

Seminar 8: Looking Back and Looking Forward (Final Session)

Tuesday, November 25, 2014

This was the final seminar. We opened class by inviting people to ask about any topics that we had not covered. There were a few people with general procedural questions about assigning grades and grading the core finals. Next, we switched topics to discuss next semester. We had hoped everyone would share their new assignment and give thoughts about how they planned to approach their teaching. Quite a few people had not yet gotten their assignments, so this discussion was much shorter than anticipated.

During the last session we gave an assignment that required each person to reflect upon their experiences in their teaching/grading assignment. They were to report on the reality (number of students, amount of time, readiness of students, etc.) and then offer advice to a future TA given the same assignment. Specifically we were looking for “best practices” – things they tried and that worked well. We broke people into groups based on their assignment. They shared their reflections and then looked for commonalities. We moved to the computer lab and they produced a document that described the common experiences and also shared advice to share with future new TAs. We were pleased at how thoughtful and thorough each group was in their discussion. This seemed to be a really meaningful assignment. It was a great way to end the course.