are deeply collaborative, drawing on the instructor’s expertise and reflecting disciplinary contexts.

Consultations are also:
• **Customized:** Consultants focus on questions specific to individual teaching contexts, needs, and time frames.
• **Evidence-based:** Consultants draw on insights from research on teaching and learning and offer data that will help you make important decisions about teaching.
“It’s so exciting when students want to participate. The challenge is to get the voices of shy or reluctant students heard in the classroom. When the same students speak all the time, and the same ones remain on the margin, this repeats similar power dynamics that occur in the larger world. So how do you get more students to participate in the conversation? This question led my friend Elizabeth and I to the CTL, where we co-facilitated a learning community called Teaching & Diversity.”

Samantha Simon is at the end of the fifth year of her doctoral program in literature. Course work complete, she is now in the second year of dissertation work on 19th & 20th Century African-American literature. Sam has taught a variety of courses at the UW: literature courses, such as Reading Fiction, and through the Interdisciplinary Writing Center, humanities and social sciences link courses.

The study of literature in higher education informs Sam and Liz’s insight on power dynamics in the classroom. “The discipline of English Literature has long been conscious of its origin in a context of colonization—the very first English Department to exist as such was in India, where it was established by the English with the aim of helping Indian people to ‘become more English.’ In general, English departments consciously reflect on and problematize that history. There’s an awareness about the need to decolonize the discipline, to make the discipline more accessible to students from a range of backgrounds—students who want to read literatures other than the historical canon.

“Liz and I saw an opportunity to explore that more deeply through a learning community at the CTL. It was cool to open the conversation to grad students from other disciplines. It gave me an opportunity to see how diversity translates across different disciplines.”

Like most teachers, Sam is invigorated when she sees students get engaged, especially when they didn’t expect to find connections between the content and their own lives. “Teaching required courses, such as composition, you often get resistance. Students sign up for times, not content, and eighteen-year-old students might not necessarily assume that a 19th century slave narrative will teach them anything about their lives. It’s cool to see them begin to make those connections.”

Participating in the learning community helped Sam think about ways to adapt courses to serve students even when she is not in control of the text or course material. In spring 2016, Sam taught a chemistry link course that offered an opportunity to connect critical thinking to questions and language that they must interact with outside the classroom. All the students in the course were applying to the UW nursing program. “I want to help them to think critically about the questions on the application. For example, what does it mean to have experience dealing with diverse populations? How can they use the questions to envision and position themselves as future nurses? Of course, I also want to support them to create a successful application. It’s possible to do both.”

LEARNING COMMUNITIES

LCs bring together small groups of faculty, graduate students, and staff educators for a series of discussions on like-minded topics. Dynamic conversations and opportunities to share ideas, as well as resources, are among the things LC participants value.

2015-2016 Learning Communities:

**AUTUMN 2015**
Contemplative Pedagogy: Bringing Our Whole Selves to the Classroom
Facilitated by Katie Querna, School of Social Work

**WINTER 2016**
Identifying and Responding to Microaggressions in the Classroom
Facilitated by Tiffany Woelfel, School of Social Work, and Brian Tracey, School of Marine and Environmental Affairs

**SPRING 2016**
Teaching and Diversity: Exploring Critical Pedagogies
Facilitated by Elizabeth Brown and Samantha Simon, Department of English

DECOLONIZING THE CLASSROOM

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THEATER FOR CHANGE UW

Theater for Change UW uses interactive and participatory theater to advance community dialogue and address issues related to classroom and institutional climate. TfC offers departments and instructors:

- Interactive workshops that use embodied learning to promote reflection, dialogue, problem solving, and skill building
- Interactive performance and community dialogue events that provide opportunities to practice responses to challenging situations related to inequity
- Consultations on using performance and arts-based pedagogies in academic settings

147 UW faculty members, staff educators, graduate and undergraduate students have attended Theater for Change UW events.

UPENDING TRADITIONAL POWER DYNAMICS IN THE CLASSROOM

Teaching (in an unofficial capacity) French and Spanish to high school students was just a small part of Alan-Michael Weatherford’s preparation for embarking on the Ph.D. program in Comparative Literature at the UW in 2012. Since then he has taught 10 courses at the UW: first French, then Spanish, and most recently Comparative Literature. Such change seems to come naturally to an instructor who thrives on exploring and questioning the accepted norms of teaching and classroom culture.

