

Department of Communication

Graduate Student Teacher Support Program

Welcome! We are delighted you have accepted teaching responsibilities in our department. Graduate Teaching Assistants can make a tremendous difference in the lives of their students, and we hope you will find your teaching assignments personally and professionally rewarding.

Our Graduate Student Teacher Support Program is designed to familiarize new teaching assistants with university-level learning and orient you to the department and university resources available to support teachers. The program includes six components:

Course Setup Studio	COMM 6090 Class	Course Supervisors	Teaching Coach	Grad Student Cohort	Department Workshops
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •During August orientation •Prepare for first day of teaching •Set up Canvas learning management system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 credit hour •Fall of first semester •Pedagogy and practice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Faculty member(s) assigned to oversee the courses you teach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •An experienced graduate student teacher •Support and advice •Individual meetings as requested 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Your peer teachers •A Professional Learning Community so you can help each other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Workshops related to teaching offered each year

By the end of this year, you will:

1. Design a university-level course with syllabus, instruction, active learning, community interaction, and formative/summative assessments.
2. Manage classroom logistics and interaction according to university and department policy, personal style, educational research, and student needs.
3. Begin to articulate and address pedagogical challenges related to power dynamics in the classroom.
4. Use a learning management system (LMS) and other computing technologies to improve learning.
5. Draft a personal teaching philosophy and begin to implement that philosophy.
6. Participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) of other teachers.
7. Become familiar with department, college, and university resources for teachers.

We look forward to working with you as you further develop your personal strengths in the classroom. Please let us know how we can help you.

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COURSE SETUP STUDIO

August 17-18 Agenda

Before coming to the Course Setup Studio, make your best effort to do the following (it's ok if you cannot complete or do not know how to do some of these items):

- Obtain your teaching assignment from Glen Feighery (including course names and numbers, course supervisor names, and contact info).
- Get access to previous syllabi for courses you will be teaching.
- Get added as an observer to previous Canvas courses similar to yours, if possible.
- Activate your Canvas courses (we can do this together the first day if needed).

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 17: COURSE PLANNING

- 9:00 **Convene in LNCO 2120**, Reading Room. Continental breakfast provided.
- 9:15 Introduction ▪ *Helene Shugart, Director of Graduate Studies, Communication*
- 9:30 Why I Teach ▪ *Kim Mangun, Associate Professor, Communication*
- 10:00 Break
- 10:15 Learning Objectives and Assessment ▪ *Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence*
- 11:45 Lunch provided by the department
- 12:30 Benefits for Teaching Assistants ▪ *Jolyn Schleiffarth, Graduate School*
- 1:15 Practical Survival Skills ▪ *Glen Feighery, Director of Undergraduate Studies, Communication*
- 2:00 Break
- 2:15 Syllabus Development ▪ *Heather Stone, COMM 6090 Instructor*
- 3:00 Alignment Grids/Lesson Planning/Assignment Lists ▪ *Heather Stone*
- 3:45 Preview of Tomorrow ▪ *Heather Stone*

THURSDAY, AUGUST 18: COURSE CREATION

- 9:00 **Convene in Marriott Library 1120, computer lab**. Continental breakfast provided.
- 9:15 Welcome ▪ *Heather Stone*
- 9:30 Overview of Communication Teaching Support Program ▪ *Heather*
- 10:00 What is a Learning Management System? ▪ *Teaching & Learning Technologies (TLT)*
- 10:30 Canvas Access and Break
- 11:00 Graduate Student Teaching Assistant Panel
- 12:00 Break
- 12:15 Working Lunch (provided) and Introduction to Canvas ▪ *Heather*
- 1:00 Course Creation Workshop
- 2:30 Discussion: Before the First Day of Class
- 2:45 COMM 6090 Preview, Question/Answer, and Wrap-up ▪ *Heather*
- 3:30 Individual meetings with Heather by request (optional)

COMM 6090 CLASS OVERVIEW

Note: This is an overview, subject to change. Refer to the course syllabus and Canvas pages for the final schedule.

