Graduate Teaching Assistant Handbook

Academic Year 2020-21

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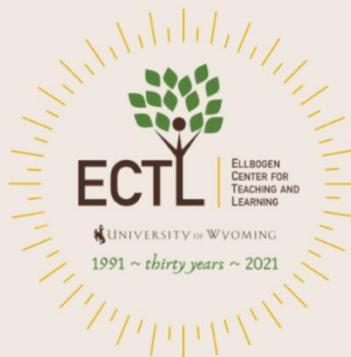
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Welcome to Graduate Education and Teaching at the University of Wyoming

Congratulations on your appointment as a graduate assistant! For many of you, this is an important chapter in your life, as you transition from undergraduate studies to becoming an independent scholar and representative of the university. New responsibilities are added to your role as a student and you are about to make important contributions that are critical to the University of Wyoming.

In addition to your academic experiences, you will now serve in research and creative work, provide instructional support, and offer undergraduate student mentorship. The diversity of these complementary activities is intended to strengthen your expertise and facilitate your professional development. Regardless of your primary responsibility here, we encourage all our graduate assistants at UW to excel both as learning scholars and as teachers of the knowledge and skills of their disciplines and awareness of the theoretic underpinnings and critical thought essential to creation of new knowledge. The experience you will gain is invaluable to your preparation for your professional career.

To facilitate your growth as an effective instructor for UW's students, we provide this Graduate Teaching Assistant Handbook as an introduction to your training in pedagogy. We also provide our students a range of learning opportunities and environments. Learning takes place in traditional classrooms, studios, and laboratories, and also in the field and in the community. UW's most effective teachers are constantly learning by testing new strategies and approaches to convey topics to facilitate higher levels of understanding within their students. Because students learn most effectively when they are actively engaged, university educators learn to employ a range of strategies to facilitate student learning. In this handbook, you will find a number of these strategies and approaches. Some will work for you, some will not fit your particular uses. Pick and choose wisely, for that is the role of the effective instructional graduate assistant.

We wish you the very best in all of your endeavors at the University of Wyoming and look forward to sharing the day you receive your graduate diploma.

Sincerely,

Jim Ahern

Associate Vice Provost for Graduate Education

Prepare

When leading any kind of class (for example, as lab instructor, discussion leader, lecturer for the day, or instructor of record), give yourself plenty of time to prepare, review, and revise your plans in advance. Read and study all text assignments or homework problems. Design a lesson plan or agenda in which you break down the class session into smaller time units. Write notes to yourself about how you will adjust if your plan goes over or under your predicted time frame for each part of the class. Practice a lecture or an introduction out loud. Try to practice all drawings and prepare all handouts prior to your class.

Evaluating student work and performance is challenging because it involves the highest level of cognitive thinking. Before you start reviewing student work, plan your commenting and grading strategies. Scanning the entire set (or a subset) of submissions will help you understand the range of quality. Scanning individual work from beginning to end prior to grading, enables you to respond to the overall thinking and purpose in addition to the specifics. Also, use rubrics for all evaluating and grading. For courses that have multiple Graduate Assistants (GA)s leading discussion sections and labs, create a common scoring guide and periodically compare your evaluations. Enlist the help of more experienced GAs and faculty mentors if you have any hesitation about the fairness of your grading.

Know and Interact with Students

Learn students' names quickly, within the first two weeks if possible, and use their names. Before and after class, have conversations with individuals and with groups of students. Encourage students to talk with each other. Walk around the room to meet and greet students who choose to sit in the far corners of the room. Remember to be authentic. Do not isolate yourself by sitting behind a desk during lab, or by always standing behind a table, or only lecturing at the front of the room. When you speak, look students in the eye, and make eye contact with all students in the room.

Using a Syllabus

Functions of a Course Syllabus

At minimum, the course syllabus is a catalog of information about the instructor, the texts, the assignments, the calendar of due dates, the objectives, and course policies. Some instructors also regard the syllabus as an intellectual guide as well as a course agenda. For example, a syllabus can present a thesis, claim, or argument about the subject matter. Various parts of the syllabus then provide a sequence of claims, a body of evidence, and assignments in which students grapple with thesis-related problems. A syllabus can also guide students on how to take control of their learning by presenting opportunities the course offers to students, as well as outline student work and summarize how progress will be assessed. Required syllabus information is outlined in UW Regulation 2-117, *Course Syllabus Requirement*.

Syllabus Checklist (see syllabus requirement information & sample template)

- Instructor information: full name and title, office phone, email, website, office location, and office hours.
- Course information: name of department, college, university, title of course, prefix and number, current semester and year, meeting times, and designated classroom.
- Brief course description: Purpose, content, and goals.
- Brief discussion of the role of the course in the department or program's curriculum: prerequisites, University Studies categories, its place in the major or minor.
- Resources for class: print and non-print materials, course packets, required and recommended materials, library reserves, course websites, and online materials.
- Course requirements: readings, labs, discussions, tests, papers, portfolios.
- Expectations the instructor will have for students: participation in discussion or following safety procedures in lab, phone policy, policies for attendance, late work, and incompletes.
- Description of grading criteria. Check with your department about the policy on the +/- grading system (A, A-, B+, B, B-, etc.).
- Disabilities/accommodations statement (see p. 16 of this handbook) and statements on academic integrity.
- Subject-to-change caveat: course statement about how syllabus changes will be communicated.
- On a separate page or website, include a tentative or working day-by-day course calendar that includes lecture topics, reading assignments, due dates for homework, dates for quizzes and tests, topics for discussions, changes in meeting spaces, and important directions (for example, what students need to bring to class).

Discussions

Types of Discussion

Class discussion is highly effective for helping students apply abstract ideas, think critically, and develop higher-order reasoning skills. To maximize these benefits, instructors should take as much time to plan a discussion session as they do a lecture. Planning involves identifying the goals and purpose for the discussion, and then creating an outline that ensures students advance their knowledge through the course of the discussion.

