

Teaching Guide for GSIs

Pre-semester Preparation

In this section of the Teaching Guide for GSIs, you will find many, many things to think about, find out, plan for, and organize as your teaching semester approaches. Even if you have worked as a GSI before, you may benefit from this broad and dense array of resources and suggestions.

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Communicate with faculty, GSIs, and Staff

Taking the time to carefully prepare for the semester before classes begin will save you many headaches, reduce anxiety, help make the first day of section go smoothly, and decrease the amount of work you will have during the semester. Moreover, undergraduates appreciate well-organized and informed GSIs.

Below are steps you should take before the semester begins to ensure a good start in teaching. We use the term “section” loosely for any GSI-led component of the course; feel free to substitute “lab” or “studio” as necessary.

[Meet with the Faculty Member in Charge of the Course](#)

[Communicate with Past and Present GSIs](#)

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[Identify the Department Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs](#)

[Checklist for Getting Started as a GSI \(pdf\)](#)

Meet with the Faculty Member in Charge of the Course

It’s essential to clarify expectations with the faculty member and other GSIs about the running of the course. Questions you will need to address with the faculty member include:

Course Structure

1. What is the function of the GSI-led section vis-à-vis the lecture component of the course? Does the professor have specific activities in mind for section? Will the GSI team come up with activities, or will each GSI determine the content of his or her section?
2. Is there a head GSI? If so, what are the head GSI’s duties?
3. Are GSIs required to give assignments in section? If so, will the professor or the GSI design the assignments?
4. Will GSIs give a section grade to students? How many percentage points in the overall course are allocated to the section grade? Does the professor

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- have a policy regarding the breakdown of the section grade? (a specific percentage for participation, assignments, attendance, etc.)?
5. What are the due dates for class assignments? (These should be listed on the course syllabus.)
 6. Will the instructor have review sessions for the midterm, final, or other class assignments or examinations? Will the GSIs hold review sessions?

Logistics

7. When, where, and how long are the meetings that the professor will convene with GSIs during the semester? ([The Graduate Council Policy on Appointments and Mentoring of GSIs](#) states that professors are required to meet regularly with GSIs.) Will there be a pre-semester orientation?
8. How many office hours is the GSI expected to hold per week? (This should be included in the appointment letter or the supplemental letter of appointment.)
9. How do GSIs in the course get desk copies of books and course readers? Where can students purchase their copies?
10. How should you obtain the most recent roster for your section (if applicable)?
11. Is the class full, or can students still add it? Are all of the sections full? This is important because GSIs may need to direct students who try to “crash” their sections to other sections that are not full.
12. How long do the GSIs have to grade assignments after students turn them in? Many instructors let GSIs determine this issue; some instructors, however, have strict timelines for getting assignments back to students.

Course Policies

13. Does the professor have policies about students adding and dropping the course? What is the procedure for enrolling people from the waitlist? When will decisions about the waitlist be made?
14. Does the instructor want GSIs to enforce particular policies about attendance, late assignments, laptop use, etc., in section?

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15. Does the professor have a policy to handle student requests to challenge grades on their exams or assignments?
16. What are the professor's expectations about handling possible cases of plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of [academic misconduct](#)?

Instructional Technologies

17. Is there a podcast or web video of the lecture? Or does the professor post notes?
18. How will the faculty member and GSIs use the bCourses site (for instance, to communicate with students, record grades)? Are your permissions in the course site set up yet so that you have access as a GSI? Does your section have its own space on the course site?
19. What other systems, services, equipment, or applications does the course use? How can you learn more about them and get access?

Communicate with Past and Present GSIs

Fellow GSIs are among your most valuable resources as you start teaching. Talk with experienced graduate students who have worked with the instructor in the past or taught as a GSI for the course with a different instructor. Seasoned GSIs often have helpful “insider” knowledge about the course (e.g., which demanding research assignment will need to be broken down into steps; whether the first few weeks of lab are more or less difficult than the remainder of the class; where to find the best resources for the course; etc.).

