

GRAD 811: Advanced Communicating in the American University Classroom Part 2

Preparing International Teaching Assistants Program (PITAP)
The Graduate School
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Syllabus

Course Description

This course is offered through the Graduate School at UNC Chapel Hill as part of the Preparing International Teaching Assistants Program (PITAP, <http://gradschool.unc.edu/pitap.index.html>). GRAD 811 serves as a continuation course with GRAD 810 being a prerequisite. The course focuses on cross-cultural communication, English pronunciation, basic teaching skills, and topics necessary for effective interaction in the American classroom. There is no additional tuition charge to the student for enrolling in GRAD 811 who is already registered as a full-time student (9 credit hours). For students not enrolled in 9 credit hours, enrollment in one of the courses may increase the total number of credits resulting in a new tuition rate level. Students should discuss necessary tuition payments with their funding source and academic program.

Instructor

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Recommended Texts

- Curzan, Anne and Lisa Damour. First Day to Final Grade. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2000. ISBN: 0472097326.
- Gilbert, Judy. Clear speech : pronunciation and listening comprehension in American English : student's book. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984. ISBN 0521287901
- Grant, Linda. Well said: Pronunciation for Clear Communication, Boston : Heinle & Heinle Publishers, 2001. ISBN: 0838402089.
- Ross, Catherine and Dunphy, Jane. Strategies for Teaching Assistant and International Teaching Assistant Development: Beyond Microteaching. Jossey-Bass/Wiley, San Francisco, CA, 2007. ISBN: 978-0470180822.
- Sarkisian, E. Teaching American Students. Harvard University Press, 2006. ISBN: 0-674-02141-X.
- Smith, J., Meyers, C.M., Burkhalter, A.J. Communicate: Strategies for International Teaching Assistants. Regents/Prentice Hall, 2007. ISBN: 1577665309.

Course Goals

- Further refine English pronunciation and grammar
- Analyze cross-cultural differences in educational settings
- Further develop cross-cultural communication skills
- Practice teaching techniques and interacting with American students
- Empower and build confidence in the classroom as an effective TA

Outcome Deliverables

- Syllabus Draft
- Teaching Statement
- Three lesson plans
- Two classroom observations and reflections

Core Areas of Focus

- Language Improvement
- Cultural Differences
- Teaching Strategies

Course Requirements:

Classroom Observation Journal

Part I: Students should complete 2 classroom observations in an undergraduate class. Since part of the task is to compare what students notice across different courses, there are several approaches students can take:

*observe two different sections of the same course/same instructor.

*observe an introductory level course and an advanced level course taught by the same instructor.

* observe an introductory level course and an advanced level course taught by different instructors.

*observe two different instructors who teach the same course.

*observe the same course two different times.

Observation guides are posted on Sakai.

Part II: Students in PITAP 811 will complete an Observation Journal. Once students have observed **2 undergraduates classes** and **recorded their observations as outlined above**, student will complete an observation journal. The journal will consist of reflections on their observations, class discussions, and final thoughts on the classrooms observed. Reflection guides are posted on Sakai.

We will be discussing some aspects of your observations and journals throughout the semester, so be prepared to share some of your observations and areas of need. You will probably notice that others have similar communication issues and challenges.

Current Education Research

Students will become familiar with current educational research within their disciplines and apply findings to their lesson plans.

Methods used in the course

The course is facilitated through active learning techniques. These techniques include microteaching practice sessions, discussions, case study analysis, self and peer evaluation, linguistic guidance, role-playing, and teaching reflection journals.

Microteaching demonstrations

Students will be expected to give microteaching demonstrations as part of the class. These experiences may be recorded and analyzed together as a class and/or individually with the instructor. The purpose of this activity is to increase your confidence in front of a classroom, identify areas of improvement, and document your progress in the course.