In **deliberative discussions,** students consider a variety of voices, texts, and experiences in order to create meaning. It is important to distinguish deliberative discussions from debates. In deliberative discussions, the goal is not for certain participants to win, but for all participants to advance their understanding of a topic or issue. Deliberative discussions in college classrooms often are organized around the following types:

- *Appreciation***:** Students examine cultures, values, and styles in order to understand differences and similarities. Discussions in humanities courses often begin with a focus on appreciation.
- *Examination of Issues***:** Students examine the complexities of choices, assumptions, values, goals, and politics. The social sciences often rely on these discussions.

- *Analysis***:** Students focus on methodology, reasoning, disciplinary thinking, rules, assumptions, and ways of problem solving. The law, sciences, philosophy, and business depend on these discussions.

In **consensus discussions**, students collaboratively apply criteria and clarify options to judge or choose a course of action. This kind of discussion is often used by panels of judges. It is effectively preceded by hearings in which students gather information and consider testimony. Hearings take a variety of forms: interviews, question-and-answer sessions, focus groups, forums, panels, or a series of short presentations.

In **work sessions**, students obtain useful feedback for developing and revising their work, such as class papers, performances, designs, and creative pieces. Work sessions have a variety of names: workshops, studios, labs, charrettes, study sessions, etc. They highly effective discussion settings for several kinds of course assignments including collaborative projects, case studies, problem solving, and peer reviews.

Debates involve taking a stand, developing formal arguments, and persuading others. Debates need careful preparation and clear structures to succeed.

Planning a Discussion

Know the material. A discussion is usually based on some kind of course assignment such as a reading or video assignment, an observation of some kind, attendance at lectures, participation in a lab or clinic, or research. Discussion leaders will be thoroughly conversant with the assignment; it is difficult to monitor a discussion without having read the text that students are discussing.

Prepare ground rules. Write a draft of ground rules for a discussion that explains your role as discussion leader, expectations for how students should participate as discussants and listeners, the kinds of comments that are not appropriate for discussion (e.g., contributions that stereotype individuals or groups). At the minimum, create a handout of the ground rules. Better yet, incorporate student ideas into your handout.

Write an outline or agenda for the session. Identify a few specific goals for the discussion session. Plan the amount of time that will be spent on each goal. Create an agenda or outline for the session and identify the approximate number of minutes for each part of the outline. In addition to identifying goals and topics, identify formats for discussion (e.g., time for individual writing, working pairs, small groups, reports from group leaders, whole group discussion).

Leading the Session

Beginning - Share your ground rules and outline with students ahead of time or at the beginning of the class period. Create a handout or write discussion guidelines on the board. For example, all students should monitor their own contributions and ask themselves if they are talking too much or not enough. Ask for students to contribute other ideas or suggest changes. Scan how students are seated in the room and rearrange seating so that all students have an equal chance to contribute. If at all possible, a circular formation where everyone one can see one another is optimal.

Middle - As you proceed through your outline, take notes and monitor the following:

- Time: If a part of the outline is taking longer than planned, let students know how you will change the outline.

- Be Attentive: Your role is to listen but not to respond to every student's comment. The goal is for students to respond to each other, not to have one-on-one exchanges with you. Instead of contributing your ideas (which may be regarded by students as the "expert's opinion"), occasionally summarize what others have said and identify the points of contention or confusion. Better yet, invite students to do the summarizing.
- Involve: Develop strategies for inviting responses from those who are not contributing. For example, turn to a specific section of the room and ask for a contribution from that group of students.
- Sustain: If the conversation stalls, keep it going by asking open-ended questions. For example, "what do you think about X?"
- Follow Up: If a student poses a question, after it is answered, ask the student why he/she asked or what he/she is thinking. This can reveal new contributions to the discussion, since individuals usually have something in mind when they ask a question.

Ending - Be sure to allow a few minutes for closing the discussion. Summarize key ideas and use the board to highlight interesting points. Pose questions for future discussion or reflection. Connect the discussion to other parts of the course. Ask for a one-minute paper in which students summarize or respond to the discussion.

Supporting Student Work During Lab

Get to lab early and be the last to leave. Walk around and talk to students before class. Bring extra copies of anything the students are supposed to bring to the lab, such as handouts, texts, or calculators, and then distribute to those who need them. Lecture briefly and use this as an opportunity to connect the lab activities to lecture content. Write all assignments and deadlines on the board or bring a handout with this important information. Simply announcing these details is probably not sufficient, and late students will miss your announcements.

Never sit away from students while they are working. While you walk around, you can assess how students are doing, and many will ask questions they might not ask in front of the whole class. Talk to small groups. Keep track of time and announce how much time is left for a particular activity. If there are natural breaks in activities during a lab session, take the opportunity to ask students to summarize what has happened thus far, identify difficult parts, and

to announce tips for the next part of the lab. If activities or experiments fail, use the moment for a problem-solving discussion. Ask, what might have caused unexpected results? How could an experiment be created to follow-up on the hypothesis?

Office Hours

Strategies for Effective Instruction Outside of the Classroom

- Advertise office hours and always keep them. If you are unable to be present during posted office hours, email all students about being away and, if possible, establish an alternative time.
- Announce to your students what forms of out-of-class communication you prefer or recommend. Possibilities include telephone calls, emails, online chats, walk-in office visits, and appointments. Decide if you will accept phone calls and text messages on a personal phone. Some GAs who share offices establish regular office hours at the Union, Coe Library, or a lounge in a classroom building. If your office is not easily accessible, students with disabilities may need an alternative meeting place.
- When you meet students in your office, always keep the door open, this is for your protection as well as theirs. Design your office or meeting space (which may only be a desk in a room with other GAs, or a table in the Union) for the comfort of visitors. Do not create barriers between yourself and your students. For assistance with homework and writing, you will probably want to sit next to a student. Keep a stash of paper and writing instruments for you and your students. A computer and a white board are invaluable tools to have handy as well.
- Do not answer your phone, read or write text messages, or read or write emails while you are working with students.
- At the beginning of an office visit, clarify the purpose of the visit and identify a time frame. As the office visit proceeds, from time to time ask the student if you are providing useful assistance. When your designated time frame begins to draw near its end, start having a closing discussion. If the student needs more help, schedule another office visit and talk with the student about the kind of work that should happen before the next visit.
- Office visits with small groups of students are very effective for learning. Instead of you always providing the answers, students will learn that they can help each other.