MODULE A: COURSE DESIGN & SETUP (WEEKS 1-3)

- Classroom management
- Active learning
- Troubleshooting
- FERPA

MODULE B: CLASSROOM LOGISTICS (WEEKS 4-6)

- Interaction among students and teachers, online and face-to-face
- Facilitation, online and face-to-face (teacher panel)
- Grading practices and tips

MODULE C: POWER DYNAMICS IN EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS (WEEKS 7-9)

- Multiculturalism
- Critical pedagogy (faculty guest speaker)
- **Assignment:** Observe Peer Teachers

MODULE D: YOUR IDENTITY AS A TEACHER (WEEKS 10-11)

- Teaching philosophies
- Student evaluations
- **Assignment:** Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI)
- **Assignment:** Teaching Philosophy

MODULE E: ONGOING TEACHER SUPPORT (WEEKS 11-13)

- Course proposals
- Workload management
- University resources
- Cohort support activities

COURSE SUPERVISORS

The Communication department assigns faculty members to supervise each course where graduate students instruct or assist. Course supervisors are there to help you understand and fulfill your teaching responsibilities.

At your request, course supervisors may help you with the following:

- Provide you with copies of previous syllabi or Canvas pages for the class, if available.
- Provide feedback on the syllabi you create.
- Observe your online or face-to-face teaching and provide suggestions.
- Assist you with any problems that arise as you teach the course.

We recommend you meet with your course supervisor once before the semester starts, and thereafter as you feel it would be useful. Course supervisors are experienced teachers who are specifically assigned to help you, so please work with them to make your own teaching development plan. Let them know which teaching opportunities interest you and areas where you want to improve. Enlist them in your success.

If you have any questions or concerns about working with your teaching mentor, please see Dr. Helene Shugart, the Director of Graduate Studies.

TEACHING COACH OVERVIEW

The department provides a teaching coach to help you during your first year of teaching. That person is also the instructor of your COMM 6090: Teaching College Communication course, and is usually a third- or fourth-year graduate student with significant experience in university-level teaching.

This year's coach is Heather Stone. She can be reached at (801) 874-6064 or heather.stone@utah.edu.

Some of the things a coach can help with include:

- Reviewing your course design and syllabus
- Troubleshooting classroom management problems
- Helping you set up your Canvas pages
- Brainstorming on how to manage your coursework, research, and teaching load
- Connecting you with other graduate students and faculty
- Helping you make a professional development plan
- Reviewing your teaching philosophy and providing feedback

Please utilize your coach whenever you need her. Her job is to help you succeed.

GRADUATE STUDENT COHORT

Teachers who join Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have deeper understanding of pedagogical practices, feel greater confidence, and experience more professional growth than their colleagues who do not participate in such groups. For example, see Erinn Bentley's research on PLCs among instructors of first-year composition.

You have entered graduate school at the University of Utah with several other students who also have teaching responsibilities. We encourage you to formally and informally connect with each other to discuss your teaching practices and challenges. We also encourage you to connect with students who have been in the program longer than you. Some of those students will be at the department Orientation and the Course Setup Studio. Feel free to meet them, remember their names, and keep in touch.

VIRTUAL COMMUNITIES

To make it easier for students to connect with each other, we have created an online community for Communication graduate students using the Canvas learning management system. You should have received an invitation from Canvas to join this community during the Course Setup Studio, but if you did not, please contact Heather Stone and request to be added. This online community is not semester-based, and you will continue to be part of it until you graduate or remove yourself from the group.

There is also a Facebook group for Communication Graduate students. We encourage you to join the graduate student group and follow the department page.

GRADUATE STUDENT ADVISORY COUNCIL (GSAC)

We have a Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC) with three elected members. Their job is to represent students in department events and decision-making. They want to hear from you if you ever have questions or concerns about the department.

COMMUNICATION DEPARTMENT TEACHING WORKSHOPS

The department offers workshops and colloquia for students and faculty throughout the year. At least two of the workshops are teaching focused, and you are encouraged to attend.

This year's teaching-related workshops are:

MULTICULTURALISM IN THE CLASSROOM (TAUGHT DURING FALL SEMESTER)

This workshop examines issues of race, class, gender, sexuality, and (dis)ability in online and face-to-face classroom environments. Teachers will gain greater understanding of the multiple perspectives students may bring, and hear how other teachers interact with sensitivity and inclusiveness.

Facilitator: Graduate student or faculty from Communication department

ONLINE AND HYBRID TEACHING (TAUGHT DURING SPRING SEMESTER)

This workshop provides an overview of setting up and teaching an online or hybrid course. Topics include student engagement, teacher presence, course navigation, technology tools for teaching, learning outcomes, and more.

Facilitator: Center for Teaching & Learning Excellence and/or Teaching & Learning Technologies

NOTE: This workshop schedule is tentative, and subject to change. You will receive updated workshop information via email once the Fall semester has started.