

Introduction to College Teaching Spring 2025

Wednesdays, 4:30 - 6:30 pm EST
January 29 - April 23, 2025

via Zoom

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/j/94526572179?pwd=N9oUfygjAZ6kQohTmrvPbYS0nfvMaO.1>

Meeting ID: 945 2657 2179

Password: 781597

Course Coordinators:

Gill Woody (he/him), Department of Economics

Teaching Assistant Project (TAP) Program Coordinator

Email: smw301@economics.rutgers.edu

Alissa Persad (she/her), Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering

Teaching Assistant Project (TAP) Program Coordinator

Email: acp159@soe.rutgers.edu

Office hours are **by appointment**—email Gill and Alissa if you'd like to meet! Furthermore, Gill will be available for drop-in office hours from 3:30 – 4:30 PM on Wednesdays (right before our class sessions). The Zoom link for those will be the same one we use for class (above).

Course Information:

Teaching in the 21st century college classroom presents early career educators with unique challenges and opportunities. This course provides an overview of the role and responsibilities of instructors in higher education. You will learn and practice a range of effective pedagogical techniques. Class periods will include a balance of lecture, discussion, and small group activities, and therefore encourages active engagement from participants. We will cover topics such as developing learning objectives, exploring your teaching identity, engaging students through active learning, creating assignments, and boosting your confidence. Deliverables for this zero-credit course include writing a teaching identity/philosophy statement, attending and reflecting on a class taught in your discipline, and presenting a teaching practicum at the end of the semester. Overall, this course will familiarize you with context and strategies to prepare you for a teaching career in higher education.

This course also prepares students to take other seminar courses offered by the TA Project, specifically Designing Your Own Course (offered in the fall) and Online and Hybrid Teaching (offered in the spring).

Course Learning Goals:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Implement a variety of teaching techniques that prioritize active learning, inclusive curriculum and policies, and student engagement
- Examine diverse teaching strategies and styles
- Reflect on teaching experiences and values to develop a teaching identity
- Apply pedagogical concepts presented in class to design activities and assignments

Course Materials:

All course materials (relevant handouts, weekly slides, and readings) will be available on Canvas.

Course Requirements and Grading:

This is a zero-credit course that will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. In order to receive a satisfactory grade and have the course appear on your Rutgers University transcript, you are expected to fulfill the attendance requirements, participation requirements, and assignments below:

Attendance

- All students enrolled in this course are expected to attend all weekly meetings and arrive on time. **Ideally, students should have no more than two absences.** Please contact the course coordinators if you have concerns about attendance.
- We understand that as busy graduate students with diverse situations and responsibilities, unavoidable conflicts related to teaching, research, and personal issues will arise. **If you know ahead of time that you must be absent or late for a class meeting, please email both course coordinators before the class meeting.**
- If you are absent due to unforeseen circumstances or an emergency, please communicate with the course coordinators via email as soon as possible after the class meeting.
- All class materials will be available on Canvas, and students who miss class are expected to review these materials before the next class meeting.

Class Participation

- We have designed this class to give students time and space to learn about, discuss, and practice teaching techniques. Therefore, you are expected to be an active and engaged member of the class, as that is how you will get the maximum benefit from this course. The course requires little time outside of the class period; therefore,

please do your best to provide meaningful and constructive contributions during class.

- Please be prepared for class. Check the announcements and reminders on Canvas before class each week and complete all assignments by the due date indicated. Read through documents assigned and uploaded on Canvas.
- Given that the class is online, it is expected that you will be attending class using devices such as laptops, tablets, or smart phones. Please be sure that you are engaged in the virtual classes, and please avoid engaging in distracting behaviors during class time, as this will limit what you gain from the course. If you feel comfortable, we encourage you to use both your video and microphone to engage in class discussions. However, using the chat function also counts as participation.

Assignments

In addition to daily class participation, you are expected to complete the following assignments:

- **Faculty Teaching Observation and Reflection:** You will observe one class session taught by a faculty member in an academic department that is related to your academic discipline. This class can be in person, online, or hybrid. You are allowed to observe a class taught by faculty outside of Rutgers. The observed class session should be for a course that you will teach, TA for, or would be interested in teaching as a future faculty member. It is advisable that you observe a class that is being taught in-person or synchronously online in order to observe interactions between the faculty person and students in the course. You will need to arrange this faculty observation yourself and confirm with the faculty member. During the faculty observation, you should reflect upon how the faculty member facilitates their course, what their teaching style is like, how they engage students, and how they organize the lesson. You will write and submit a reflection on the faculty teaching observation. The purpose of this observation is for you to analyze and think critically about effective teaching strategies to implement in your own practice as an instructor, TA, and/or future faculty member.
- **Teaching Identity/Philosophy Paper:** You will write a 1-2 page paper focused on your teaching philosophy or a reflection on your teaching identity. This is your opportunity to begin developing a specific teaching philosophy statement, define yourself as an instructor, and set intentions for the type of educator you aspire to be.
 - If you choose to write a paper on **your teaching philosophy**, we advise writing a teaching philosophy statement that you would aim to include in your teaching portfolio. Teaching philosophy statements are always a work in progress, so this is an opportunity to begin considering what your teaching philosophy is and how it is demonstrated in your teaching (or teaching and learning goals).
 - If you choose to **reflect on your teaching identity** (which likely will have similarities with a teaching philosophy statement), we advise that you reflect on and answer the following questions: What kind of teacher do you plan to be? How will your teaching philosophy be evident during and outside of class? What do you hope students will take away from the courses you teach? What type of college/university best supports these goals?

