



Teaching Your First Course
Balancing Teaching and Research

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Discussion Topics

How to be a good teacher

How to balance teaching and getting a research program off the ground

***Why* do we teach?**

So that people *learn*

***Who* do we teach?**

students
colleagues
your chair, your dean
the public
program managers
patent office
...

Teaching Tips

Developing a good course takes *time*

learn good time management

Teaching Tips

What students *learn*
< What you *teach*

don't just try to "cover" the material

Teaching Tips

Learning styles [Richard Felder, NCSU]

don't "teach yourself"

Teaching Tips

Active learning [Richard Felder, NCSU]

**"I hear, I forget;
I see, I remember;
I do, I understand"**

2 minute paper

Teaching Large Classes

Mike Gustin

Large class teaching: tips

Outline of class topics on board

Avoid powerpoint where possible

1-2 sec pause between points

Mike Gustin

Large class teaching: tips

Be intense

Wait for questions, step into class

Take a break in the middle

Mike Gustin

Large class teaching: issues

Break into smaller groups?

Clickers?

Quiz at start of class?

Notes on line?

Mike Gustin

Large class teaching: testing

Exam topics predictable, exact question not

Multiple choice plus short essay (best 5 of 7)

Curve each exam, give letter grades

Mean \pm SD, mean = lowest point of B range;
each SD one full grade (B-, B, B+)

Mike Gustin

Jane Grande-Allen

Dept of Bioengineering
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Your First Year Teaching

- Plan 6-8 hours of prep time per lecture
- Don't expect perfection
- Do get feedback throughout the semester
- Don't expect eager listening faces
- Do make the time to get to know your students or at least learn names
- Assignment tips
 - Textbooks have typos
 - Work the exams yourself
 - Extra credit: not all that

After: Recap and Revise

- Fix the lectures that needed the most work first
- Every few lectures, work in up to date data to keep things current
- Get a mentor and meet monthly. Go over how EVERYTHING has been for you
- Do attend teaching workshops

Evaluations

- Don't take the evaluations too harshly
 - "This professor actually discouraged independent thought..."
 - "Dr. Grande-Allen is the most fair & considerate teacher I've had at Rice..."
 - "Not enough engineering – too much biology"
 - "The name of the course should surely be changed to Mechanical Properties of ECM because little or no chemistry or biology was discussed"

Time Management / Balance

- Set office hours and keep to them
- Give the same course lecture you gave last year
- Don't say yes to every undergrad that wants to work with you
- Focus your time on learning what you need for the research you will be strongest at
- Do early
 - Write IRB and IACUC
 - Attend regional training seminars by NIH and NSF
 - Sign up for grants mailing lists

Maintain Perspective

- Get a mentor and meet monthly!
 - Colleagues, other young faculty
- Get to know some people and faculty outside the department
- Read [At the Helm](#)
- Check out a few blogs of other women in this position

Points for Discussion

- How to deal with absent or failing students
- The students are not like you were/are
- Should you recycle quizzes/exams?
- How accommodating should you be to student requests?
- Where did the day go? Protecting your time
- What is important and not important?