Office Hour Problems

One or more of these problems are likely to occur. Never hesitate to solicit help from other GAs and faculty with any of these issues:

- Students complaining about other GAs or about the professor.
- Students seeking exceptions or exclusive treatment.
- Students from other sections who come to your office hour because of convenience, perception of better help, or lack of availability from other GAs.

- Flirting or sexual harassment (in this case, please refer to university policies and procedures) - visit the Dean of Students page for more information.
- Students who seek your help so often that they appear to have an advantage over others, or students who become so dependent on you that they can barely function on their own.
- You are spending so much time in your office helping students that your personal or academic life starts to suffer. Remember that you have student worker rights, do not feel pressured to spend more hours being a TA than is expected of you as an employee. See guidance forms from the Graduate Student Affairs office that list the number of expected hours.

Requirement to Keep Office Hours

If you are the primary instructor for a course, you are required to keep office hours. Policies for these required office hours vary by college. Your supervisor, department head, and office staff members will help you clarify the policies.

If you are concerned about a student's emotional health because of comments made in class, comments made in writing, or because the student comes to you with concerns, you may refer the student to the University Counseling Center (UCC). The University Counseling Center is located in 341 Knight Hall. You also may consult with the UCC or the Dean of Students Office, which coordinates the UWYO Cares Team (please see the following page for more information).

The most important aspect of engaging with a student is to communicate your interest and care. You do not need to have all the answers; responding to a person with honest, nonjudgmental feedback will improve the referral process. At the same time, be direct if you have a concern about safety. Click here for an example of what this communication may look like.

If there is any doubt about the safety of a situation, err on the side of caution. Do not hesitate to contact the University of Wyoming Police Department at 307-766-5179.

Principles of Academic Integrity

Academic work is devoted to pursuing, cultivating, preserving, and transmitting knowledge; it is similar to a very extensive and systematic conversation. Academic integrity consists of the virtues that support and nourish the conversation: Accuracy, honesty, transparency, openness to questioning, willingness to communicate, and similar virtues. Violations of academic integrity thwart the purposes of academic work. All professions rely on these virtues and expect them of their members.

Plagiarism consists of representing someone else's words or ideas as your own, whether deliberately or inadvertently. It can take a variety of forms, but they all violate the norms of academic integrity, as do other actions like turning in the same paper for two different classes or cheating on exams. For more information on the University of Wyoming's policy on plagiarism, see UW Regulation 2-114, Procedures and Authorized University Actions in Cases of Student

Academic Dishonesty. Avoiding plagiarism and maintaining academic integrity is accomplished by a set of good practices that begin with reading and go all the way through accurate referencing in bibliographies. For example:

The good practice of reading means taking notes (writing in books, etc.).

The good practice of attribution means always making clear whose voice or idea is being presented.

The good practice of paraphrasing means to transform an idea into new phrasing, and nearly always means to digest and condense it for the purpose of connecting it with other ideas.

The good practice of quotation means both accuracy of form (including quotation marks) and aptness of selection. *

The good practice of citation means clearly identifying cited materials in their original sources.

The good practice of accurate bibliographies means clearly identifying the information needed for others to find the original sources.

*Note that quotations are not always appropriate, depending on the discipline (e.g. scientific writing).

> ***-Adapted and reproduced by permission from PacSem 2008, the first-year seminar of the University of the Pacific.***

Why are people tempted by academic shortcuts?

Students often take shortcuts in their work because they have competing responsibilities and they are short on time. Some students lack time management skills. They may be novices with expectations that require them to rapidly develop expertise but may not have the required knowledge. Most likely, they fear the challenges of their academic tasks, but they want to be regarded as high performers.

What can instructors do to encourage academic integrity?

Instructors can make relatively small changes in their courses and in their teaching that will help students engage in their academic assignments, manage their time, improve their academic skills, and learn the different disciplinary expectations. The payoff will be evident in better all-around performance on assignments in addition to reduced plagiarism or cheating.

- Take the time to teach students how experts in your discipline read, write, and conduct research, or alternatively, what your specific expectations are. Students report that they rarely receive direct instruction in how to cite, paraphrase, and shape arguments that are based on the work of others. If they have received instruction in one discipline, they cannot easily translate their learning to another one.

- Talk to students about the points in the semester when they may experience difficulties with time management or lack of knowledge that may interfere with completing an assignment. Remind students about upcoming assignments.
- Help students manage their time by creating short assignments as steps to completing major assignments. Even a three-sentence progress report written during class time will help students along, especially if they give these reports to each other for feedback.

Rubrics and Scoring Guidelines

The Value of Scoring Guides

Written scoring guides or rubrics are highly effective tools for evaluating student work, especially papers, lab reports, exams, problem sets, speeches, and designs. Scoring guides keep you fair and on track, they help you make efficient use of your time, and they are an excellent means of communication with students. Upfront time spent developing detailed and fair scoring guides will save significant time later when you are under stress to meet deadlines for returning student work. Rubrics also help to prevent grade disputes and to focus discussion on the quality of work. If you are a member of a GA group who teach lab or discussion sections for a large lecture course, scoring guides are invaluable tools for ensuring fairness and uniformity across sections.

A simple scoring guide consists of describing "A" or high-quality work for a test or assignment. A more detailed guide will describe differing qualities: "A" versus "C," for example or "Excellent," "Fair," and "Poor." An analytical scoring guide establishes a number of points or grades for a variety of categories, such as *content*, *organization*, and *writing style,* with an accompanying description of how to achieve the full number of points for each category. For grading problem sets, a scoring guide helps you to be consistent with how you grant or delete points.