Experienced GSIs may provide new GSIs with sample or template lesson plans, assignments, handouts, and other materials that will help new GSIs save time.

GSIs may consider making explicit arrangements with fellow GSIs to divide the workload - to share lesson planning, alternate writing handouts and assignments, develop a collective grading rubric, etc. Sharing the workload with other GSIs can save time and ease stress. GSIs should find out whether their departments have files with lesson plans, handouts, and other materials from past semesters. (Your

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department's pedagogy course instructor or Graduate Assistant may have this information.)

Communicate with Department Staff

Staff members in your teaching department are typically very knowledgeable. Some questions to ask staff:

1. Where are GSI mailboxes located?
2. Do GSIs get a code for the department's copy machine? If so, is there a limit to the number of copies GSIs can make during the semester?
3. Where can GSIs find supplies needed for teaching, such as pens, printing paper, index cards, envelopes, etc.?
4. Where do GSIs find departmental equipment for labs, studios, or sections? What is the process for checking equipment in and out?
5. Is there a computer and a printer in the department that GSIs can use to prepare for teaching?
6. Where is your office for holding office hours with students?

It may go without saying, but it is important to emphasize that departmental staff are extremely helpful - particularly to GSIs and faculty who treat staff members with respect and appreciate their work.

Identify the Department Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs

Each department employing GSIs should have a Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs.

Among this person's responsibilities are these:

To be actively aware of all policies and regulations concerning GSIs, whether they originate in the University, the campus, or the department, and to communicate these policies and regulations to departmental faculty and GSIs. Such policies and regulations include eligibility requirements, maximum and minimum terms of service, promotion procedures, appointment procedures and criteria, evaluation procedures, departmental or university requirements regarding the pedagogical preparation and mentorship of GSIs for teaching, and any other policies pertaining to GSIs.

To be available to GSIs teaching in the department for consultation and advice on matters of policy and regulations, on pedagogical matters, and in cases of conflict with supervising faculty members.

[Find your department's Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs](#)

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Learn more about the responsibilities of the Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs

Checklist for Getting Started as a GSI

I. Things to Do

- Read over your appointment letter and finalize the hiring process.
- Familiarize yourself with policies pertaining to your GSI position.
- Get a copy of the course syllabus and review it.
- Familiarize yourself with the course readings and materials.
- Set your office hours (time and location).
- Create a section syllabus (see online Teaching Guide for GSIs for information and examples).
- Visit the classroom or lab you will be teaching in.
- Get a copy of the roster for your section and practice saying students' names. You may also be able to see the photos through bCourses.
- Create your first-day lesson plan (see conference handouts for template).
- Copy handouts for the first day (e.g., section syllabus).

For first-time GSIs:

- Enroll in your department's 300-level course (most go by the number 375).
- Enroll in and complete the GSI Professional Standards and Ethics in Teaching online course. All first-time GSIs must complete the five modules with passing scores before interacting (in person or online) with students in their role as GSI.
- Register for and attend the Teaching Conference for First-Time GSIs held the week before classes start.
- Familiarize yourself with the Gold Folder, a guide to helping students in distress find appropriate campus resources:
https://uhs.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/ucb_goldfolder.pdf

II. Review Syllabus and Responsibilities with Instructor of Record

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Have a pre-semester meeting with the faculty member teaching the course to review the course syllabus and your responsibilities. Most of the questions below will be addressed by the faculty member. However, there may be some that you will wish to bring to their attention. If the faculty member does not initiate this meeting, reach out and ask when it will be scheduled.