Teaching gives Alan-Michael the opportunity to actively explore his research interest in colonialism. “I’m deeply curious about the power relationship between student and professor, and I enjoy breaking that down, addressing it explicitly in the classroom. I strive to create an environment of peer learning where students learn from one another and the instructor learns from the students.” His research includes the study of pedagogies that acknowledge power dynamics in the classroom and invest in altering the traditional power relationships that often play out unnoticed—and, as a result, unchallenged.

“It seems like I’m starting to attract more women of color to my courses, perhaps because I actively call on women of color in the classroom.” Alan-Michael intentionally posits women of color as the individuals who tend to be the most oppressed in a classroom setting—experiencing the double oppression of racism and sexism. “These dynamics have to be acknowledged. Traditionally, it’s been white males who have dominated classroom discussions, both as speakers and the ones who are listened to. I am using my power as an instructor to shift that. My aim is to give women of color more space to actively speak or listen.”

Alan-Michael became involved with the CTL through the TA/RA Conference, running workshops at several conferences, including workshops on how students learn, how to balance the demands of being a graduate student, and how to teach foreign languages. This year he’ll lead a workshop on diversity in the classroom. While he describes his TA/RA experiences with enthusiasm, his passion is unmistakable when he talks about his participation in the interactive...
AM WEATHERFORD (CONTINUED)

Theatre as Pedagogy Project, also known as Theater for Change. “It’s one of the best courses I’ve had in grad school. It gave me practical activities to use in class and provided a great synthetic understanding of racism, sexism, classism and ableism under colonialism—how teaching functions as a colonial apparatus. The class looks at who gets to produce knowledge and who doesn’t. That perspective continues to help me as I produce knowledge, and to make sure that I’m working with the people who I’m producing knowledge about.”

In the course, a few groups of students produce a two—or three—act play that centers on an act of oppression. At the end of the course, each play is performed for an audience who participates by intervening to try to interrupt the oppression. After each performance, cast members and audience debrief to discuss what went well, what could have gone better, and how each participant felt during the encounter. Then another play is performed with another round of interventions and people reflect on the success of various approaches. “Now, Theatre for Change has evolved from a course to a collective of five or six people. We get together and practice for a few weeks, then perform for audiences” (often numbering from 75 to 100 people). “I’ve played both an antagonist (the oppressor) and an ally (to the oppressed). The most disconcerting thing when playing the antagonist was discovering an instinct for inflaming the situation, victimizing the person. I realized that I’ve been implicitly and explicitly taught how to do all these things, and it’s exhausting and painful to play that role. It takes so much energy.”

Alan-Michael looks forward to teaching this year, continuing his effort to shift traditional classroom dynamics, and using his power as instructor to diversify the voices that contribute to the production of knowledge.

2015-16 CTL COURSES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

The Center for Teaching and Learning offers several experiential courses for graduate students during the academic year. Each evidence-based course encourages students to reflect and participate by engaging in active learning.

Last year’s courses included “Teaching & Learning in Higher Education: From Campus to Career,” “TA/RA Preparation” and “Teaching & Learning in Higher Education: Frameworks and Practices.”

**GRDSCH 595 From Campus to Career** focuses on the development of teaching materials for academic job searches. This course centers on developing engaging and comprehensive written materials that dovetail with research materials. It includes online group work, peer review, and mock interviews.

**GRDSCH 615A TA/RA Preparation** helps to prepare new TAs and RAs by:
- Welcoming them to UW teaching, learning, and mentoring communities
- Providing specific strategies and practices that support their work
- Connecting them to campus resources
- Supporting their discovery of departmental norms, practices, and resources

**GRDSCH 515 Frameworks and Practices** is designed for graduate students seeking to build knowledge and skills in effective teaching practices as a teaching assistant or independent instructor. Students will be introduced to fundamental pedagogical frameworks and practices applicable across the disciplines in:
- Course design
- Assessment
- Active learning strategies
- Teaching inclusively
- Using technology effectively in teaching

