

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 510**  
**SEMINAR ON TEACHING POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**Spring Semester 2008**

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**Office Hours:** Mondays 4:30 - 5:00 PM  
6:00 – 6:30 PM

**CLASS MEETING TIMES & LOCATION:** Mondays  
5:00 – 5:59 PM  
BSB 1115

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This seminar in college teaching is an outgrowth of the national *Preparing Future Faculty Program*. The Preparing Future Faculty (PFF) program is sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS) with support from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the National Science Foundation. Preparing Future Faculty is a national network of academic leaders who are reshaping graduate education to include preparation for the full range of faculty roles including teaching, research, and service. It is a collaborative effort of colleges and universities from across the United States that are organized into clusters led by a doctoral institution. PFF programs ask faculty, not just those at doctoral institutions, to bring their intellectual and experiential knowledge to the professional development of the next generation of academics.

Very often, new Ph.D.s are thrown into the classroom without any experience or formal training related to education. It is often erroneously assumed that new teachers know how to teach because they used to be students. Those who are making the transition from being students to being teachers often have many questions and anxieties about the duties they will perform. This course will attempt to address those concerns and provide opportunities to enhance academic teaching performance.

While teaching is both an art and a science, research indicates there are effective ways of teaching and they can be learned. One of the goals of this course is to introduce potential faculty to a wide array of techniques which have been demonstrated to lead to more effective student outcomes. Becoming an excellent college teacher is a continuing life-long professional challenge, the dimensions of which often go unrecognized. While many of you have and will take courses and attend workshops related to teaching, this course will address problems and teaching strategies from the perspective of Political Science.

The course will employ outside speakers, site visits, and teaching observations. Throughout the semester, senior faculty and consultants from UIC and our partner institutions will meet with you to discuss the challenges of teaching and provide information related to their academic institutions and teaching environments.

## **COURSE GOALS**

This course is designed to assist you in further developing your teaching skills and provide information related to the role of faculty in higher education. Our goals are to help you:

- Acquire information about teaching and learning processes;
- Identify faculty roles and responsibilities at a variety of institutions;
- Gain a realistic perspective on the skills required for success as a faculty member;
- Examine your fit with a teaching career in higher education;
- Demonstrate, document, and reflect upon your teaching skills;
- Market yourself in competition for faculty or other professional positions; and
- Enhance your graduate student experience at UIC by making graduate study even more responsive to and reflective of student, disciplinary, and professional needs.

## **REQUIRED TEXTS**

Brinkley, Alan (Ed.). *The Chicago Handbook for Teachers: A Practical Guide to the College Classroom*. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1999. ISBN: 0226075125

Bain, Ken. *What the Best College Teachers Do*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004. ISBN: 0674013255

*Additional articles related to specific topics will be distributed and/or posted on Blackboard throughout the semester.*

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Attendance/Participation**

**College Teaching Preparation Program Seminars/Workshops:** Sponsored by UIC's Teaching and Learning Center (TLC) and the Council for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL). Dates and topics will be announced.

**Classroom Observation:** The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an opportunity to observe and reflect on another person's teaching practice. For example, you may want to observe a large lecture class, a small seminar, an introductory or advanced Political Science course. You are encouraged to select the most meaningful context for you at this point in your teaching career. After your observation, you will be required to submit a short written summary of that observation. A detailed description of this assignment and a list of faculty at UIC and our partner institutions who have agreed to allow these observations will be distributed in the next few weeks.

**Philosophy of Teaching Statement:** Discuss your philosophy of teaching, your beliefs about good teaching. How you have tried to accomplish these objectives? How they have changed over time? A teaching philosophy statement is not only a self-reflective statement of your

beliefs about teaching; it is also a statement about how you put your beliefs into practice by discussing concrete examples of what you will do (or anticipate doing) in the classroom. Philosophy statements are typically 1-2 double-spaced pages.

