First Time Teaching Assistants

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Kent State University
August 2019
Session Outline

• Inside the Classroom
  • Preparedness and Nerves
  • Classroom Management
  • Healthy Boundaries
  • Diversity Awareness
  • Clarity of Expectations and Policies

• Outside the Classroom
  • Departmental Requirements
  • Logistical Concerns

• Other Appointments

• Q & A
Inside the Classroom:  
Before Classes Begin

- **Preparation can help lessen anxiety.**  
  - Include full calendar in syllabus and have syllabus uploaded or printed on the first day of class  
  - Print your class roster  
  - Have key numbers and apps already in your phone  
    - SUSO and KSU Mobile are helpful apps!  
    - Plan for alternative lesson plans (each class)

- **Know where to get classroom materials.**

- **Before the first day, check:**  
  - Keycard or key for classroom door  
  - Classroom layout  
  - Technology  
    - Do you know how to use this technology?  
    - Do you have to request adapters?  
    - Do you need an access key or password?
Inside the Classroom: Classroom Management

- **Establish your presence**
  - Tell students how to address you
- **Know your responsibilities as instructor**
- **Know your syllabus (policies)**
- **Student accommodations:**
  - Students with disabilities [http://www.kent.edu/sas](http://www.kent.edu/sas)
  - Student athletes (will be notified by student)
- **Academic Presence Verification Roster**
  - [https://www.kent.edu/registrar/academic-presence-verification-roster](https://www.kent.edu/registrar/academic-presence-verification-roster)
Visible and Invisible Diversity Awareness

• Visible Diversity
  • Examples: age, race, sex, ethnicity, accent, and/or other physical attributes

• Invisible Diversity
  • Examples: socio-economic status, work experience, sexual orientation, parental status, religious affiliation and beliefs, nationality, geographic location of birth, and/or political views

• Personal Diversity
  • Recognition that no two individuals are exactly alike
Diversity Awareness: Visible and Invisible Diversity

• **Visible Diversity**
  • Examples: age, race, sex, ethnicity, accent, and/or other physical attributes

• **Invisible Diversity**
  • Examples: socio-economic status, work experience, sexual orientation, parental status, religious affiliation and beliefs, nationality, geographic location of birth, and/or political views

• **Personal Diversity**
  • Recognition that no two individuals are exactly alike
Diversity in the Classroom

Kent State is a unique place!

Some types of diversity you may come across as a TA:

- First Generation Students (First-Gen)
- Minority Students
- Non-traditional Undergraduate Students
- Students with Disabilities
- Students who identify as LGBTQ+
- International Students
Inside the Classroom: Healthy Boundaries

• Don’t let students walk all over you.
  • Be flexible but firm.
  • Avoid inappropriate situations.

• Don’t give out personal information to students—use your KSU email, office phone, and avoid social media connections with current students.

• Give yourself time to respond to student emails or requests.

• Keep necessary phone numbers in your phone (campus security, student access, etc).

• Keep all correspondence in written form—make policies clear and consistent.

• Keep graded material for at least one year.

• Don’t hesitate to use the Early Alert System if you are concerned about a student.
  • [http://www.kent.edu/success/earlyalert](http://www.kent.edu/success/earlyalert)
Inside the Classroom: Grades

- Enter grades promptly on Blackboard Learn
  - Don’t surprise students with their grades!
- Final grades must be entered in Flashline at the end of the semester
  - Midterm grades are required for all lower-division courses (levels 00000, 10000, and 20000)
  - Grade Push [https://www.kent.edu/provost/grade-push](https://www.kent.edu/provost/grade-push)
- All grades must be kept confidential!
  - FERPA [https://www.kent.edu/registrar/ferpa](https://www.kent.edu/registrar/ferpa)
My Courses & Rosters

Course: 21011  Section: 095  CRN: 21045

Location: WEB COURSE

Schedule Type: Lecture

Official Section Dates Type: 1 - Full Term 2019-01-14 through 2019-05-05

Instruction Method: 100% Online-No Set Meet Times

Enrolled: 18 of 19 seats filled.

