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PSYC 501.01: Teaching of Psychology

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PSYC 501
TEACHING OF PSYCHOLOGY
SYLLABUS
Fall 2001

Meeting Time: M-F, 9:00-12:00
Meeting Place: SB 246 (SB 303 on Th.)
Instructor: Dr. Nabil Haddad
Office Hours: TBA
Office: SB 143
Phone(s): (W) 243-4384, (H) 728-7037
Text: B. G. Davis, Tools for Teaching
Reading Materials: To be distributed

INSTRUCTOR'S TEACHING BACKGROUND (a personal note)

I spent the first two years of my undergraduate training at Robert College in Istanbul, Turkey, and finished my BA in Psychology at the University of Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in 1972. I obtained my PhD in Experimental Psychology-Animal Learning from OU also. During those four years, I started developing my skills in teaching. As a first year graduate student, I was in charge of Intro Psyc discussion sections where I learned, to my horror, that I often did not know what I was talking about.

That experience coupled with the ghosts of all the wonderful and the terrible teachers I had had, made me determined to strive to become a good teacher. OU gave me the opportunity to learn how to teach by allowing me to teach my own undergraduate courses: Intro to Psychology and Fund. of Learning. I also coordinated the introductory Psychology course for one year (3000 students/yr), and designed an experimental lab to study fish behavior. The most important factor that helped me improve my teaching skills during those years was the atmosphere in the department at the time. The graduate students, and two faculty members, were committed to quality teaching. It was in the hallways, in the offices or over beers in a bar, that we discussed, argued and helped each other learn how not to do it and how to do it. The most important lesson I learned during those years was that the process of honest self-evaluation begets improvements in teaching.

I've been at UM since 1976. During the past twenty years I've taught graduate courses and seminars, large undergraduate courses, small undergraduate courses and seminars and coordinated the introductory course for 12 years. I have taught over a dozen different courses, designed new preparations for all of them and established new offerings not taught at UM until then. I have also supervised over 100 TA's over the years.

After all this experience, I still consider my teaching skills to be in an evolutionary stage: Evaluation, criticism, change and improvement are the necessary mechanisms for this evolution. To be smug and perfectly content with my teaching abilities would be the first sign of becoming "dead-wood".

Course Philosophy: This course is based on the philosophy that good teaching practices can be taught and learned. Excellence in research alone does not automatically beget excellence in teaching. The skills in the two domains are essentially independent (Feldman, 1987). However, the “true scholar” is both a good researcher who knows how to consume and produce new knowledge and a good teacher who knows how to impart the information to the student in an optimal environment. Knowing one’s discipline then is the first step towards sound teaching. The second step is that current research on, and philosophies of, teaching and learning can be translated into practical skills. However, it is not sufficient to read and be lectured on these findings. One must practice them, assess them and fine-tune these practices on an ongoing basis.

Course Goals: This course is designed to assist you in combining your content knowledge with the theory and practice of sound teaching so that you may:

- < acquire some knowledge of the various philosophies, skills and practices of good teaching.
- < acquire some helpful habits that may serve you in your future teaching endeavors.
- < carry these habits and skills with you wherever you are employed.
- < become a favored candidate for the professoriate, especially in the current, competitive market.

Course Objectives: Students will be able to demonstrate in classroom discussions, papers, assignments and exercises:

- < familiarity with resources available to enhance teaching
- < familiarity with the ongoing debates, controversies and research regarding teaching effectiveness
- < skills in developing syllabi, preparing lectures and delivering them, designing activities for discussion, evaluating student work and one’s own work
- < development of your own personal philosophy on teaching effectiveness

In-Class Work: This course is designed to function within a seminar or workshop format. I hope that I do not have to lecture for an entire 3-hour period. Rather, you and I are to read the assigned readings ahead of time, think about them, make notes and come to class prepared to engage in a discussion. True dialogue and discussion involve cogent, honest exchange of experiences and ideas. It may involve personal exposure and taking risks. You are invited to question and to challenge. However, we should all be respectful of each others’ opinions, experiences and feelings and be open to perspectives different from our own.

Grades: This is a P/F course. Its success will depend in large measure on the quality of the in-class interactions and discussions. Attendance and classroom participation are therefore vitally important. There will also be a number of assignments, micro-lectures and a full lecture, and classroom activities of your own design. These are expected to be handed in on time.

Assignments: Each of the following assignments will be described in detail in class:

- 1) Micro Teach: In class; Bring a blank videotape with you.
- 2) Lecture Critique: In teams of two, videotape and critique a fellow student's lecture and a faculty member's lecture (by Sept. 30).
- 3) Guest Lecture: Students who are not on teaching assignments are to deliver a guest lecture in Psyc 100, or another 200-level course, and have it critiqued by 2 fellow students (by Oct. 30). Lecture outline requires prior approval.
- 4) Syllabus: Prepare an "outcome-assessment syllabus" for any of our undergraduate classes other than 100 (by Oct 30).
- 5) Lecture Outlines: Outlines for a 5-lecture series on any topic (by Nov. 30)
- 6) Class Activities: Prepare at least 3 classroom activities that would demonstrate a psychological phenomenon and would engage the students (by Nov. 30).
- 7) Teaching portfolio: Design an outline for your future teaching portfolio. Include current pertinent material (Optional).

Calendar

<u>Day</u>	<u>Chapters</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
M	1, 2, 3	Elements of good teaching Syllabus First day of class	Fernald Terenzini & Pascarella Appleby
T	8-17 & 21-22	Lectures Student's Learning Style Discussions	Jenkins Weaver & Cotrell
W	8-17 & 21-22	Micro-teach	
R	28-34	Tests Grading Effective feedback to students	Stewart Willingham
F	41-43	Evaluating your teaching	Weisberg Barskamp