If you create a scoring guide well in advance of the syllabus deadline for an assignment, distribute it to students and discuss for a few minutes. If you are unable to create a scoring guide until the assignment is submitted, start the process of writing a scoring guide by scanning a few of the student submissions. A quick scan will give insight into the range of qualities and will help you to describe in writing the levels of quality. When you return assignments with your scores or grades, give each student a copy of the scoring guide.

Providing Feedback

Students deserve feedback on their work, and they will especially appreciate comments that help them improve on drafts or on the next assignment. Feedback is most often given through writing, but many instructors are discovering the power of oral comments provided in an office visit or through electronic means, such as podcasting. One of the greatest challenges in providing feedback is time management.

The following principles will help maximize the benefits of providing comments for both instructor and students.

- Before writing comments on any work (including quantitative problem sets), scan the entire piece and decide on two or three major points you will make in your comments. These points should relate to the intellectual and disciplinary purpose and content of the assignment. Scanning several submissions before you start is also a good idea.
- Provide comments about what is strong in the piece of work, as well as what could be changed for improvement. Avoid abbreviations and global comments that do not relate specifically to the student work. For example, avoid phrases like "awk," "unclear," "poor organization," or even "good."
- Comment most often on ideas, use of evidence, logic, organization, and critical thinking. Resist the desire to aggressively edit grammar, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure. Editing is not an effective teaching technique, and it deflects communication from the intellectual content. You can maintain high standards for writing style without excessive editing.
- If you have developed a scoring guide, use the vocabulary of the scoring guide in the comments you provide.

Learning from Student Work

After providing feedback on a set of student work, take the time (even 5 minutes) to summarize your perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the class performance in response to the assignment. Provide this summary to students orally or in writing. You will discover a significant amount about what students have learned because of the time you took to review and respond to their work. Take the opportunity to make small changes in the next assignment, create handouts, and/or sponsor some brief question and answer sessions in class about the next assignment or exam.
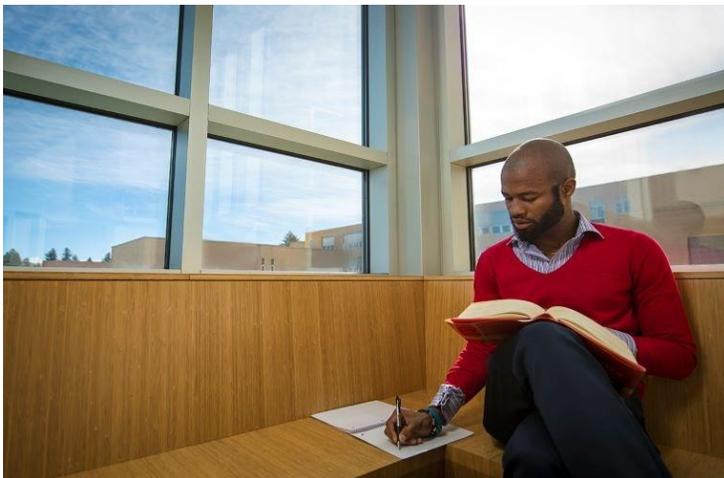
Major tests and class assignments give students good feedback on their standing in a course, but they may not be frequent enough to help students steadily advance. First-year students, in particular, benefit from early and frequent low-stakes or no-stakes assessments, such as quizzes and one-minute papers, that help them monitor their own learning. In-class assessment techniques offer one of the best ways to monitor and promote learning; they are signposts letting students know if they are on the right track.

Midterm Reality Check

Taking Surveys

Near the middle of the semester, take 15 minutes of a class period to ask your students to anonymously provide answers to two or three questions: what is going well; what is difficult or challenging; and what needs to be changed. Be careful how you phrase this. It is better to ask for specific suggestions on how you could better facilitate student learning than to leave it as an open-ended question. Before the next class period, read and summarize the responses, and then discuss with students what changes you can make (and the reasons why you cannot make other suggested changes). Instructors who employ this assessment technique confirm that it has significant benefits.

When someone with the authority of a teacher describes the world and you're not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.

- *Adrienne Rich*

Being responsive to students' diverse ways of knowing and learning is one of the most challenging tasks of college teaching. Rewards are gratifying when you can find ways to connect with a variety of students, including veterans, nontraditional students, international students, and students from a multiplicity of cultures, sexual orientations, and abilities. Support services and other organizations are available for these students and can be found in the Appendix.

"Even though some of us might wish to conceptualize our classrooms as culturally neutral or might choose to ignore the cultural dimensions, students cannot check their sociocultural identities at the door, nor can they instantly transcend their current level of development… Therefore, it is important that the pedagogical strategies we employ in the classroom reflect an understanding of social identity development so that we can anticipate the tensions that might occur in the classroom and be proactive about them" (Ambrose *et. al*., 2010, p. 169-170).

The first step in moving toward inclusive teaching is to realize that few students will learn the same way you do. You cannot rely on your experiences to guide all of your decisions about teaching. The second step is to know that small adjustments can have positive impacts in helping students feel welcome and comfortable.

Feedback from Students

Resources and techniques for gaining feedback from students:

- Carolyn Lieberg (2008) suggests, in *Teaching Your First College Class: A Practical Guide for New Faculty and Graduate Student Instructors*, incorporating a midterm assessment and feedback opportunity for students to provide anonymous comments (feedback on assignments, class structure, discussions, etc.). Review the feedback and

then have an open discussion with the class on opportunities for adjustments from the feedback and things that cannot be adjusted but acknowledge the student voice.

- Anne Curzan and Lisa Damour (2011) address the importance of feedback and student voice in the 3rd edition of *First Day to Final Grade: A Graduate Student's Guide to Teaching*: "You must be sure to talk briefly about the feedback in the next class after you have read the forms. The students need to hear you respond to their concerns and suggestions" (p. 204).