ENG - LITERATURE IN THE US II

Course: 25005  Section: 001  CRN: 13301

Meeting Time: Tuesday: 3:45 PM - 5:00 PM
               Thursday: 3:45 PM - 5:00 PM
The TA
Outside the Classroom
Outside the Classroom: Things to Consider

• Confidentiality applies outside of the classroom, too!
• Familiarize yourself with the administrative structure of your department
• Maintain your personal, student, and teacher roles—balance is key to success!
• Ask for syllabi on file for the course(s) you’re teaching
  • You can also ask colleagues or mentors for their assignment sheets or syllabi
• Ask for help or report issues when you need to!
Outside the Classroom:
Paycheck and Benefits

• **Bi-monthly paycheck**
  - First paycheck is usually issued two weeks after the beginning of the semester – September 15th
  - 15th and 30th of every month (except early in December)
  - Check Flashline for your paystubs

• **Benefits of being a Graduate Assistant**
  - Discounted Health Insurance
  - State Employee discounts on your cell phone bill
  - Free Microsoft Office products
  - University Bookstore discount
Other Appointments: Graduate Research Assistants (GA)

• Assignment to one or more faculty
• Regular meetings with supervisor
• Faculty research projects – academic research
• Assist with:
  • Grant applications
  • Data entry and analysis – data collection?
  • Editing and preparation of manuscripts
  • Preparation of IRB documents
  • Literature review
• Opportunity to get published
• Supervise undergraduate students working on the same project
• More flexibility
Other Appointments: Administrative Assistant (AA)

• Routine clerical duties
• Organize events on campus
• Report write-up
• Correspondence with other campus offices
It’s okay if...

- Your students do not show up to office hours after you repeatedly told them that you are available.
- You change it up and try something different if a lesson plan does not work – seek advice and keep trying new techniques.
- Students are silent when you ask questions - embrace the silence, even how awkward it will be at first.
- You ask students whether they understand the material as you go before moving forward quickly.
- You repeat instructions and due dates for clarity, especially those related to assignments.
What resources are available for teaching assistants?
Resources for TAs:
Online Resources

• The Center for Teaching and Learning: http://www.kent.edu/ctl

• Student Mediation Services: http://www.kent.edu/studentconduct/mediation

• GSO Complex Conversations: https://www.kent.edu/graduatestudies/gso-conversations

• Technology Workshops: https://training.kent.edu/

• Blackboard Tutorials (YouTube)

• A.L.I.C.E. Training: https://www.kent.edu/success/alice-workshops
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<th>Resource</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Phone</th>
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<td>Academic Success Center: Tutoring</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/asc/univ-tutoring">http://www.kent.edu/asc/univ-tutoring</a></td>
<td>330-672-3190</td>
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<td>Career Services Center</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/career">www.kent.edu/career</a></td>
<td>330-672-2360</td>
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<td>Center for Adult &amp; Veteran Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/cavs">www.kent.edu/cavs</a></td>
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<td>Counseling &amp; Human Dev. Center</td>
<td><a href="http://chdc.educ.kent.edu">http://chdc.educ.kent.edu</a></td>
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<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/diversity">www.kent.edu/diversity</a></td>
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<td>Financial Aid</td>
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<td>Office of Student Ombus</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/studentaffairs/student-ombuds">http://www.kent.edu/studentaffairs/student-ombuds</a></td>
<td>330-672-9494</td>
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<td>Portage County Veterans Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.co.portage.oh.us/veterans.htm">www.co.portage.oh.us/veterans.htm</a></td>
<td>330-297-3545</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/psych">http://www.kent.edu/psych</a></td>
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<td>Sexual Assault Response Team</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/srvss">www.kent.edu/srvss</a></td>
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<td>Student Accessibility Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/sas">www.kent.edu/sas</a></td>
<td>330-672-3391</td>
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<td>University Health Services</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kent.edu/uhs">www.kent.edu/uhs</a></td>
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<td>Women’s Center</td>
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<td>330-672-1787</td>
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Other GSO Sessions to Attend:

• **Blackboard Design**
  • Room 315
  • 1:20-2:00p and 3:00-3:40p

• **Blackboard Grading**
  • Room 315
  • 2:10-2:50p and 3:50-4:30p

• **Complex Conversations**
  • Room 318
  • 3:00-3:40p

• **Principles of Effective Teaching**
  • Room 317
  • 1:20-2:00p and 3:50-4:30p
QUESTIONS

ask
who?
discover

where?
how?
discover

questions

why
challenge
who?

clues

when?
knowing

investigation

how
why?

ask

knowing

investigation
Q & A

• How do you plan a lesson? What are the parts of a lesson plan?

• What are some ways you can establish an authentic pedagogical style?

• If you make a PPT for your lesson, but find the computer isn’t working, what will you do?
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