Course Logistics

- Do the GSIs have any responsibilities during lecture (e.g., taking attendance or passing out handouts)?
- What process can be put in place for GSIs to track their use of time and communicate with the faculty member so as not to exceed the workload and hours designated for the position?
- Find out how requests for accommodations will be handled. If the Disabled Students' Program (DSP) has provided a Letter of Accommodation (LOA) indicating the need for accommodations (for instance, extra time or alternative space), who will oversee the provision of the accommodation? Ask whether the faculty member can make one or more GSIs their proxy for the DSP portal to access Letters of Accommodation for their students. If they prefer not to, ask when/how they will share relevant letters with the GSIs.
- Do sections begin the first week of the semester or do they start later?
- How many office hours do GSIs need to hold?
- Find out from the faculty member what the regular faculty/GSI meeting time and location will be.

Remote-Friendly Considerations

- How much of the course will the professor teach synchronously vs. asynchronously? Will the GSI be required to attend and assist during the instructor's synchronous sessions? For example, will the GSI monitor Zoom chat?
- How many hours per week are the GSIs expected to meet synchronously with their students and how many hours should they devote to preparing

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asynchronous learning activities (note that the Instructor of Record is responsible for this decision).

- Is student attendance in synchronous section meetings required?
- Does the professor expect the GSIs to record their synchronous sessions if conducted online? Does the professor want the recordings to be housed on bCourses or elsewhere?

Instructional Technology

- If using bCourses, has the faculty member created (or asked IT to create) separate bCourses section sites? This is advised since it gives GSIs full functionality to manage their sections. However, some faculty members may prefer to add you as “teacher” and have all student work centralized.
- If using sites other than bCourses, how will they be used and who will set them up?
- Does the classroom or lab have the necessary IT equipment installed or will you need to check out equipment?
- Will GSIs be responsible for picking up or setting up equipment for lectures? Regularly or on occasion?

Course Materials

- How are the books and/or readings made available to students? Will there be readings on electronic reserve in the library? If so, how and when can they be accessed?
- How do GSIs obtain and get reimbursed for any electronic texts not available through the university library?
- Will lecture notes or slides be available to students and/or GSIs for the course?

Enrollment Information

- What is the policy or procedure for letting students in from the waitlist or dropping them from the course? When will decisions be made? Who is in charge of enrollment decisions?

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- Are there prerequisites?

Student Assessment

- What quizzes, exams, and/or papers will students complete?
- What will be the format of the assessments: short answer questions, essay, multiple choice? Will they be timed or untimed?
- What additional assignments will be part of the course grade?
- When are the exams/papers/assignments due?
- When is the final exam, and how will students take it? Will it be proctored?
- What is the professor's policy for make-up exams or late papers?
- Do GSIs have the freedom to create low-stakes quizzes and other interim assignments to assist students in their learning?

Preparation for Exams and Papers

- Will there be a review session before each exam? If so, who will be responsible for running the session, posting materials, and determining the date and time?
- Will GSIs be asked to come up with questions for the exams/papers?
- What are the GSI responsibilities in managing and proctoring exams?
- If there are students who have accommodations through the DSP, who will oversee the provision of the accommodation?

Grading

- Will GSIs be responsible for grading? If so, what will they be grading and when will this take place in the semester?
- Are students required to use Turnitin.com before submitting their written work?
- How will grading be distributed among GSIs?
- How much time do GSIs have to grade each paper and/or exam? How quickly should papers or exams be returned to students?
- What are the procedures if a GSI thinks a student has plagiarized, cheated, or engaged in another form of academic misconduct?

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- Who will be responsible for responding to requests for re-grades, the GSIs or the professor? What are the course policies for re-grades?
- Who will record and maintain student grades? Will there be a course list or separate lists for each GSI?
- How will students receive their graded work: in bCourses, Gradescope, etc.?