**GRDSCH 615A: Teaching Assistant/Research Assistant Preparation**
- 168 new TA/RAs enrolled

**GRDSCH 595: Teaching & Learning in Higher Education—From Campus to Career**
- 14 graduate students enrolled

**GRDSCH 515: Teaching & Learning in Higher Education—Frameworks and Practices**
- 19 graduate students enrolled
TEACHING STUDY SKILLS

In autumn 2015, incoming graduate student Jessica Hernandez, School of Marine and Environmental Affairs, participated in CTL’s TA/RA Conference and a one-credit hybrid course on TA/RA preparation. “I feel like I met my closest friends there. Just starting out [as a graduate student], you don’t know what it is to teach or assistant teach, or even tutor college students. It’s very different at this level!”

Since last fall, Jessica has tutored students in environmental courses and led sections as a TA for Forest and Society, a lecture course with 240 students that studies indigenous peoples who rely on the forest and forestry for their livelihood.

TA/RA Conference

Jessica credits the conference with giving her a way into teaching. “The conference opened up a door to the possibilities of teaching and the resources available to us.” For example, worries about technical difficulties (“everything is technologically based now!”) were assuaged by learning about the Learning Technologies group in Odegaard. “They’ll guide you through the process, show you how to record lectures, grade assignments. I felt like I got to a comfort level that even some of the professors don’t have.” Other presentations that Jessica recalls include how to use the research databases at the library, how to lead an effective classroom discussion and how to make the classroom more inclusive.

Mentoring

Jessica did her undergrad work at UC Berkeley, so she’s no stranger to very large classes. But it was a pleasant surprise to discover that as a tutor, she could still connect with students one-on-one. Students, especially the ones who aren’t doing so well, are often reluctant to approach the professor or the TA. “The students get biweekly tests, and that helps us see who might need some help.” Jessica found that students were more willing to talk to her, as a tutor, about their struggles.

Perhaps some students approach Jessica because they see her as a role model. “Students are amazed when they see a person of color as a grad student, that they see someone who looks like them. I like being able to connect with the first generation students, to work as a mentor.”

“’What I learned at the [TA/RA] conference helps me keep an open mind, especially when teaching.’

The challenge is working with students who seem not to like school.” Tutoring such students, Jessica discovered that what appears to be a lack of motivation may actually be a lack of confidence. “A lot of them don’t know how to study or how to develop study skills or strategies. So sometimes in our sessions rather than just going over the course material, I’m teaching them how to study.”

The TA/RA Conference may have laid the foundation for this discovery. “What I learned at the conference helps me keep an open mind, especially when teaching. I learned that a lot of the students face educational disparities. It really helps to know where my students are coming from. The conference helped me understand where and how I can intervene.”
The TA/RA Conference helps graduate students prepare for their roles and responsibilities as TAs and RAs at the UW.

- **800** graduate students participated in the September 2015 TA/RA Conference
- Over **149** workshop sessions were offered on **33** different teaching topics
- **63** experienced TAs and RAs facilitated **126** workshop sessions
- UW faculty, UW librarians, UW-IT learning technologists, and CTL consultants facilitated an additional **23** workshop sessions
- **33** UW staff members volunteered at the conference
- **168** graduate students registered for GRDSCH 615A “TA/RA Preparation,” a 1-credit hybrid course offered in conjunction with the conference

The TA/RA Conference is sponsored by the Graduate School and the Center for Teaching and Learning, in partnership with UW-IT Learning Technologies and UW Libraries.