Course Policies

This is a pass/fail, 2 credit course. Students are expected to attend all sessions. Each student is permitted two (2) unexcused absences; any other absence must be excused by the instructor prior to the class missed. **More than 2 unexcused absences will be grounds for failing the course.**

Assumptions about Culture and Language

In this course a number of generalizations (e.g. characteristics of U.S. higher education, qualities of UNC undergraduates etc.) will be discussed. While these generalizations can be very useful in learning about another culture, they must not be mistaken for stereotypes. A generalization is a hypothesis - a starting point of inquiry about a subject. Exceptions and individual variation are always present.

Further, the exploration of cross-cultural differences in teaching and learning can be a complicated and sensitive task. It is not unusual for misunderstandings to occur. In order to do the work of this course, it is important to acknowledge this potential and to prepare for how to handle any misunderstandings or feelings of offense that may arise. It is a course expectation that any concerns that arise will be brought to the attention of the instructor and that a mutually agreeable solution will be the goal. (Adapted from R. Michael Paige's concept of cross-cultural inoculation)

Finally, it is important to have realistic goals for language development. The goal is not for students to sound like native speakers of U.S. English, but rather to be intelligible to undergraduates enrolled in their classes. In this course, students will need to demonstrate sufficient proficiency to convey discipline-specific content effectively, and comprehend questions and comments. Minor language errors that do not interfere with meaning are expected.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

UNC Graduate and Professional Student Federation (GPSF)

Office Location

Suite 2501-F
Carolina Student Union

Phone Numbers:

(919)962-5595 (office)
(919)962-4723 (fax)

Email Address: gpsf@unc.edu

International Student & Scholar Services

<http://oiyss.unc.edu/resources/esl.html>

Lists additional resources to support the needs of international students and scholars at UNC.

International Student Support Group

This support group gives international students a space to discuss homesickness, loneliness, communications difficulties, cultural differences, adjustment to the university, and more. Students can drop in to as many sessions as they would like.

Mondays, 3:30-4:30

Student Union Room 3509

No sign-ups needed

Email CAPS-info@unc.edu for more information

In-class Topic and Activity	Post-Assignment
Self-assessment of your communication skills Your First Day of Class Icebreakers (Class cancelled for snow)	*Bring in a syllabus from your discipline
Generating a Syllabus – review found syllabus	*Start developing your own syllabus *Complete – TPI http://www.teachingperspectives.com/tpi/
Microteaching: Your First Day of Class	Revise Syllabi and turn in by 1/30
Microteaching: Your First Day of Class	
Discuss TPI results Creating Lesson Plans	
Active Learning and integrating discipline specific activities	Locate 1 education research article within your discipline to discuss 2/15 or 2/20
Scaffolding and Assessment	
Classroom Assessment Techniques	
Education research in the disciplines	
Education research in the disciplines	Submit Lesson Plan #1(Sakai)
Microteaching: scaffolding and assessment	
Microteaching: scaffolding and assessment	
Misconceptions – teaching in comparison and contrast - Using Graphic Organizers	
Responding to Students' Questions	
Instructor Talk	Submit Lesson Plan #2 (Sakai) Complete Observation #1
SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES	
Diversity and Inclusion in the American Classroom, Part 1 – Stereotype Threat	Read “Help! My Professor Doesn’t Talk English” by Rubin for 4/03
Diversity and Inclusion in the American Classroom, Part 2 Discussion of Rubin chapter / communication discussion	
Microteaching: addressing misconceptions	
Microteaching: addressing misconceptions	
Diversity and Inclusion in the American Classroom, Part 3 – Case studies	
Diversity and Inclusion in the American Classroom, Part 4 – Case studies Return to Instructor Talk – Effective methods	Complete Observation #2 Complete – TPI http://www.teachingperspectives.com/tpi/
Evidence of Learning – The Teaching Portfolio and Developing a Teaching statement	
Assessing and improving teaching	
Discuss classroom observations	Submit Lesson Plan #3 (Sakai)
Microteaching: teaching difficult concepts	
Microteaching: teaching difficult concepts	
Summative Self-Assessments Course Evaluations	*Teaching Statement *Observation Journal