Diverse Ways of Knowing and Learning

Research shows that culture plays a significant role in shaping how people learn. Some cultures, for instance, privilege inductive ways of knowing and learning. Students from these cultures may struggle in the university system that privileges deductive reasoning. For example, if you have international students in your classroom, be alert to signs of discomfort with American classroom etiquette. You can help them become comfortable, and their subsequent willingness to participate in class will help broaden all of your students' learning.

Utilizing a variety of teaching strategies, activities, and assignments to accommodate the needs of students with diverse learning styles, abilities, backgrounds, and experiences will help students from diverse backgrounds be successful in your classroom. In addition, when possible, provide flexibility in how students demonstrate their knowledge and how you assess student knowledge and development. Vary your assessments (for example, incorporate a blend of collaborative and individual assignments) or allow choice in assignments (for example, give students multiple project topics to choose from, or have students determine the weight of each assignment on their final grade at the beginning of the semester.)

Students with Disabilities

As you develop and modify your teaching techniques and styles, keep in mind the diversity of students who may be in each of your classes, including students with disabilities. Try to be flexible and patient, as well as creative when presenting new concepts and materials. To learn more about teaching students with visual, hearing, learning, or physical disabilities, please visit the [Disability Support Services (DSS) website](#).

There are many other types of disabilities represented at UW including respiratory disorders, psychological impairments, chemical sensitivities, head injuries, heart conditions, multiple sclerosis, asthma, diabetes, etc. Some students may require accommodations, which should be arranged and documented in advance. Below are some suggestions to consider when teaching a class that includes students with disabilities.

- Encourage students with disabilities to make appointments during office hours to discuss their accommodation and access needs. Ask students how you, as an instructor, can assist

in facilitating learning of the course material, and invite all students to share ideas with you about how to make your class more accessible. If you want to go a step further, learn about the principles and practices of Universal Design for Learning (UDL) by contacting the Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning (ECTL). A good outside resource is on the University of Washington website.

- Pursuant to UW Regulation 2-117, Course Syllabus Requirement, you are required to have a statement or reference to the Disability Support Services website in the syllabus.
  - **Example:** "If you have a physical, learning, sensory or psychological disability and require accommodations, please let me know as soon as possible. You will need to register with, and possibly provide documentation of your disability to Disability Support Services (DSS), room 109 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at 307-766-3073 or udss@uwyo.edu. Visit the DDS page for more information."

- When a student self-identifies, you may ask them to provide verification of the disability and confirmation that the requested accommodations are appropriate. DSS is responsible for verifying each student's eligibility for accommodations and determining what accommodations are appropriate. If you have not received information from DSS, accommodations may not have been requested and you are not required to provide them at that time. Assist students who have not made contact with the DSS office to do so; this will help facilitate the accommodations requested by the student. Remind students with documented disabilities that using DSS is their right, and it may greatly benefit them. We encourage instructors to set a tone of openness to accommodations.

In the Classroom Resources

Resource	Location	Phone	Email	Website
Academic Affairs	Old Main 312	307-766-4286	mpeck@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs
Ellbogen Center for Teaching &	Coe Library 510	307-766-4847	ellbogenctl@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/ctl

Learning				
Information Technology Help Desk	Information Technology Center	307-766-4357	userhelp@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/infotech/
LeaRN: The Learning Resource Network	Coe Library 105	307-766-4430		www.uwyo.edu/learn
Libraries at UW	Multiple	307-766-3190		www.uwyo.edu/libraries
Center for Assistance Statistics and Mathematics (CASM)	Ross Hall 029	307-766-4221	gauss@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/mathstats/mac
Oral Communication Center	Ross Hall 442	307-766-3815	cojoofc@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/cojo/occ/
STEP Tutoring Center	Coe Library (Lower-Level) & Washakie (Lower-Level)	307-766-4354	epatuw@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/step/
Disability Support Services	Knight Hall 128	307-766-3073 (V/TTY)	udss@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/udss
University Testing Center	Knight Hall 4	307-766-2188	utc@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/utc
Writing Center	Coe Library	307-766-5250	writing@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/writingcenter
WyoCourses Instructional Support			wyocourses-inst@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/wyocourses
WyoCourses Technical Support		307-766-4357	wyocourses@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/wyocourses

Develop professionalism and leadership qualities, including a sense of humor

Take charge of the classroom and develop a professional teaching demeanor. Make sure everyone has a place to sit and can see. In a lab, ensure that everyone has the materials. Welcome all students, even late arrivals. Develop good chalk or whiteboard writing, drawing skills, and legible handwriting; illegibility is not excusable. Impressions count, so convey enthusiasm, interest, and appropriate humor. Be aware of the impression your clothing conveys. Project your voice and speak clearly. Do not hesitate to use a microphone if you are in a large lecture hall and are soft-spoken. Be alert to any difficulties individual students may have with your speaking style, such as rapid speech or an accent that sometimes can be difficult to understand. Be on time and do not leave early. Keep all office hours and appointments and deal professionally with emergencies that you or your students may face. Return student work promptly. Resist sarcasm, especially in email or in comments on student work. Establish boundaries in the classroom and in your office by creating an approachable, professional communication style.

Teaching Strategies

Talk About Teaching

Meet frequently with the instructor of record or a faculty mentor and with fellow graduate students to talk about teaching. Take advantage of any teaching colloquia sponsored by the ECTL and your department, join the *Graduate Student Network at UW*, and/or work with your fellow graduate students to establish regular times for informal discussions of teaching in departmental lounges or seminar rooms. *Seek help on problems as soon as they arise.*

If you are the official instructor of a course, you can start the semester well by developing an informative syllabus that will guide students through the course. If you are assisting a faculty member, you can help by always having the syllabus on hand, keeping students informed about upcoming assignments, and making connections from one part of the syllabus to another.