III. Setting Up for the First Week and Beyond

After meeting with the faculty member, use the GSI Center's dedicated webpage to prepare for the semester and first week:

<https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/>

- Create a section syllabus (see Teaching Guide for information and examples: <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/syllabus/>).
- Access the course bCourses site to view the roster for your section and practice saying students' names. You may also see students' photos (if provided).
- Send out a pre-semester survey to collect relevant information to facilitate community building and gauge situational factors that may impact student learning a week before your section begins (see Teaching Guide for information and examples: <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/first-day-plan/>).
- Create your lesson plan for the first week (see Teaching Guide for information and examples: <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/gsi-guide-contents/pre-semester-intro/first-day-plan/>).
- Organize and have at the ready any documents you will need to refer to on the first day (e.g., section syllabus, lesson plan, roster).

Remote-Friendly Considerations

- Set up synchronous class meetings and office hours through Zoom. For more information, see GSI Zoom Set Up Instructions (pdf): https://gsi.berkeley.edu/media/Zoom-Instructions_GSI.pdf

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IV. Other Resources in Your Department

Office Spaces and Supplies

- Do you have an office? Where is it? How do you get the office key?
- Can you hold office hours there without disturbing other GSIs, or do you need to find another location for office hours?
- Do you have access to computers and printers from the department?
- Where is the copier? What code do you need? Is there a limit to the quantity of copies you can make?
- How do you get access to teaching supplies (e.g. paper, chalk, index cards)?
- Where is your mailbox located?

Teaching Resources

- Is equipment available to GSIs should they need a laptop or other device to carry out their teaching responsibilities?
- In addition to the resources provided by the GSI Center, does the department have an electronic repository where teaching materials are kept? If so, where is it and how do you access it? What resources does it provide?

Other GSIs

- Can you get access to past section lesson plans for the course? The faculty member may be able to give you access or put you in contact with former GSIs for the course.
- Is there a "head GSI"? What is their role in relation to yours?

Go-To People for Addressing Concerns

- Should issues relating to your position come up, first speak to your supervisor, the faculty member teaching the course (Instructor of Record). Should you need further input, you should reach out to the Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs in the department in which the class is being offered (each department that hires GSIs must have a Faculty Adviser for GSI Affairs who can advise GSIs on all matters pertaining to GSI appointments. See list at <https://gsi.berkeley.edu/basics-for-gsis/find-adviser-for-gsi-affairs/>). Should

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the issue not be resolved within the department, feel free to email the GSI Teaching & Resource Center at gsi@berkeley.edu.

Adapted with permission from handout by K. Blount-Matthews, Former GSI, Department of Psychology

Create a Section Syllabus or Information Sheet

Many GSIs create and distribute a syllabus for their section or lab. This document is separate from the faculty member's course syllabus and its purpose is to detail important information related to the section or lab only. GSIs and students refer to this document throughout the semester to clarify information about expectations and policies throughout the semester.

Sample Section Syllabi

[Chemistry \(pdf\)](#)

[Integrative Biology Syllabus \(pdf\)](#)

[Political Science Syllabus \(pdf\)](#)

[Italian Studies R5B Syllabus \(pdf\)](#)

Some professors prefer that their GSIs **not** create a section syllabus, so check with your professor. If you do create a section syllabus, or even an abbreviated document like an information sheet, make sure it's consistent with the professor's course policies and ask the professor to review it before distributing it to students.

Elements of a Section Syllabus or Information Sheet

[Description of Section or Lab](#)

[Contact Information](#)

[Grade Breakdown](#)

[Key Dates](#)

[Respectful Discussion](#)

[Statement on Diversity](#)

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[Acknowledgment of Land and Place](#)

[Policies](#)

[Campus Resources](#)

Description of Section or Lab

Many undergraduates have not had sections or labs prior to attending UC Berkeley. Sections and labs also vary from course to course and sometimes within courses. It is important, therefore, to include a brief description of the purpose of the section, the relationship of section to lecture, and the role of the GSI. The descriptive paragraph may give students an idea of the types of activities that will occur in section - question and answer, lab experiments, problem sets, review of lecture material, group discussion, homework, debates, film reviews, etc.

