

# CTL Program for Excellence in Teaching in Higher Education

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## Summary of the program

The CEU Center for Teaching and Learning Program for Excellence in Teaching in Higher Education for CEU doctoral students consists of a foundational course in the Fall term, two additional short seminars, and a capstone course on the development of an electronic teaching portfolio. All students who complete this series of seminars (normally within one or two academic years) and produce a comprehensive early-career teaching portfolio will receive a certificate of program completion.

The program design, content, and core values are informed by relevant research on professional development of scholar-teachers. Our courses are based on collaborative inquiry and often involve peer teaching, observation and experimentation. This program aims to support a networked community of scholars capable of learning through observation, reflection and collaboration across and within disciplinary communities.

## Essential program values

**Scholarship** - We encourage an approach to the development of university teachers as informed scholars-teachers. Our teaching and mentorship is informed by higher education research and learning theory. The program acknowledges discipline-specific knowledge and practices.

**Reflection** - We collaborate with early-career scholar-teachers as they become reflective practitioners, critical problem-solvers and peers in a professional community of university teachers;

**Innovation** - We embrace the integration of technology-supported teaching and learning, learner-centered practices, collaborative models, and inquiry-driven approaches to teaching for the development of 21st century higher education learning.

### **Core competencies developed:**

1. Practice designing and leading learner-centered classroom activities.
2. Application of both theory and best practice in the design of student activities and assessment practices.
3. Practice of learning-centered curriculum design in appropriate settings (including blended course redesign and collaborative lesson and course planning).
4. Demonstration of understanding of basic concepts, models and selected practices in technology-supported teaching and learning in higher education.
5. An appreciation of the variety of educational contexts and pedagogical settings, including inter- and multiculturalism, the international classroom, and inclusive higher education.
6. An engagement with new and emerging models of teaching and learning in higher education both inside and outside the classroom.
7. A demonstration of ongoing reflective practice in teaching and other aspects of academic work.

### **Program components**

- Stage 1: Foundations.

The first stage of the program is comprised of students taking the 12-week-long Fall term course, **Foundations in Teaching in Higher Education: Scholarship, Reflection, and Innovation**. This stage ensures a sustained immersion in an academic development community with peers acting as critical friends and co-teachers. The course entails exposure to all core values, skills, areas and major topics in university teaching and learning, including basic educational theory and best practice. Most sessions focus on practical issues in teaching (such as design of a class and learning activities, lecturing and discussion leading skills, issues of the first day of class, the beginning stages of professional development of teacher-scholars in academic communities, basics of teaching with appropriate new technologies). This course also involves significant practice in teaching and designing, observing, and self-evaluation as the course sessions are co-constructed and co-taught with the students.

- Stage 2: Focused Inquiry.

Students are offered a choice of short seminars, each exposing them to fundamental issues of teaching and learning in higher education and requiring the production of sample teaching designs. Students take two of the following four-week-long seminars as a way to engage with core competencies of the program in more depth.

#### **Podcasting in Higher Education: Implications for Teaching and Learning**

This four week course explores the different possibilities of using podcasting in the classroom, as a teaching tool for instructors and a learning method for students. It equips participants with the practical hands-on skills and conceptual background needed to design and create audio materials, audio assignments and assessment criteria for podcasts produced in class. Each class will have a dedicated space for learning technical skills such as

editing, recording, and writing for the ear; skills that will feed into the more conceptual discussions on the use of audio technology in higher education.

Participants in the course learn to approach podcasting in various ways, to design meaningful audio assignments for students, evaluate and grade audio work (such as podcasting) produced by students, and produce their own teaching podcasts.

### **Design for Learning: Planning, Assessment & Curriculum Design**

This 4-week course is part of a set of seminars that focuses on learning-centered instructional design as the core of all university teaching. By designing for learning we mean that course design begins with understanding your students; deciding what you want them to learn; determining how you will measure their learning; and planning activities, assignments, and materials that support their learning. Hence, learning activities and assessment strategies you design should follow from the learning goals.

Although courses may vary in size, subject matter, or level, a systematic process will help participants structure their course and syllabus to effectively meet desired instructional goals. The design theories informing this seminar are comprised of teaching for understanding as well as blended redesign models for integrating learning technologies in university teaching. The assessment of student learning is a core element of the design process. The seminar will challenge participants further through design projects and experiments: students will put together a specific course, session, unit or a whole set of student learning tasks grounded in the notion of student-centered teaching.

### **Course Redesign: Blending Online and In-person Teaching Strategies**

(Prerequisite: Design for Learning: Planning, Assessment & Curriculum Design.)

When it comes to perspectives on teaching and learning, emerging technologies have generated waves of new opportunities for rich and engaging learning experiences in higher education. This short course is designed to help doctoral students take advantage of the new participatory learning culture and explore ways to use technology to foster interaction, collaboration, and ownership over learning. Strategies to be discussed and modeled address teaching and learning processes and also focus on the transformed learner and instructor roles in online environments such as Moodle.