Simple Strategies

Brief small group work (five minutes or less) in which students must work intensively on a problem and report their results to the whole class. This may help deepen the learning experience. Mix things up by having students draw a picture of a key concept and then discuss. Ask students to share examples from current events that relate to topics in class. Consider using the document camera to project student answers to problems instead of always projecting your

"professional" answers. Featuring student work as part of the class lecture or discussion will result in a higher level of student accountability, quality, and interest.

More Complex Strategies

Complex assignments, although more difficult to manage and assess, present opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and learn the advanced thinking skills of synthesis and evaluation. Examples of complex assignments include case studies, debates, problem-based learning, collaborative projects, role-plays, simulations, and service learning.

Planning and managing these kinds of assignments requires considerable time, and the work requires risk-taking on the part of both students and instructors.

A key skill needed to incorporate complex assignments into a course is project management. The instructor and students will need to agree on methods for communication, frequently submitting progress reports, making adjustments when plans go awry, and managing collaboration. Excellent organization helps. Complex assignments will create different course rhythms and will almost always result in unexpected occurrences. With a commitment to flexibility, mutual trust, and good humor, instructors and students are likely to be highly satisfied with the outcomes of these assignments.

Instructional technologies can help enhance the teaching and learning experience within and beyond the classroom. WyoCourses, UW's Learning Management System, multimedia materials, student response systems, online conferencing, and lecture capture tools are useful for delivering teaching materials, gathering and assessing student work, tracking and posting students' grades, fostering student interaction, and extending teaching and learning beyond the confines of the class session.

Multimedia Teaching Platforms

Multimedia Content

Various multimedia creation tools can be used to enhance live lectures and written course materials. Brief videos, audio recordings, and images that you create and embed in your course can engage students and support multiple and diverse ways of learning. Video capture tools (VidGrid, Zoom, or WyoCourses' built-in recording feature) used independently or combined with presentation software (e.g., Prezi or PowerPoint) can be useful for providing accessible, reviewable course content. In the classroom, 21 document cameras project images of paper

documents or other objects. Note: If you are using works you did not create make sure you are complying with U.S. Copyright Law. For more helpful information on copyright visit the Office of General Counsel Copyright.

Polling Software

Use polling software, such as Poll Everywhere or Zoom's built-in polling tool, to gather immediate feedback from students about questions you ask in class and/or help you gauge student attendance, knowledge, understanding, or engagement. Project real-time responses to stimulate discussion, and/or examine results and statistics later. Use a computer or document camera to capture and project students' contributions during class discussions and/or students' works in process.

Zoom

Use Zoom to hold virtual office hours; record and retain classroom sessions that students can access later to review content and prepare for exams. Use Zoom to bring in guest speakers from anywhere—either into a Zoom conference or into a live classroom. Zoom can be used to facilitate a panel discussion with experts from all over the world, live during class. You and your students can use Zoom to record interviews with anyone in the world.

WyoCourses

WyoCourses is UW's branding of Canvas, our learning management system (LMS). Every course offered has a WyoCourses course shell, accessible with any desktop, laptop, or mobile device. Whether you teach fully online, hybrid, or in a physical classroom, WyoCourses can be the interactive hub of all of your course content; a place where students find resources, receive and submit assignments, access feedback and grades, collaborate and interact with each other, with you, and with the course content.

Instructional and Technical Support

The Ellbogen Center for Teaching and Learning is your resource for teaching support. We can guide you in your use of any of these tools, functionally and pedagogically. The ECTL hosts workshops, book discussion groups, faculty learning communities (FLCs), twice weekly drop-in faculty support hours (Faculty Learning Studio). ECTL also offers opportunities to get a variety of certificates and badges in active learning, assessment, critical and creative thinking and many more applicable subjects. For information on those services, visit https://www.uwyo.edu/ctl/. If you have questions about using any of these teaching technologies email wyocourses-inst@uwyo.edu. For IT technical support call 766-4357 or email userhhelp@uwyo.edu.

Teaching Statement and Portfolio

Teaching Statement Benefits

A teaching statement, sometimes called a philosophy of teaching, is a public document for students, colleagues, supervisors, prospective employees, and review committees. Teaching statements are published in teaching portfolios, course syllabi, web pages, review packets, and application materials. A teaching statement written for a course syllabus will probably differ from one written for prospective employers, and you will find that a teaching statement is a living document, developing and deepening over time as your teaching résumé grows.

When creating a teaching statement and philosophy visit these resources for more information:

- Writing a Teaching Statement
- Philosophy Infographic

Portfolio Benefits

Graduate students who have completed portfolios in the past few years report numerous benefits. Many suggest that teaching and overall professionalism improve as a result of reflection, planning and creating a portfolio. Working with others on portfolio projects, and publicly presenting project results, establishes collegiality within and across disciplines. There is no question that completing a professional portfolio significantly helps graduate students to achieve their next steps: admission to PhD programs, receipt of graduate assistantships, or gaining employment in academic and nonacademic jobs.

More information about resources and how to create a teaching portfolio visit these resources:

- Teaching Portfolio
- Portfolio Infographic

Professional Development Resources

The Graduate Student Teaching and Learning Symposium

The Office of Academic Affairs, in collaboration with the ECTL, sponsor a one-day teaching symposium in the fall prior to the start of classes for all graduate students who have first-time teaching responsibilities at UW. Symposium leaders include University of Wyoming faculty and administrators. The symposium format includes plenary sessions and small-group conversations. Visit Teaching and Learning Symposium for more information.

ECTL Teaching and Learning Seminar Series

These interactive sessions are designed to address a spectrum of teaching topics of interest to new instructors. Experienced instructors with significant success in teaching lead many of these workshops. **All graduate assistants are encouraged to attend.** Visit ECTL Events and Programs to register**.**

Course in College Teaching – GRAD 5910

GRAD 5910, a three-credit S/U course, generally offered in the spring semester for graduate students who want to broaden their skills and knowledge in the area of teaching in higher education. This course provides opportunities to develop skills and knowledge in order to design learning materials in one's discipline; create a rich, interactive, and productive classroom; successfully assess student learning; develop an effective personal teaching philosophy; and reflect on teaching and learning experiences. Enrollment is capped at 25 students. The course is listed in the online course catalog under "Other Programs" GRAD-Graduate School.

