## Workshops

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Register at www.cidde.pitt.edu/workshops
Assessing Writing Assignments:
There are few things as painful as reading a poorly written student essay, and few things as rewarding as reading a well-crafted response to a writing assignment. Effective design and assessment of student writing can be challenging. By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to identify characteristics of an effective writing assignment, design grading criteria and rubrics, assess writing assignments, and provide constructive feedback.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify characteristics of an effective writing assignment
- Design grading criteria and rubrics
- Effectively assess writing assignments
- Provide constructive feedback

Offered: Monday, January 14th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Tuesday, February 18th, 10:30 a.m. in Hillman Library G74
- Thursday, March 6th, 6:30 p.m. in Hillman Library G74
- Wednesday, April 9th, 5:00 p.m. in Hillman Library G74

Cheating and Plagiarism:
One national study conducted by the Academic Integrity Center at Duke University suggests that 3 in 4 college students cheat. And cheating is more likely when a teaching assistant gives the exam. Why? Because they thought they could get away with it. Be prepared! By the end of this workshop participants will be better able to identify and prevent cheating in general, and to manage violations of the University of Pittsburgh’s academic integrity policy.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Define academic integrity, cheating and plagiarism
- Discuss ways to prevent plagiarism and cheating
- Describe how to deal with cheating and plagiarism at the University of Pittsburgh

Offered: Wednesday, January 15th, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Thursday, February 6th, 10:30 a.m. in Hillman Library G74
- Wednesday, March 26th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B26
- Monday, April 14th, 1:00 p.m. in Hillman Library G74
Dealing with Difficult Situations in the Classroom:
Expect the unexpected, and have some tools in your toolkit for dealing with difficult situations in the classroom. The purpose of this workshop is (1) to illustrate a few difficult situations, (2) to discuss actions you can take to prevent them from occurring or remedy them when they do occur, and (3) to understand distress in students and be able to act accordingly when this is present in your classroom. We will also use this opportunity to provide you with information regarding the university policies that regulate possible discriminatory behavior in the interactions between instructor and students.

Objectives: The goals of this workshop are to...
- Present you with a few relatively common difficult situations that you might encounter in classrooms at Pitt
- Discuss and evaluate possible courses of action that you might take in these situations
- Discuss how you should interact with distressed students

Offered: Monday, February 3rd, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
          Wednesday, March 5th, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815

Designing In-Class Activities:
Small group activities are a great way to engage students in your course, by providing them with opportunities to practice the skills you would like them to develop and “learn by doing.” This workshop provides some recommendations for designing small group activities with learning objectives in mind. Participants will be able to identify a variety of small group activities and effectively design and implement small group activities in their own classes.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify a variety of in-class activities
- Articulate the ways that in-class activities can contribute to learning
- Design a small group activity

Offered:      Tuesday, January 21st, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
              Friday, January 31st, 11:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815
              Thursday, February 20th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
              Friday, March 21st, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
Developing a Lesson Plan:
A lesson plan might be scribbled on the back of a napkin or filed in a formal record of course instruction, but planning ahead, including some primary components, and considering best practices can make for a more effective class. A detailed description of instructional activities for each class is a must for effective teaching, provides a roadmap for the instructor, and is also an important reflexive tool which can help you to evaluate how well class goals have been met.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify the major components of a lesson plan
- Develop a lesson plan based on learning objectives

Offered:  
- Monday, January 27th, 10:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Friday, February 14th, 12:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Tuesday, March 25th, 6:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Saturday, April 19th, 11:00 a.m. in Hillman Library G74

Developing a Teaching Philosophy Statement:
A teaching philosophy statement is a concise, compelling illustration of you as an instructor, a useful exercise in reflexive examination of your teaching, and a necessary component of any job application packet. This workshop will give those just beginning to write a teaching philosophy statement a place to start and tools with which to move forward, and those students who have developed teaching philosophy statements in the past this workshop will provide the guidance needed to achieve a fresh look.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Create a compelling, concise statement which reflects their unique values as an instructor
- Articulate teaching objectives
- Describe methods for working towards teaching objectives
- Discuss ways of gauging teaching effectiveness
- Reflect on the ways in which teaching is impactful for the instructor, and in which the instructor hopes to make an impact

Offered:  
- Monday, February 17th, 3:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
- Thursday, March 27th, 11:00 a.m. in Hillman Library G74
Developing a Teaching Portfolio:
Teaching portfolios are an important component of any job application packet, and it is never too early in your teaching career to begin developing yours. While teaching portfolios vary widely, this workshop presents some guidelines to follow and some basic strategies you can use to ensure that your portfolio will demonstrate the best of your teaching ability and allow you to put your best foot forward. Whether you are just beginning to teach or about to enter the job market—or both—this workshop will enable you to compile and best develop your teaching portfolio.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify the important characteristics of a teaching portfolio
- Make decisions about portfolio contents, structure, and framing based on an understanding of its likely audience
- Strategically compile teaching materials for use in a teaching portfolio
- Streamline information for more impactful presentation in a teaching portfolio

