Effective Teaching at Georgia State
Advice for New Teachers

10 Tips for First-Time Teaching Assistants

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• = Good Teaching!
• Variety of disciplines represented in this room
• Shared common characteristic—enthusiasm for what you’re studying and a desire to learn more and create knowledge.
• This requires effective communication
• Novice vs. Expert
1. Reflect on your own past educational experiences

• Think back on your own undergraduate training and model the positive experiences.

• What made your good instructors good?

• What helped you learn?

• Don’t repeat teaching approaches that didn’t work for you or were less than engaging.
2. Set a class culture

• Get to know your students, but
• Don’t become friends with them or be afraid of them.
• Provide a professional, positive and engaging learning environment.
• Set boundaries regarding your role as an instructor and theirs as students.
• You might not be much older than your students (and some may be older than you are), but let them know why you’re here, what you’re studying, and about your career path.
3. Take “ownership” of your class

- GTAs often teach sections of large courses and aren’t involved in writing the syllabus or exams.
- Because of this some TAs may inadvertently send the message that they are passively involved in the course.
- If you act passive, your students may think that you lack knowledge about the course and be reluctant to ask you questions.
- One simple strategy is how you talk in class:
  - Use “I” language and say “What I want you to think about here is...” and “What I think will help you prepare for the test is ...” This sends the message that you know what is going on, can answer questions and help your students be successful.
4. Set the tone for your class early and don’t make lots of changes

- First impressions in class, are important.
- Your first class meeting should serve to break the ice and to establish class routines and a class culture.
- If you want students to contribute to discussions and ask questions, give them an opportunity from the first day.
- Follow the policies laid out in your syllabus. Changing a major policy, such as grading, during the semester is very disruptive to students.
5. Don’t be afraid to not know something

• But make sure to find the answer and follow-up

• We are all still learning and being asked a question that you don’t know the answer to (especially in front of an entire class) can be frightening and shake your confidence.

• Don’t be afraid to say you don’t know something. Say “that’s a great question—let me find out the answer” or ask your class to look it up. But then make sure to follow-up so that everyone knows the answer.
6. Less is more

• New teachers have a tendency to cover more material than necessary or possible.

• It’s often difficult when first teaching to judge how much material can be covered in one class session.

• Be realistic with time and make sure to save time for questions, discussion and review.
7. Learn how to respond to students

- At some point in your teaching career a student will tell you that “If I don’t get an A in your class, I will lose HOPE!”
- It is important that you treat all students fairly and don’t provide grading opportunities for some students that aren’t offered to the entire class.
- Developing a formulaic answer to use whenever you receive this type of message makes responding easier.
8. Evaluate your teaching and get feedback from students

• Course evaluations are one way to gain insight into what aspects of a course are working or not working.

• Consider informally evaluating your teaching several weeks into the semester and use the feedback to reflect on your teaching and make changes, where possible.

• GIFTS
9. Maintaining student confidentiality

- Since the enactment of the 1974 federal law called the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), instructors are not permitted to disclose students’ records to anyone other than the student.

- Be mindful of maintaining students’ confidentiality in other circumstances.
  - Don’t post grades in a way that publically displays any student identifying information.
  - Don’t hand back graded assignments with letter or numeric grades in a way that makes the grades visible to other students.
  - Don’t openly discuss your students or their class performance anywhere students may overhear (this includes complaining about students!)
  - Don’t post anything related to students or their performance on social media.
• [http://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/student-conduct/ferpa/](http://deanofstudents.gsu.edu/student-conduct/ferpa/)

• The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) was enacted to give students access to their education records and to protect their privacy. Unless a student is legally dependent, the university is prohibited by FERPA from releasing student account information to a parent or guardian or other unauthorized third party without the student’s consent.

• Students who wish to authorize an individual to have access to their student records should complete the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Waiver in the Dean of Students office.
10. Use campus resources

• Talk to your advisor and fellow graduate students about their teaching philosophies and always ask for advice.

• Center for Excellence in Teaching & Learning.
• CETL is here to support all of your instructional needs.
• Visit us in Library South, Room 100 (first floor)

• CETL: http://cetl.gsu.edu/
Resources for Graduate Students

The CETL offers a variety of workshops, certifications and support for graduate students teaching at Georgia State University.

Certificate of Excellence in College Teaching

This certificate is available to all graduate students who have participated in pedagogical training at Georgia State and held a teaching or lab assistantship.

General Pedagogical Training

The CETL offers general pedagogical training to graduate students who are not able to receive training through their academic departments.
SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
AND
Bystander Intervention Strategies

Presented By:
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Learning Outcomes

• Identify behaviors that violate the sexual misconduct policy
• Identify reporting and disclosure options/requirements
• Know the available resources for parties involved
• Learn bystander intervention strategies
Why does GA State University have a sexual misconduct policy?

To prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex or gender and to create a safe learning environment that supports the dignity of all members of the community. To that end, this policy prohibits behaviors that violate Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and the Campus SaVE Act of 2013.
What is sexual misconduct?

- Dating Violence
- Domestic Violence
- Non-Consensual Sexual Contact
  - Consent – Words or actions that show a knowing and voluntary agreement to engage in a mutually agreed upon sexual activity..."Two people agreeing to do the same thing in the same way at the same time."
- Sexual Exploitation
- Sexual Harassment
- Stalking

Source: http://codeofconduct.gsu.edu/
What is your role?

- **Note to Self...Responsible Employee**

- **Not Confidential**

- Have a responsibility to report incidents of sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator

- Refer students to confidential support services:
  - Student Victim Assistance (victimassistance.gsu.edu)
  - Student Health Clinic (health.gsu.edu)
  - Counseling & Testing Center (counselingcenter.gsu.edu)
Privileged Employees

Confidential Disclosure/Privileged Employees

For Students
• Student Victim Assistance
• Student Health Clinic
• Counseling & Testing Center

For Employees
Faculty and Staff Assistance (FASA)
Support for the Respondent

• Counseling & Testing Center
  – Ongoing counseling

• Office of the Dean of Students (Student Advocacy & Outreach)
  – Emergency Notification, Emergency Withdrawal, Requesting Incompletes

• FASA
Student Violations
Deputy Title IX Coordinator in the Office of the Dean of Students
404-413-1515 Atlanta Campus

Faculty/Staff/Contractor Violations
Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Opportunity Development/Diversity Education Planning
404-413-3290
“Retaliation occurs when an employer, employment agency, or labor organization takes an adverse action against a covered individual because he or she engaged in a protected activity.”

**RETALIATION INCLUDES**

- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Threats
- Adverse Action or Speech
Bystander Steps

1. Notice the event
2. Interpret it as a problem
   - Ambiguity & Conformity
3. Assume personal responsibility
   - Diffusion of Responsibility
4. Know how to help
   - Direct, Delegate or Distract
5. Implement the help (Step Up!)
Contacts

Office of the Dean of Students

deanofstudents.gsu.edu/
404-413-1515

Student Health Promotion

healthpromotion.gsu.edu/
404-413-1577

AA/EEO Training & Compliance

odaa.gsu.edu/
404-413-2567
Thank you for your attention.
Any questions?