ECTL Teaching and Learning Certification and Badge Program

Through this certification and badge program, participants are exposed to the theory and practices of effective teaching and learning. The certification challenges participants to examine teaching and learning and to engage learners using innovative techniques and technologies that enhance the learning experience. This program allows participants to choose their preferred tracks towards certification and/or badges.

For additional information please visit [ECTL Teaching and Learning Certification and Badge Program](#) or contact Cathy Gorbett at cmoody5@uwyo.edu for more information.

ECTL Graduate Assistant Learning Community Book Club

Join fellow GAs from a variety of disciplines in a facilitated book and article discussion group. Books utilized in previous years are as follows: *First Day to Final Grade: A Graduate Student's Guide to Teaching*, 3rd edition (Curzan & Damour), *Teaching Your First College Class: A Practical Guide for New Faculty and Graduate Student Instructors* (Carolyn Lieberg), and *How Learning Works: Seven Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (Susan Ambrose et al.). These books help to prepare readers for a confident start as teachers and gives them a firm foundation on which to develop their skills and personal classroom styles.

The opportunity to interact with peers and learn together has been celebrated as an integral part of this experience. Please check the ECTL website for more information and to apply.

Graduate Student Network at UW (GSN)

GSN is a Recognized Student Organization (RSO) group of graduate students interested in professional development and networking opportunities, community service, exchanging ideas, and supporting and advocating for fellow graduate students during their studies at University of Wyoming. Like them on Facebook or sign up to their email list (gsn@uwyo.edu) to learn about upcoming events and resources.

Professional Development Resources

Resource	Location	Phone Number	Email	Website
Advising Career & Exploratory Services	Knight Hall 222	307-766-2398	aces@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/aces
Ellbogen Center for Teaching & Learning	Coe Library 510	307-766-4847	ellbogenctl@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/ctl
Graduate Education	Old Main 312	307-766-4286	graded@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad
International Students & Scholars	Cheney International Center, Suite 5	307-766-5193	uwglobal@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/iss
LeaRN: the Learning Resource Network	Coe Library 105	307-766-4430	mhand4@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/learn/
Service, Leadership & Community Engagement (SLCE)	Union 006 and 011	307-766-3117	slce@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/slce
Writing Center	Coe Library 302	307-766-5250	utc@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/utc

Support

The University of Wyoming is focused on helping students achieve their goals and on supporting students on their academic journey. We understand students are often navigating challenges which prevent them from fully engaging in their academic work or with the campus community. The UWYO Cares Team is a University of Wyoming multi-disciplinary team responsible for assessing, responding to, and evaluating the safety and welfare of individuals who present concerns of any nature. Families, students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to report concerns about a student's health, wellbeing, safety, and/or academic success.

There are two ways to submit a report:

1) Visit the Dean of Students website and click on the UWYO Cares Program in the left-hand menu. There you can find the reporting form link.
2) Download the UWYO Cares Guide on the UWYO Guidebook App on your mobile device. Click on the Report a Concern in the menu bar.

When you submit a student report of concern to the UWYO Cares Team, you are informing the Dean of Students Office that you have seen or heard something regarding a student that causes concern. The Dean of Students Office will work with our partners, including the University Police Department*, the University Counseling Center*, Residential Life, Student Health*, Stop Violence Program*, and our Welfare Coordinator to contact the student of concern.

Your report may be the activating event that helps the student get connected to appropriate campus resources, or you may be providing supplemental information about a student that assists in our ability to more appropriately reach out to support the student.

UWYO Cares Team members shall have a duty to protect confidential and/or sensitive information which is disclosed about students as part of the behavior intervention team process. The UWYO Cares Team members shall limit disclosure of information within the UWYO Cares Team and/or employees having a need to know in order to care for the student.

Questions about UWYO Cares Team or submitting a report? Contact the Dean of Students.

*Please note that these members are confidential entities and they do not discuss specific students or cases.

Resources for Graduate Assistants with Teaching Responsibilities

Students awarded an assistantship involving any type of teaching responsibility, including labs, lectures, paper grading and interpretation to students, are REQUIRED to successfully complete the Graduate Teaching Orientation PRIOR to assuming their duties. The Graduate Teaching Orientation is designed to introduce GAs to principles and issues in college teaching. The University of Wyoming strongly encourages all GAs to consult with their departments to define teaching interests and responsibilities prior to attending the teaching orientation.

You can plan your schedule to include the Graduate Teaching Orientation by consulting the schedule available through the Graduate Education website or asking staff within your department. The ECTL offers Graduate Student Programs and Resources that provide graduate students with a broad introduction to the teaching profession in addition to the initial Graduate Assistant Teaching and Learning Symposium and New Graduate Student Orientation. Failure to satisfactorily attend and complete this teaching seminar may result in cancellation of your assistantship.

University Counseling Center (UCC) Services

UW students may receive assistance with problems that interfere with academic progress, daily living, adjustment to university life, or relationship issues through group, individual, or couples counseling; crisis intervention services; or brief problem-solving sessions. Drop-in, emergency hours, and scheduled appointments are available daily.

UCC collaborates closely with the STOP Program (aka SAFE Project) in the Dean of Students Office by providing counseling support to students who are victims of sexual violence, as well as collaborative programming regarding prevention of sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking.

UCC professional staff are trained in helping students cope more effectively with the stresses that interfere with their academic progress. The counseling staff consists of licensed psychologists and counselors, as well as doctoral and master's level students who are completing their training in counseling and psychology.

Who is Eligible?

UW students are eligible for free counseling, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, political belief, or progress toward academic degree. UCC is a Safe Zone for all students seeking services.

