

## Memorandum

**To:** Graduate Assistant Colloquium Presenters/Facilitators

**From:** Dr. Chuck Spuches, Dean, Open Academy

**Copy:** Teaching Fellows

**Re:** Your role in the Graduate Assistant Colloquium

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### **Presenters' / Facilitators' Role in the Graduate Assistant Colloquium**

Please locate your session on the *Colloquium* program and record the date and start time on your calendar. I ask that you arrive at least 15 minutes prior to your session's scheduled start time. **Also, you are asked to bring copies of any handouts you intend to distribute – planning on enough for approximately 95 participants.** If you wish to have us copy materials for you, please give them to ESF Open Academy at least two weeks prior to the *Colloquium*.

Please remember that you are invited to join us for lunch on the day of your *Colloquium* session.

We appreciate your active support and participation in the *Colloquium* – thank you. Please call me with any questions you may have and if you haven't already done so, please visit the *Colloquium* web page at:

[www.esf.edu/openacademy/tlc/colloquium](http://www.esf.edu/openacademy/tlc/colloquium).

## **Breakout Sessions - Teaching Strategies & Assessments / Evaluation**

1. Facilitators will be introduced at the start of the session.
2. Your session will have two “consecutive” small group segments. This will break down as follows:
  - A. Each presenter or pair of presenters will have approximately 30 minutes to present and discuss their topic with a small group of new ESF graduate assistants (attendance typically ranges from 7 to 25).
  - B. After approximately 30 minutes, participants will have an opportunity to switch groups and each pair of presenters will have a second 30 minute session to present and discuss their topic with another small group of graduate assistants.
  - C. During your session you are asked to address those key points that you believe are essential for new graduate assistants to know about your topic. I realize you have a wealth of information to share but please consider the new graduate assistant’s perspective.  

An outline of Topics / Goals and Objectives / Key Points to address is also included.
  - D. We will begin and conclude promptly as scheduled.

## **Facing the Challenge: Where the Rubber Meets the Road**

1. You will have 1-3 minutes to introduce yourselves and your roles at the College at the start of this session.
2. We will take a few minutes to address relevant institutional policies (e.g. Academic Integrity).
3. Your session will involve 3 – 4 brief Scenarios that portray a challenge or dilemma that GA’s commonly face:
  - A. After viewing the first scenario, graduate assistants will work in small groups at their tables on a worksheet intended to help them unpack the problem portrayed in the video and to generate possible responses. Your role at that point, is to circulate and to facilitate discussion at the tables: question, probe, guide, etc. – but please do not give answers.
  - B. After approximately 5 – 7 minutes (more or less as needed), the Teaching Fellows and I will facilitate a large group discussion. I hope that you will participate in this discussion and, most important, help to model the problem solving process.
  - C. When discussion has appropriately addressed key points, we will move on to the next Scenario.
  - D. We will begin and conclude promptly as scheduled.

# Colloquium Outline of Topics, Goals and Objectives, and Key Points

## ❏ Exploring Learning Styles

### 1. Have strategies to facilitate your students' and your own learning.

Be able to describe how learning may vary with a student's learning style, gender, or cultural background, and identify techniques you could employ to promote learning among a diverse array of students.

Key points:

- Learning/personality styles (including what GA style is)
- Teaching to different learning styles
- Gender differences in how students react/respond in a classroom
- Cultural differences in learning/teaching that may be encountered for international GAs and for international students

## ❏ Can you hear me now?

### 1. Have strategies to facilitate your students' and your own learning.

Be able to employ strategies to promote open communication among your faculty supervisor, other graduate assistants, and students to optimize learning on the ESF campus.

Key points:

- Be available to students through office hours and email
- Attend class (if possible)
- Meet regularly with faculty supervisor and other GAs (when there are multiple GAs for a course)
- Develop a list of questions to address at the first meeting between the GA and the faculty supervisor
- Note that faculty supervisor is not the same thing as advisor
- Debrief – ideas from exercise (Clarify! Ask questions!)

## ❏ Teaching Strategies: Your Instructional Toolbox

### 1. Have strategies to facilitate your students' and your own learning.

Be able to describe how learning may vary with a student's learning style, gender, or cultural background, and *identify techniques you could employ to promote learning among a diverse array of students.*

Key points:

- Strategies for giving a lecture, leading a discussion or recitation, teaching in a lab or studio, conducting course-related fieldtrips/fieldwork
- Gender differences in how students react/respond in a classroom
- Cultural differences in learning/teaching that may be encountered for international GAs/students

Have strategies for challenging yourself (the GA) and your students to learn.