**Teaching Topics Presented:**

- Getting to Know UW Students: Overview for International TAs
- Panel Discussion With Experienced International TAs
- Plenary: Graduate Assistantships at the UW—What You Can Look Forward To
- Activities to Engage Your Students in Learning
- Assessing Student Work in the Fine Arts
- Balancing Graduate School Demands
- Balancing Graduate School Demands as a Parent
- Being an RA in Health and Biological Sciences
- Being an RA in Humanities, Social Sciences, Arts, and Professional Schools
- Being an RA in Math, Computer Science, and Engineering
- Being an RA in Natural and Physical Sciences
- Dealing with Difficult Classroom Situations
- Gathering and Using Student Feedback to Improve Your Teaching
- Grading Short-Answer Questions on Homework, Exams, or Lab Reports
- How Students Learn: Applying the Principles of Learning to Teaching
- Including All Students: Teaching in the Diverse Classroom
- Planning and Facilitating Discussions
- Presenting Information Effectively in the Classroom
- Presenting Your Research Effectively
- Responding to Longer Student Essays and Assigning Grades
- Teaching in Lab Settings
- Teaching Math, Science & Engineering Quiz Sections
- Teaching Modern Languages
- Teaching One-to-One in Office Hours & Study Centers
- Teaching Social Science & Humanities Quiz Sections
- Teaching Your Own Class
- Beginning Canvas LMS: Part 1 & 2
- Clickers and Classroom Response
- Intermediate Canvas: Grading in Canvas
- Intermediate Canvas: Modules & Navigation
- Intermediate Canvas: Science, Technology, Engineering & Math (STEM)
- Introduction to Panopto
- Introduction to Teaching Technologies at UW
- Master Your Data! Introducing Data Services at the UW Libraries
- Research Smarter, Not Harder: Research and Information Management Tips and Tools
BRINGING DRAMA TO THE CLASSROOM

Guillaume Tounnaire set out to earn a Ph.D. in drama in part to prove to himself that he could do it. “People in this field can often be hired based on their experience in theater practice—directing, dramaturgy, translation. Mentors told me, ‘You don’t need the Ph.D. to teach.’ But I discovered that I wanted to keep going.” Guillaume’s high school and undergraduate education had a Jesuit foundation. “In the Jesuit tradition, you don’t stop learning. If there’s a next step, you go for it. I was the first in my family to go to college. After I finished my Master’s in 2009, the first thing I missed was the conversations, meeting with colleagues, talking in hallways before and after class. When I found myself teaching at Catholic University, I got those conversations back. I realized—this is the world I want to be in.”

Last fall, part of that world included Drama 103, an online class in theater appreciation that Guillaume taught, which explores what drama is, and the differences (and crossovers) between art and entertainment. This spring, he is working as a teaching assistant for Drama 101, a lecture course of 200 students with discussion sections of 25 students each.

“I like to challenge students’ expectations and to encourage them to see performance where they might not otherwise. I try to pull in things that they might see in the course of their lives, but not recognize as produced drama, not recognize all the decisions and choices that go into performance. For example, they may see music videos that use elements of a marginalized culture in performance. I encourage students to question: Is that appreciation or appropriation? And if I come to class wearing a tie, I ask them to consider what kind of performance am I doing here today?”

“When I heard about CTL’s TA/RA Conference, I signed up for everything I could. It was an extremely rich experience—learning ways to keep students engaged, dealing with conflict and difficult situations in the classroom.”

Challenges

“A consistent challenge is getting quieter students to participate. I keep a check sheet of who raises their hands, who gets involved. After a few weeks, I intentionally seek out those who haven’t been participating. I tell them directly that they need to learn how to mitigate the fear of raising their hands in class. It’s hard, and as an introvert myself, I respect that. But it’s so important to learn how to overcome that discomfort.”

“My mission is to teach a love of theater. It’s easy to do that with theater majors. To have a room full of STEM students and get them interested in theater—that’s really exciting.”

Guillaume considers the UW’s doctoral program in drama “among the top in the nation” for training scholars, but still seeks out any opportunity for further pedagogical training. “When I heard about the CTL’s TA/RA Conference, I signed up for everything I could. It was an extremely rich experience—learning ways to keep students engaged, dealing with conflict and difficult situations in the classroom. People who participate in a certain number of sessions at the conference can take the online follow-up course, which is perhaps even more helpful than the conference (I haven’t yet completed all the follow-up work that I want to do!). I’ve applied to teach one of the sessions this fall and plan to participate in more.”
A partnership of the **Graduate School, Undergraduate Academic Affairs**, and **UW Libraries**, the Center for Teaching and Learning promotes student learning by supporting and strengthening the UW teaching community.

The Center works with groups and departments, as well as in collaboration with campus partners, to share knowledge of best practices and evidence-based research on teaching, learning, and mentoring.

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