This seminar will be useful for those who are interested in experimenting with technology-supported ways of teaching and learning, want to supplement their current or future higher education classroom course with web-based materials and need a sound organizational system for doing so, and who wish, also, to gain an understanding of general guidelines in the practical application of online course content. Members of the seminar will have the opportunity to develop new teaching approaches for their own work, through creating a course development map and prioritizing content to place online. Participants also will create learning guides, online modules and other learning activities to begin developing flexible, updateable online course materials.

### **Facilitating Group Discussions: from the Seminar Room to the Lecture Hall**

This seminar will explore leading research and exemplary practices regarding how scholars can facilitate inquiry-based, student-centered discussions at the core of university teaching. What constitutes a good discussion in your academic field? How can you, as a discussion facilitator promote critical thinking, complex questioning, and

deep understanding among your students?

Doctoral students in the seminar will have an opportunity to develop discussion strategies appropriate to their academic disciplines, practice facilitating discussions, and receive critical feedback from members of the seminar.

### **Persuasive Communication in Teaching and Research Contexts**

Whether you are presenting your research at a conference, giving a public lecture, preparing a thesis defense, giving a job talk, or speaking as an advocate on behalf of legal or policy issues to the press, you are attempting to persuade listeners and to involve them in the production of knowledge. This is a complex process and a dynamic that is fundamental to the work of scholars and practitioners alike.

In this seminar we will examine scholarship and exemplary practices in persuasive communication. A key element of the seminar is that students will develop, practice, and learn to critique and improve their own public presentations. We will practice various elements of engaging the audience including the art of questioning, the use of visual tools, professional body language and the use of space, and structural strategies for effective presentations. Participants may elect to participate in video recording and analysis of their practice sessions. In all cases, students will have the opportunity to practice with one another in a supportive setting as they work to refine their personal speaking style and develop engaging discipline-based presentations.

### **Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning**

What is the point of teaching students through engagement with research? What makes a good case-study for student learning and how would one teach with it? What characterizes how successful teachers structure their classes and what teaching strategies do they use? What is innovative and what is simply good practice in creating a really engaging classroom? How can we work with students in a non-hierarchical partnership model of learning? This 4-week CTL seminar engages doctoral students as future teachers in thinking through these questions, exploring their emerging teaching philosophies, and planning to put them into practice.

This seminar invites participants to investigate and discuss a range of inquiry-based teaching and learning strategies, including classical and modified problem-based learning approaches (including the written case-study), research-based and research-led learning, community-based learning, work-based learning, the flipped classroom and studio-method, integrative learning and any other approaches of interest. The participants will be invited to consider teaching approaches that will be interesting and appropriate for their own future courses. The seminar itself is based on the philosophy of teaching through inquiry and integrates scenarios, collaborative micro-teaching projects and developing plans for actual classroom interventions. The philosophy underpinning the course is that of the scholarship of teaching and learning as the basis for informed and sustainable teaching interventions and ongoing professional development of university teachers.

### **Teaching Strategies for Critical Thinking and Writing**

This four-week seminar addresses perhaps the single most important area of pedagogical competence for social science and humanities academics: teaching critical

thinking through student assignments (combined with other elements of your course). This implies decoding what critical thinking means to you as a scholar, designing and fine-tuning unique and relevant assignments, classes, and assessment tasks, and finally, careful analysis of your students' work, not only for grading, but also for the development of your own teaching strategies.

Based on the approaches developed by scholars of teaching from various academic domains, in this seminar we will engage in analyzing various conceptions of critical thinking. We will critically observe, discuss and analyze multiple ways in which critical thinking is taught, and we will construct detailed, authentic student assignments and feedback mechanisms. The work produced in this seminar will be useful in developing your own future courses and your teaching portfolio.

- **Stage 3. Sustainable Professional Development.**

In this capstone stage of the program students take the **Starting Your Teaching Portfolio** seminar and produce an electronic teaching portfolio as the basis for ongoing professional development in teaching. The portfolio will be built from students' work as teaching assistants, co-taught sessions and teaching designs that they produce.

The program provides peer-teaching opportunities for students during the Foundations course. Through the sequence of program seminars and the teaching portfolio work students develop teaching design skills and reflect on university teaching in a critical and informed way.

### **Full List of Courses Available for Program Completion**

- Foundations in Teaching in Higher Education: Scholarship, Reflection, and Innovation
- Podcasting in Higher Education: Implications for Teaching and Learning
- Facilitating Group discussions: from the Seminar Room to the Lecture Hall
- Persuasive Communication in Teaching and Research Contexts
- Design for Learning: Planning, Assessment and Curriculum Design
- Course Re-Design: Blending Online and In-Person Teaching Strategies
- Starting Your Teaching Portfolio
- Teaching Strategies for Critical Thinking and Writing
- Inquiry-Based Teaching & Learning