- **Teaching Practicum:** At the end of the course, you will have 8-10 minutes to present and teach the class any topic of your choice using any teaching method you choose. It is recommended that you present a topic directly related to your academic discipline. You may use any instructional methods that you would like, e.g., power point presentation, activities, worksheets, videos, group work, etc.—feel free to be creative! The session will be recorded on Zoom and shared with you so you can review and reflect upon the experience.

Course Communication and Anti-Discrimination Expectations:

It is important that we maintain a supportive learning community where everyone feels safe and where people can communicate amicably. Treat **everyone** in class with respect at all times, and in all communications.

This class aims to foster an **inclusive learning environment** that promotes and values respect for others and allows for civil, respectful conversations about a variety of topics. As we consider effective practices in teaching and develop a teaching identity and philosophy, students will often share anecdotes and experiences. We welcome and encourage that – indeed, sharing and reflecting on our experiences and goals is imperative to developing effective teaching practices. It is imperative that students behave in a respectful and considerate way to their fellow classmates during the discussions. Inappropriate, disruptive, or offensive interpersonal behavior is not acceptable.

This is a space where we value diverse identities, ideas, and experiences. We encourage active, deep conversations about the material in the course and the social and historical events that it relates to, but we do not condone hateful speech, prejudicial remarks, or debates that question the rights and personhood of people of various identities. Discriminatory behavior will **not** be tolerated.

Instructor Communication Policies

We are available by email at smw301@economics.rutgers.edu and acp159@soe.rutgers.edu. If your inquiry has to do with class policies, absences, grading, etc., please first read through this syllabus for the answer to your question.

To the best of our abilities, we will respond to emails within 48 hours Monday-Friday, but please do not expect responses on holidays, breaks, or weekends.

Academic Integrity

Any form of cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with academic integrity policies found at <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>.

University Resources

Technical Support

If you experience computer difficulties, need help downloading an application, accessing internet, assistance logging into the course's Canvas site, or if you experience any errors or problems in Canvas, contact the Rutgers Help Desk for assistance. You can call 833-OIT-HELP, email help@oit.rutgers.edu or visit the Rutgers student online support center website.

Mental Health Services

Mental health services professional staff members work with students to resolve personal and interpersonal difficulties, many of which can affect the academic experience. These include conflicts with or worry about friends or family, concerns about eating or drinking patterns, and feelings of anxiety and depression. Most students work with mental health professionals at some point in their academic career.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)

<http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/>

(848) 932-7884

17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Scarlet Listeners, Peer Counseling and Referral Hotline

(732) 247-5555

Scarlet Listeners is a free & confidential student run peer counseling and referral hotline based out of Rutgers. Basic problem solving, venting, thoughts of suicide, depression, anxiety, eating disorders, self-harm, relationship problems, loneliness, etc.

Office of Disability Services (ODS)

Any student with a documented disability may contact the Office of Disability Services to determine the appropriate accommodations. Students with disabilities who require accommodations should follow the procedures outlined at <https://ods.rutgers.edu>.

Course Schedule*

*This schedule is not binding and is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. Please make sure you are referring to the most updated version of the course schedule, which will always be available to you on Canvas, and that you are checking all announcements on Canvas.

| Week | Date | Topic | Facilitator(s) | Assignments |
|--|----------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Unit 1: Introduction to College Teaching | | | | |
| 1 | Jan. 29 | Introduction to College Teaching Best Class You Ever Had | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| 2 | Feb. 5 | Role(s) as an Instructor Learning Goals | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| Unit 2: Developing your Teaching Identity | | | | |
| 3 | Feb. 12 | Developing your Teaching Identity | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | Reminder: Schedule your faculty observation! |
| 4 | Feb. 19 | Inclusive Teaching | Marissa Caldwell | |
| Unit 3: Teaching Skills and Strategies | | | | |
| 5 | Feb. 26 | Activities and Assessments for Engaging Students | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| 6 | March 5 | Active Learning in the Classroom | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| 7 | March 12 | Controversial Topics and Difficult Conversations | Sophia Fox-Dichter | Submit faculty observation reflection to Canvas by Friday, March 14 th at 11:59 pm |
| | March 19 | NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK | | |
| 8 | March 26 | Motivating Students Leading Effective Discussion Discussion on Faculty Observation Reflections | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |

| | | | | |
|---|----------|---|-----------------------------|---|
| 9 | April 2 | Best Practices for Online/ Hybrid Teaching | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| Unit 4: Boosting Confidence and Preparing to Teach | | | | |
| 10 | April 9 | Boosting Confidence as an Instructor Partner Work: Teaching Identity Statements | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | Reminder: have a first draft of your teaching identity statement completed BEFORE this class! |
| 11 | April 16 | Teaching Practicum Day 1 | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | |
| 12 | April 23 | Teaching Practicum Day 2 Wrap Up & Course Evaluation | Gill Woody Alissa Persad | Submit teaching identity statement to Canvas by Friday, April 25 th at 11:59 pm |