**Development of a Curriculum Vitae (CV):** A curriculum vitae (CV), contains information relevant only to work within academia. It should not contain personal information such as age, gender, height, weight, marital status, dependents, race, ethnic background, religion, hobbies, or personal interests. A vita may be tailored for specific purposes and is not required to contain every detail about a person's academic career. It can, however, be as long (or as short) as is needed for its particular purpose. Vitas should be organized according to salient categories of information arranged in the order of most important to least. Almost any academic professional will have need for a CV. It is best to start a CV sooner rather than later and keep it up to date in order to capture all relevant data as it happens rather than try to recover the information later. Additional information related to CVs and sample vitas will be distributed.

**Teaching Portfolio:** A "teaching portfolio" is a historical and reflective description of an instructor's teaching achievements. It has documents and materials that collectively suggest the scope and quality of teaching performance. "It is to teaching what lists of publications, grants and honors are to research and scholarship." It is important to keep in mind that a teaching portfolio is designed to reflect a teacher's entire teaching career and is an on-going compendium that should last as long as one teaches. A teaching philosophy statement is usually the first entry in a portfolio and self-reflective teachers will continue to revise their statement as new experiences and insights occur throughout the teacher's professional career. In addition to a teaching philosophy statement, a portfolio also includes various entries that document one's teaching practices and strategies. These are generally self-reflective in nature. For example, a syllabus developed for a past (or prospective) course would also include a statement that presents reasons for making various pedagogical choices (why was it organized a particular way, why were certain assignments required, why were exams designed as they were, etc.). Portfolios may also contain entries detailing your views on issues raised by ethnic diversity, gender equity, learning styles, disability issues, discrimination, or any other issue that has had an impact on one's teaching theory and practice. It is from their teaching portfolios that job applicants draw those materials which they will present to future hiring or promotion committees.

**Mini-Class:** Toward the end of the semester, each of you will conduct a "mini-class." This mini-class should be approximately 10 minutes in duration and will be critiqued by your peers. Before beginning the lesson, you as the "teacher" will need to specify the level of the class, and the peers, who are acting as students will be asked to role-play at the appropriate level. This mini-class may be presented in any style: lecture, discussion, or small groups for a specific activity.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

*This schedule is continually evolving. It will be updated regularly and posted on blackboard.*

### **WEEK I: 1/14**

Course Introduction & Overview

### **WEEK II: 1/21**

*Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday - Class will not meet*

### **WEEK III: 1/28**

Teaching & Learning: Engage, Conceptualize, & Encourage

Review of course assignments and blackboard site

Reading: Bain, Ch.1: *Defining The Best*

ASSIGNMENT: Submit a 1-2 page essay describing the best teacher you have had and why you consider them the "best." What did they do to engage you in the learning process? What did you learn from them that you would like to incorporate in your own teaching?

Be prepared to discuss these inspiring teachers during class.

### **WEEK IV: 2/4**

Preparing to Teach

Brinkley, Ch. 1, 2, & 8

Bain, Ch. 3

### **WEEK V: 2/11**

The American Community College

Kevin Navratil, Moraine Valley Community College

Readings posted on blackboard

### **WEEK VI: 2/18**

Students & Learning Styles

Brinkley, Ch. 9

Bain, Ch. 4 & 6

### **WEEK VII: 2/25**

Teaching Political Engagement

Dr. Dick Simpson, UIC

Educating for Democracy, Ch. 1 (available on blackboard)

Additional Readings to be distributed

### **WEEK VIII: 3/3**

American Comprehensive Universities

James McHugh, Roosevelt University

Readings posted on blackboard

***First Draft of Teaching Philosophy Statement Due***

**WEEK IX: 3/10**

Conducting Class  
Brinkley, Ch. 3 & 4  
Bain, Ch. 5

**WEEK X: 3/17**

Presentation Skills  
Diane Dorsey  
Readings posted on blackboard

**WEEK XI: 3/24**

Spring vacation - Class will not meet

**WEEK XII: 3/31**

Liberal Arts Colleges  
Jennifer Boyle, Elmhurst College  
***Classroom Observation Assignment Due***

**WEEK XIII: 4/7**

Student Mini-Classes  
***Final Teaching Philosophy Statement Due***

**WEEK XIV: 4/14**

Student Mini-Classes

**WEEK XV: 4/21**

Student Mini-Classes

**WEEK XVI: 4/28**

Student Mini-Classes  
***Teaching Portfolio Due***

**WEEK XVII: 5/5**

Student Mini-Classes