Contact Information

A section syllabus or information sheet should list the GSI's office number, mailbox location, office hours, and email address. GSIs may consider including the professor's office number and office hours. We recommend that GSIs **not** provide students with their phone numbers or invite text messages.

Grade Breakdown

A section syllabus should include a breakdown of the grade **for section** as distinct from lecture (percentages for attendance, assignments, participation, etc.). Both the GSI and the students should have a clear understanding of how the students' performance in section will be evaluated and how each element of the section grade will be weighted. Make sure to clear your grading policies with the faculty member in charge of the course.

Key Dates

Listing key dates and deadlines on paper allows you and your students to refer to them throughout the semester. Include dates of review sessions, paper deadlines, exams, class presentations, final exam, etc.

Respectful Discussion

GSIs often include on their syllabus a statement that describes the respectful classroom climate they aspire to foster and that suggests ways students can help create and maintain that climate. For example, include language that asks students

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to respect multiple perspectives; to use people's preferred names and pronouns during discussions; to discuss speakers' statements and ideas without criticizing the speakers themselves. This statement on discussion shows students that you are serious about developing and maintaining a supportive classroom environment in which all students can engage in serious, meaningful discussions without fear of reprisal. Many GSIs establish fuller [community agreements](#) with students within the first two weeks of class.

It is sometimes difficult for students to understand in advance how a comment they make may sound to someone else. For more background on respecting differences in class discussions, UCB's [Division of Equity and Inclusion has posted links](#) to many informative resources.

Statement on Diversity

Diversity is a defining feature of the University of California and we embrace it as a source of strength. Our differences — of race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, socioeconomic status, abilities, experience, and more — enhance our ability to achieve the University's core missions of public service, teaching, and research. We welcome faculty, staff, and students from all backgrounds and want everyone at UC Berkeley to feel respected and valued.

Acknowledgment of Land and Peace

We recognize that Berkeley sits on the territory of xučyun (Huichin [Hoo-Choon]), the ancestral and unceded land of the Chochenyo (Cho-chen-yo) speaking Ohlone people, the successors of the historic and sovereign Verona Band of Alameda County. This land was and continues to be of great importance to the Muwekma (Muh-wek-muh) Ohlone Tribe and other familial descendants of the Verona Band.

We recognize that every member of the Berkeley community has benefitted, and continues to benefit, from the use and occupation of this land since the institution's founding in 1868. Consistent with our values of community and diversity, we have a responsibility to acknowledge and make visible the university's relationship to Native peoples. By offering this Land Acknowledgement, we affirm Indigenous sovereignty and will work to hold the University of California, Berkeley more accountable to the needs of American Indian and Indigenous peoples. [This](#)

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statement was developed in partnership with the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe and is a living document.

Policies

GSIs can minimize conflicts and misunderstandings with students by establishing and communicating clear policies the first day of section and repeating those policies throughout the semester. We recommend articulating key policies and expectations in the section syllabus or information sheet so that students have them in writing. Here are some topics GSIs should consider addressing:

Office Hours: GSIs may require or invite students to meet with them in office hours at least once during the first few weeks of the semester. This meeting has several purposes:

- To talk individually with students and get to know them.
- To ascertain students' preparedness for the course and understanding of the material.
- To provide feedback to students about their early performance in the course.
- To obtain feedback from students about section.

Your syllabus statement might look something like this:

Everyone must come to my office hours at least twice during the semester. Please visit me at least once in the first five weeks. These meetings can be used to clarify topics from lecture, reading, or films, or for help with writing. You can also come to office hours to discuss anything else related to the course topic. Feel free to meet with me in small groups as well as individually.

For suggestions about opening up conversations in office hours, see [Starting Conversations in Office Hours](#).

Email: Many GSIs have policies regarding email communication with students so that they can manage the time they commit to teaching. A few common email policies include:

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- Answering student questions about similar topics in bunches (rather than answering each individual question).
- Answering email at particular times of day or night, rather than every time you receive an email from students.
- Informing students that you will answer questions about course material in section or office hours.
- Helping students establish reasonable expectations about your availability via email. For example, “Email messages will be answered within 24 [or 48] hours.”