Offered:  
Tuesday, February 25th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Thursday, March 20th, 10:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815

Encouraging Student Participation:
Few things are less comfortable than asking a question and seeing a classroom full of blank faces staring back at you in silence. In this workshop, we cover strategies for eliciting student participation, best practices for handling difficult students, encouraging the quiet students to contribute, and other common challenges in the classroom. Participants will leave the workshop with strategies to engage all of their students in the learning process.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Describe the role of participation in student learning and course design
- Employ some strategies for increasing quality student participation

Offered:  
Wednesday, January 29th, 3:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B26  
Thursday, February 20th, 6:30 p.m. in Hillman Library G74  
Wednesday, March 19th, 6:30 p.m. in Hillman Library G74  
Thursday, April 3rd, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
Gender, Authority, and Teaching:
Many teaching problems are faced by all instructors: some students come unprepared for class, turn in assignments late, or fail to read the syllabus, regardless of who their instructor may be. But some teaching challenges appear along gendered lines. Especially for Teaching Assistants who may additionally be close in age to their students, issues of authority can be difficult to navigate and challenges to authority may be overt or subtle. In this workshop, we will discuss the special challenges associated with gender and authority faced by TAs at the University of Pittsburgh, and identify some strategies for meeting these challenges.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
• Identify the challenges associated with gender and authority in the classroom
• Create a classroom environment in which authority is clear and appropriate boundaries are maintained
• Employ some strategies when faced with challenges to authority

Offered:  
Friday, January 17th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B26  
Friday, February 7th, 4:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Friday, March 28th, 2:30 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Friday, April 18th, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815

Getting Off to a Good Start in the Classroom:
The first day of class sets the tone for the whole semester. Your students will form their first impression of you, and it is your opportunity to create a classroom environment of your choosing that will endure throughout the term. In this workshop, we cover strategies for making good use of this time, including going over the syllabus and course policies, icebreakers, and introducing course material. Participants will leave the workshop with a plan for their first day of class.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
• Identify some of the common mistakes of first-time instructors
• Set goals for the first day of class
• Determine a plan of action for the first day of class

Offered:  
Monday, January 6th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Thursday, January 9th, 9:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Wednesday, January 22nd, 3:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
Grading, Feedback, and the Curve:
Grading is time-consuming and often thankless work. It is also one of the few ways that students can determine how well they are grasping course principles and instructors can evaluate student progress. This workshop is designed to address the various purposes of grading and strategies instructors can employ in giving students feedback. We will additionally address that controversial subject, the curve.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Articulate the difference between summative and formative assessments
- Design grading criteria and effective rubrics
- Provide effective feedback to students
- Identify the situations in which grading on a curve might be appropriate

Offered:  
Wednesday, January 22nd, 10:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall B26  
Friday, February 7th, 12:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B12  
Tuesday, March 18th, 6:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Saturday, April 5th, 11:00 a.m. in Hillman Library G74

Leading Effective Classroom Discussions:
Discussions can build rapport, motivate students to engage with a subject, and promote critical thinking. They can also help students develop problem-solving skills, retain knowledge, and transfer knowledge to new situations. Leading classroom discussions, however, is not intuitive. Participants will leave this workshop with strategies for opening, directing, and strategically leading discussions while maintaining rapport... and not dominating the room.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Articulate the role of discussion in student learning
- Articulate the role of discussion in course design
- Design strategies for increasing quality class discussion

Offered:  
Friday, January 10th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Friday, February 21st, 4:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Friday, March 7th, 2:30 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Friday, April 25th, 2:00 p.m. in Hillman Library G74
**Syllabus Construction:**

Putting together a syllabus for the first time can be a daunting task. In this workshop, we cover the basic components of a syllabus, as well as practical and stylistic "do's-and-don'ts" of syllabus construction. Participants will leave the workshop knowing how to construct their own syllabus so that course information is clearly presented to students, and so that students' confusion over course assignments and expectations is kept to a minimum.

**Objectives:** By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify and produce necessary features of a syllabus
- Identify optional features of a syllabus that you might want to include
- Construct your own syllabus for a class which you are independently teaching

**Offered:**
- **Monday, January 6th, 3:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815**
- **Friday, April 11th, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815**

**Teaching a Six-Week Course:**

Teaching a six-week course is a whirlwind, a challenge, and a very different kind of teaching. Covering a full course in a third of the time is a difficult proposition for students and instructors a like. In this workshop, we will identify the distinctive characteristics of a six-week course, discuss the associated challenges, and identify some strategies which you can apply to meet those challenges.

