Syllabus for UNIV 400A / UNIV 400B:
Professional Development for Graduate Teaching Assistants

Instructor:
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Mentor Teaching Assistant (TA) Staff
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The Mentor TA staff helps develop and implement the CWRU Graduate TA Training program. During the sessions, the Mentor TA staff will welcome participants and facilitate both large- and small-group discussions. The staff is also there to answer questions about being a TA and/or about having a particular role as a grader, lab assistant, recitation leader, and/or instructor.

Course Description:
Welcome to UNIV 400! We hope you enjoy this educational experience. We greatly look forward to your participation, and encourage you to ask questions at orientation or at any of the seminars. Our primary goal is to provide you with the resources you need to be an effective teaching assistant at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU).

CWRU is committed to ensuring excellence in its undergraduate programs; hence the instructional roles that graduate students assume are of critical importance to the University in fulfilling its educational mission. TA instructional roles include graders, lab assistant, recitation leader, and instructor.

Fulfillment of the TA training requirements will be an important element in evaluating the performance and possibility of continuing appointment of a new graduate TAs in their instructional or instructional support roles.

UNIV 400A - Professional Development for Graduate Teaching Assistants (TAs) -- For Domestic Graduate Students
UNIV 400 A is comprised of an orientation and the four required seminars and two elective seminars.

UNIV 400B - Professional Development for International Graduate Teaching Assistants (ITAs) -- For International Graduate Studies
UNIV 400 B students must take the CWRU Spoken English Test to determine their level of spoken English as it applies to instructional roles. If international students need to improve their spoken English, they will be asked to take one of three courses UNIV 402 A (accent reduction), UNIV 402 B (fluency), and/or UNIV 402 C (presentational skills). If students are enrolled in UNIV 402 A or B, they will defer enrollment in UNIV 400 B until they have approval from their UNIV 402 instructor. Once enrolled in UNIV 400 B, students must complete the orientation and the four required seminars and two elective seminars.

Students have a total of two consecutive semesters to complete either UNIV 400A or UNIV 400 B. Once students complete the course, they will receive a Pass (P).
Students who do not complete the course within the first semester will receive an Incomplete (I). They do not need to re-register for the next semester.

If students do not complete the course within two consecutive semesters, they will receive a No Passing grade (NP).

UNIV 402 A (Spoken English Pronunciation), UNIV 402 B (Spoken English Fluency), and UNIV 402 C (Spoken English Presentation).

Non-completion of UNIV 400A, UNIV 400B, or UNIV 402 A, B, or C will be reported both to the Office of Graduate Studies and to the student’s academic department.

Objectives of UNIV 400 A and 400 B
UNIV 400(A) Professional Development for Graduate TAs and UNIV 400(B) Professional Development for International TAs have been designed to meet these objectives:

1. To sensitize graduate teaching assistants to the issues of undergraduate teaching at Case Western Reserve
2. To improve the quality of the interactions between graduate teaching assistants (TAs) and the undergraduate students enrolled in the courses to which the TAs have been assigned
3. To underscore the importance of each TA’s instructional role and the value of teaching at Case Western Reserve
4. To introduce graduate students to the professorate and the life of the academy at a private research university
5. To inform graduate TAs about student services that will assist in their work with undergraduates

In addition to attending orientation, you will need to complete the rest of the course.

You have two choices:

Choice 1: Training for graduate students who ARE planning to become professors: You will meet with Judith Olson-Hammer and invited guests for a discussion on Tuesdays, 11:30 am to 1:00 pm and Thursdays at 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, beginning September 9 or 11 (the third week of class). You need to be at all six sessions in order to receive credit. You will be given a textbook for this session.

Choice 2: Training for graduate students who are NOT planning to become professors: You must successfully complete four core seminars: (1) Experiential Learning in a Global Classroom; (2) Wittke/Jackson Lecture, (3) Inclusion, and (4) Observation. You are also required to attend two elective seminars of your choice. You must be on time and stay for the entire seminar in order to receive credit. Some seminars are 90 minutes long; others are 60 minutes.

It is possible to complete UNIV 400A/B in one semester, but you have two consecutive semesters to fulfill the requirements for UNIV 400A or UNIV 400B.

At the beginning of each semester, you are responsible for making certain your schedule permits you to attend the seminars needed to complete the course. If you discover a schedule conflict, you must make an appointment to see Professor Olson-Hammer by the third week of class. The ESS office manager sets her appointments; call 216-368-5230 to arrange an appointment.

To attend each seminar, you must reserve your space by going to http://studentaffairs.case.edu/education/tatraining/. From that page, select My TA Training, where you can login and reserve your spot for each seminar. You must register by Friday at 5 pm the week before any seminar
that you plan to attend the following week. You cannot register the day of the seminar, because the Mentor TA team needs to know the number of attendees in order to make appropriate plans for each seminar.

The first time you register at the TA Training website, you will be asked to complete a demographic profile to help organize the small-group discussions for various seminars.

Approximately one week before each seminar, you will receive a reminder email announcement. This message will be sent to your university email account, which you are responsible for activating and reading on a regular basis. If you do not receive these messages, you should contact Professor Olson-Hammer immediately.

We ask that you bring your CWRU ID with you. We have a system for taking attendance that requires you to swipe your ID. If your name does not appear on the electronic attendance sheet, you will not receive credit for that seminar.

Because some of the seminars occur around noon or dinner time, you are welcome to bring a meal with you.

Within two weeks of any seminar, we will post attendance on the TA website: http://studentaffairs.case.edu/education/tatransing/, then click on My TA Training to view your attendance record and grade. If you have any questions regarding your attendance, please contact Professor Olson-Fallon. Please check with Professor Olson-Hammer immediately rather than waiting until the end of the semester.

Before you leave each seminar, you will receive an evaluation form. Your feedback is vital to this program, so please complete the surveys.