Attendance and Tardiness: GSIs should note on the syllabus if they will deduct points for absences and/or lateness. GSIs should also define “absence” (e.g., excused vs. non-excused absences) and “lateness” (e.g., more than five minutes after class starts).

Late Assignments: The faculty instructor may have a policy about late assignments in the overall course. If not, GSIs should consider including one in their policy list. Many GSIs deduct points for late assignments, and some do not accept late assignments. Be sure that your policy on late assignments has the approval of the faculty member you are teaching with.

Grade Disputes: This too is a policy the professor’s course syllabus probably already addresses. If it does not, or if the faculty member otherwise gives you latitude to formulate your own policy, let students know in writing what your policy is for grade disputes. These disputes can take a great deal of time in a GSI’s week, so it is important to establish a protocol in advance. Consider requiring students to write out clearly each item they wish to dispute on their test or paper. (This requires students to reflect on the specifics of each item, which can result in a student recognizing that the grading is already correct.) Have the students submit their dispute prior to meeting with you, so that you can review the dispute and consider its merits carefully. You can often avoid spurious grade disputes by warning students that if their assignment is re-graded, the revised grade may be lower or

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higher than the disputed grade. More information and sample policies appear in the [Grading](#) section of this online guide.

Laptops and Hand-Held Devices: If the Instructor of Record agrees, you have the option of deciding whether laptops and other electronics are permitted during section time. For more information on laptop policies, see [Setting Policies on Student Use of Electronics in the Classroom](#) in the Teaching with Technology chapter of the Teaching Guide. It is important to note that students with certain disabilities may need to use a laptop for note-taking, regardless of your policy; check with the professor for confirmation if someone tells you this is their situation.

Important Class and Campus Policies: Every syllabus should include statements about academic integrity, accommodations for students with disabilities, and scheduling conflicts for student athletes.

Here are some examples of policies for syllabi, based on UC Berkeley campus policies. You may want to adapt some of the language for your particular section or lab:

Academic Integrity: Any test, paper, or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. You may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, websites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to ask me. You should also keep in mind that as a member of the campus community you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic work and be evaluated on your own merits. The consequences of cheating and academic misconduct — including a formal discipline record and possible loss of future opportunities — are not worth the risk.

Course Materials Note-Taking Policy: I encourage you to take notes from section and to share them among yourselves. However, you may not post notes or the materials I provide on any website, or disseminate them in any way without my

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prior, written permission. The same holds true for all course materials. Violations are subject to action by the campus Center for Student Conduct.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have been issued a letter of accommodation from the Disabled Students' Program (DSP), please see me as soon as possible to work out the necessary arrangements. If you need an accommodation and have not yet seen a Disability Specialist at the DSP, please do so as soon as possible.

If you would need any assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation of the building, the DSP recommends that you make a plan for this in advance. (Contact the DSP access specialist at 510-643-6456.)

Scheduling Conflicts: Please notify me by the second week of the term about any known or potential extracurricular conflicts (such as religious observances, graduate or medical school interviews, or team activities). I will try my best to help you with making accommodations, but I cannot promise them in all cases.

On Confidentiality: As UC employees, all course instructors and tutors are "Responsible Employees" and are therefore required to report incidents of sexual violence, sexual harassment, or other conduct prohibited by University policy to the Title IX officer. Instructors and tutors cannot keep reports of sexual harassment or sexual violence confidential, but the Title IX officer will consider requests for confidentiality. Note that there are confidential resources available to you through UCB's PATH to Care Center, which serves survivors of sexual violence and sexual harassment; call their 24/7 Care Line at 510-643-2005.

