

## **GSTTS Seminar 7 - Summary**

Today we went over teaching philosophies: what they are and how they should go about writing them. First off, we motivated why they would need one. After we went over this, we had the class break up into small groups and answer some questions as a teacher might. For example, questions like

- What is your role as a teacher?
- How do you think your students learn and how can you facilitate learning?
- How does your teaching philosophy affect various aspects of you class (grading policy, assignments, class activities, etc.)

The goal was to get them to actually think about and analyze their current thoughts on and approach to how they teach and interact with their students by contemplating a teacher's answers to these questions. We had them put up their group's answers on the board so that they could refer to them in the later part of the assignment as well as see the answers other groups came up with.

Since we wanted them not only to contemplate, but produce something tangible, we then had them individually create a rough outline of their teaching statement, taking into account what was said in the beginning of class and the questions and answers on the board. In addition, they were handed the teaching philosophies of various faculty as examples to draw upon. Once done, they paired up, swapped outlines and discussed what they included and why.

Lane then went over aspects of the more general teaching statement, which is an overall collection of your teaching experiences, such as classes taught, the teaching philosophy, etc.

Finally, we gave the students a HW assignment. They were handed a sheet of paper with some general questions. They are to answer the questions with respect to their own experiences teaching a class or recitation, including how they managed their time, planned assignments, structured lecture, etc. In our final seminar next week. we'll have them draw upon these answers to provide a class specific note of advice for first-time TAs.

## **GSTTS Seminar 7 - Reflection**

We structured things here so that everyone would have to think about certain questions that should be addressed in a teaching philosophy, at which point they'd produce an outline of one and then explain their choices. I believe this worked out quite well. The majority of students seemed engaged, though a few were listless, and produced thorough enough outlines to have an adequate head start on the actual assignment. The small groups worked well here; they were large enough that the questions were reasonably well discussed, yet there were enough groups to get a varied sampling of answers. The pairing afterwards was ingenious because it

forced everyone to try and produce something coherent, not rushed, so as to defend their choices to their partner.