**Objectives:** By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Identify distinctive characteristics of a 6-week course
- Identify some of the challenges unique to a 6-week course
- Identify and apply some strategies to meet those challenges

**Offered:**
- **Wednesday, April 2nd, 9:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815**
- **Tuesday, April 8th, 4:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815**
- **Wednesday, April 16th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815**
- **Monday, April 28th, 3:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815**
Teaching With PowerPoint:
PowerPoint is used in a majority of classrooms on campus today, but it is not often used well. In this workshop, we will cover best practices for designing slides for use during lectures and review sessions, sharing slides and notes with students, and the legal implications of sharing course materials online. Participants will leave the workshop knowing how to design PowerPoint presentations which contribute to more effective learning.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Use best practices to inform your use of presentation tools
- Identify and avoid common PowerPoint pitfalls
- Design and present an effective PowerPoint presentation

Offered:  
- **Tuesday, February 11th**, 10:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall B26  
- **Monday, March 3rd**, 1:00 p.m. in Hillman Library G74

The American Recitation Section:
Institutions around the world have varied approaches to higher learning. At the University of Pittsburgh, the recitation or discussion section is an integral component of many undergraduate classes. This workshop is designed for International Teaching Assistants with little experience at English-language universities. Participants will leave the workshop with an understanding of the responsibilities of Teaching Assistants leading recitation sections and strategies for using class time effectively.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
- Define the recitation section
- Identify several possible objectives of a recitation section
- Articulate the nature of both the TA-Faculty Supervisor relationship and the TA-student relationship
- Identify resources on campus available to support TAs

Offered:  
- **Monday, January 13th**, 11:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
- **Tuesday, January 21st**, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
- **Monday, January 27th**, 9:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
- **Wednesday, February 5th**, 4:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B26
The Role of the TA:
Participants will learn about the resources available to graduate students, as well as the responsibilities Teaching Assistants and Teaching Fellows have (and do not have) to their faculty mentors, their students, and their own development as scholars. Graduate student participants will identify strategies to prepare for the job market and learn to make best use of the breadth of resources available to them as students, instructors, and researchers.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
• Become familiar with resources available to TAs and TFs in the classroom
• Identify resources available to TAs in the development of teaching skills
• Become familiar with policies which outline the limits of TA responsibilities
• Define a TA’s responsibilities to faculty, students, and self
• Identify strategies to prepare for exit from grad school

Offered:  
Wednesday, January 8th, 2:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Monday, January 27th, 11:00 a.m. in Hillman Library G74  
Thursday, February 27th, 10:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815

Using Office Hours Effectively:
Office Hours can be a valuable resource for your students, a waste of time, or a welcome respite from a busy day... depending on how you use them. In this workshop, we will discuss the best practices for and responsibilities of Teaching Assistants when it comes to office hours as well as discuss how to make the most of your time. Office hours can be a valuable asset for you and for your students. This workshop will show you how to use them effectively.

Objectives: By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...
• Apply best practices in holding office hours
• Provide appropriate support for students who attend office hours for extra help

Offered:  
Thursday, January 16th, 11:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Tuesday, February 11th, 11:00 a.m. in Alumni Hall 815  
Thursday, March 6th, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall B26  
Tuesday, April 1st, 1:00 p.m. in Alumni Hall 815
**Writing Tests (for Math, the Natural Sciences, and Engineering):**

Writing tests, quizzes, exams, and assignments can be a time-consuming challenge. A good assessment can tell us what our students have achieved, can motivate students, and can inform our teaching to make us better instructors. In this workshop, we walk you through the steps of writing an assessment, and by the end of this workshop participants will be able to design effective assessments, articulate what makes an assessment effective, and avoid common pitfalls in constructing various types of assessments. This workshop is geared primarily towards Teaching Assistants in math, the natural sciences, and engineering, but is open to everyone.

**Objectives:** By the end of this workshop, students will be able to...

- Articulate what makes an assessment effective
- Design an effective assessment aligned with course objectives
- Describe common pitfalls in constructing assessments

**Offered:**

- **Tuesday, January 14th, 11:00 a.m.** in Alumni Hall 815
- **Thursday, February 13th, 11:00 a.m.** in Alumni Hall 815
- **Tuesday, March 4th, 1:00 p.m.** in Alumni Hall 815
- **Thursday, April 3rd, 1:00 p.m.** in Alumni Hall B26