Veteran Students

The rich diversity of experiences that veterans bring to the classroom can enrich both discussion and written work, if a wide range of options are provided so that veterans can choose whether or not to share personal experiences. Discussion of issues related to war, politics, patriotism, and the military are part of inclusive teaching and require careful and respectful management and facilitation. Like nontraditional aged students, veterans may isolate themselves from their younger civilian classmates. Some veterans may prefer sitting in the rear of the class or where they can easily scope out activity while having their backs to a wall as a self-protection measure.

Veterans may be multicultural learners, deal with gender issues, or even have disability related issues. Knowledge of campus resources is important to share. Accessing resources like the Veterans Services Center and the teachers of the UW veterans' transition course may enrich your knowledge and help you make referrals when you become aware of a veteran's status.

Training

Harassment and Discrimination Prevention ONLINE Training *(Formerly known as Sexual Misconduct and Duty to Report)*

All University employees are required to participate in training, within 90 days of hire, about responding to and reporting sexual misconduct. This course teaches employees to identify and eliminate workplace harassment and discrimination based on "protected characteristics" by assisting employees with understanding the law and responding to misconduct appropriately. This evidence-based course will strengthen our commitment to the prevention of sexual misconduct at the University of Wyoming.

Sessions are available online. New employees will receive an email from University of Wyoming Online Training with a link to the EVERFI portal. Employees will then need to sign in using their UW credentials to complete the course. For questions or more information, please contact the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at diversity@uwyo.edu or (307) 766-3459.

"Make the Call: Sexual Harassment/Discrimination for UW Supervisors, Managers, and Faculty" Prevention Training

Since 2004, EORR (part of Equity and Employment Practices) has been conducting training on preventing sexual harassment/discrimination and UW Regulation 4-2, which outlines UW's non-discrimination policy. This training is mandatory every 3 years.

Sexual Harassment (EORR) Introduction Video (created for GTA Online Symposium)

You can register for sessions on your own by logging into WyoWeb and opening UW Employee Self-Service, then go to Courses and Conferences. View the entire course schedule or search for the course you want to take. There will likely be more than one page

of courses available, so use the arrows at the top of the list to view more options. Click on the "Add to Cart" icon to sign up. Please remember that even though the course is free, you must "Check Out" before the registration is complete. After you "Check Out," you will receive an email confirming your registration as well as a reminder a few days before the course.

If you have problems registering, visit the training page for a list of available sessions. You can find the date and time that work best with your schedule and contact us to register. Please call 307-766-5200 or email report-it@uwyo.edu if you have questions or to request an accommodation.

Sexual Harassment

(For more information about UW Regulation 4-2 Discrimination and Harassment, please visit www.uwyo.edu/reportit/policies)

It is the policy of the University of Wyoming to prohibit sexual harassment and all forms of discrimination that are based on race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, etc. All students, faculty, and staff have a responsibility to assist in the enforcement of this policy, be aware of its contents, and to abide by its terms.

Administrators, managers, supervisors, department heads/chairs, deans, vice presidents, and members of the Campus Police are directly responsible for promptly reporting any complaints of sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination to EORR. The Manager of Investigations and the appropriate University officials shall promptly investigate and attempt to resolve the complaint in a timely manner.

The University of Wyoming will neither tolerate nor condone any act of sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination, which violates state and federal laws. In addition to mandatory training for managers and supervisors, training will be available during new employee orientation and on an as needed basis.

Sexual harassing behavior consists of unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, sexually motivated physical conduct, or other verbal or physical conduct or communication of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to that conduct or communication is made a term or condition, either explicitly or implicitly, of obtaining or retaining employment, of obtaining an education, or of obtaining educational benefits or opportunities; or
- Such conduct is pervasive, has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's employment, education, educational benefits or opportunities, creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive employment or education environment. Sexual harassment, as defined herein, is generally

limited to conduct or communication by someone in authority but also includes any sexual harassment as defined when perpetrated on any student or employee by any other student or employee.

Sexually harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to:

- Sexual name calling, jokes, spreading sexual rumors, or overly personal conversations of a sexual nature
- Subtle pressure for sexual activity
- Inappropriate patting, pinching, or fondling, pulling at clothes, or intentional brushing against an individual's body
- Demanding sexual favors accompanied by implied or overt promises of preferential treatment with regard to an individual's employment or educational status
- Any sexually motivated unwelcome touching, cornering, or blocking an individual's movement
- Conditioning a student's grade or academic progress on submission to sexual activity
- Hanging or displaying sexually explicit pictures, posters, drawings, or any other inappropriate items in the workplace
- A pattern of conduct intended to cause discomfort or humiliation, or both, that includes one or more of the following:
  - Unnecessary touching or hugging,
  - Remarks of a sexual nature about a person's clothing or body, or
  - Remarks about sexual activity or speculations about previous sexual experiences.

The university recognizes that not every advance or consent of a sexual nature constitutes harassment. Whether a particular action or incident is a personal social relationship without a discriminatory effect requires a determination based on all the facts and surrounding circumstances.

General Community Resources

WY 211 contains many resources for finding assistance, from basic and family needs to health and food assistance, throughout the entire state of WY.

Laramie Interfaith provides emergency services to the community including food pantries, emergency shelter, and assistance with rent, utilities, and other expenses.

Laramie Soup Kitchen serves hot meals daily at no cost.

Clothing Cottage provides very low cost, or free, clothing and household items.

University of Wyoming Food Share Pantry is open to all UW students and employees.

Support Resources

Resource	Location	Phone Number	Email	Website
Academic Affairs	Old Main 312	307-766-4286	mpeck@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/acadaffairs
Dean of Students	Knight Hall 128	307-766-3296	dos@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/dos
Ellbogen Center for Teaching & Learning	Coe Library 510	307-766-4847	ellbogenctl@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/ctl
Graduate Education	Old Main 312	307-766-4286	graded@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad
International Students & Scholars	Cheney International Center, Suite 5	307-766-5193	uwglobal@uwyo.edu	www.uwyo.edu/iss