Key points:

- Good to ask/answer thoughtful questions [How? Examples?]
- How to promote students' taking responsibility for/ownership of their own learning
- Encourage critical thinking and discussion
- Motivate students to work hard [How?]
- Be enthusiastic! There's more to teaching than just the mechanics of presenting information

## **The GA's Role in Instructional Technology Integration**

### **1. Have strategies to facilitate your students' and your own learning.**

Be able to identify appropriate instructional technology resources and support.

Key points:

- Outline services and support, and multimedia equipment and systems provided by ITS:
  - Classroom media / presentation technology (e.g. overhead projectors, digital projectors, multimedia systems – including where to get them)
  - Multimedia production (e.g. client workstations: slidemaker, plotter)
- Contact list, location
- Scheduling
- When and where to get help: orientation, training, support
- State and RF accounts for charge-backs (where applicable)
- Location of technology classrooms – availability of training in them

## **Reality Check: Balancing Personal, Professional, and Academic Responsibilities**

### **3. Balance your roles as a student and an instructor while making use of the resources available to you within the ESF/SU community.**

Describe how to maintain a professional demeanor in your role as an instructor and as a role model for your students.

Key points:

- Friendly vs. friendship
- Avoiding favoritism
- Promptness and courteousness
- Confidentiality of information
- Who to approach when you have a problem related to your GA duties (chain of command)

Articulate the importance of prioritizing responsibilities, setting limits, and recognizing the extent your knowledge and abilities.

Key points:

- When is ok to say no to additional responsibilities?
- It is ok to say you don't have the answer – but find the answer if you can
- You don't have to know everything and do everything

## Classroom Assessment and Student Feedback

- 2. Be able to employ assessment/evaluation strategies as an essential component of the learning process.**

Have strategies for assessing and improving your teaching effectiveness.

Key points:

- Techniques for soliciting feedback from students and when/how often to employ them
- Techniques for soliciting constructive feedback from your supervising faculty
- How to develop a plan for responding to the feedback
- Importance of and methods for self-reflection
- Shouldn't compare to any arbitrary benchmark of a "good/bad" GA!
- Should show/develop confidence in your teaching

## Assessment and Evaluation: How to Know if Students are Learning

- 2. Be able to employ assessment/evaluation strategies as an essential component of the learning process.**

Be able to articulate the importance of providing timely feedback to your students.

Have strategies for evaluating your students through the use of quizzes, exams, papers, projects, and other assignments.

Key points:

- Grading – strategies for consistency (i.e. one person grades one question, grade one question all at same time), fairness (grade without looking at student's name on exam), etc.
- Composing quizzes, exams, paper topics, assignments
- Evaluating questions [determining if the question is fair and unambiguous, i.e. is it a good question, or how to allocate partial credit when grading]

## Facing the Challenge: Where the Rubber Meets the Road

- 1. Have strategies to facilitate your students' and your own learning.**

Have strategies for challenging yourself and your students to learn.

Key points:

- Good to ask/answer thoughtful questions [How? Examples?]
- How to promote students' taking responsibility for/ownership of their own learning
- Encourage critical thinking and discussion
- Motivate students to work hard [How?]
- Be enthusiastic! There's more to teaching than just the mechanics of presenting information.

**3. Balance your roles as a student and an instructor while making use of the resources available to you within the ESF/SU community.**

Describe how to maintain a professional demeanor in your role as an instructor and as a role model for your students.

Key points:

- Friendly vs. friendship
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- Confidentiality of information
- Who to approach when you have a problem related to your GA duties (chain of command)

Articulate the importance of prioritizing responsibilities, setting limits, and recognizing the extent of your knowledge and abilities.

Key points:

- When is it ok to say no to additional responsibilities?
- It is ok to say you don't have the answer – but find the answer if you can
- You don't have to know everything and do everything

Send students to the appropriate person when necessary (for emotional, personal, health, or academic problems), including identifying situations in which you *must* refer the student to someone else because the scope of the problem is beyond what you can or should handle.

## **Campus Tour (As Needed)**

**3. Balance your roles as a student and an instructor while making use of the resources available to you within the ESF/SU community.**

Send students to the appropriate person when necessary (for emotional, personal, health, or academic problems), including identifying situations in which you *must* refer the student to someone else because the scope of the problem is beyond what you can or should handle.

Use appropriate resources to guide you to the location of and contacts for specific campus resources.

Key points:

- Where and how to pick up paychecks and obtain keys and parking permits
- Bookstore discounts
- Computer resources/support personnel
- Copy facilities (departmental and campus)
- Location of important facilities on SU campus (computer center for support and email, health center, gyms, ID card office, etc.)
- Facilities for support during own emotional, personal, health, or academic problems
- Where to find information on your GA assignment