Sources for campus policy information: [Statements on Course Policies](#) (adapted); [GSI Professional Standards and Ethics Online Course](#); Disabled Students' Program (DSP) [Student Emergency Preparedness Program \(pdf\)](#); [Guidelines Concerning Scheduling Conflicts with Academic Requirements \(pdf\)](#).

Campus Resources

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It is a good idea to include in your document information about campus resources for students. Such information might include web addresses, phone numbers, and office locations. Some key units on campus:

- [Student Learning Center](#)
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#)
- [University Health Services](#)
- [PATH to Care Center](#)
- [Ombuds Office for Students and Postdoctoral Appointees](#)
- [Gender Equity Resource Center](#)
- [Disabled Students' Program](#)
- [Berkeley International Office](#)
- [Centers for Education Justice & Community Engagement](#)

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Chem 3AL Section 113 Syllabus

GSI: Jason Pflueger
Email: jpflueger@berkeley.edu
Meeting Time: Monday, 1pm-5pm, 320 Latimer
Office Hours: Friday 9am-11am

Welcome to CHEM 3AL, the organic chemistry laboratory. This syllabus contains specific expectations and policies associated with this section of the lab course. You are responsible for knowing the contents of this specific section syllabus in addition to the general course syllabus. Note that this is NOT a comprehensive document, so for course-wide policies, such as grading information, please refer to the course syllabus and lab manual.

General Information

This laboratory course provides you with a hands-on introduction to the basic techniques used in chemical research, allowing you to put into practice the concepts and reactions you will be covering in lecture. One of the most important things you can get out of this course is the ability to think critically and analytically about problems, skills that are widely applicable in scientific research, medicine, and daily life. My job as your GSI is to help facilitate the development of your analytical skills, guide you through the successful completion of your experiments, ensure a safe and enjoyable laboratory environment, and help you understand the connections between chemical practice, theory, and application.

Communication

Just as you are not a full-time 3AL lab student, I am not a full-time 3AL GSI. In addition to my duties with this course, I am taking several classes, attending seminars, and beginning to conduct my own research. Thus, I cannot always be available to respond to e-mails or do so in great detail. While I will try my best to respond promptly, I reserve the right to take up to 2 days to respond to any requests made by e-mail. The best questions to ask by e-mail are simple clarification questions. It is time-consuming and difficult to respond to more involved questions via e-mail, particularly those concerning reaction mechanisms. Do not be surprised or insulted if I reply with something to the effect of: "This

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question is a little too involved to be adequately explained through e-mail. Please stop by my or any GSI's office hours to discuss this in detail."

Lab Management

Most experiments we will be doing in this course will be done in groups. Science is a very social discipline, and working with and learning from others is an integral part of this course. As there are many of you and only one of me, you will need to rely on each other to successfully complete each experiment. It is important that you not only learn from but challenge each other to think critically about the problems you encounter. To ensure a diversity of opinions and encourage a wide array of interactions, groups will be randomly assigned week-to-week. It is my hope that by the end of the course, you will have had the opportunity to work with everyone in the class and benefit from the diversity of opinions, ideas, and perspectives you all bring to the laboratory.

Pre-lab

You **MUST** come to lab each week with a complete, written pre-lab in your notebook. The prelab must contain enough information so that you can safely and successfully complete the experiment with it as your sole resource. Before you can begin any lab work each week, I must check and initial your pre-lab write-up. If you enter the laboratory without a completed pre-lab, you will receive a zero for the experiment and be forced to leave the laboratory. Consult the CHEM 3AL lab manual (pages 9-12) for instructions on what is required in the pre-lab.

Safety

Safety is our primary concern, and we all need to do our part to ensure safety in the laboratory. If at any point, you are unsure if what you are about to do is safe or notice a potentially unsafe situation, ask or notify me immediately! Your lab manual contains a comprehensive list of safety measures (pages 3-7), but here are some points that are always worth repeating:

- No eating, drinking, smoking, gum chewing, or applying cosmetics in the laboratory.
- You **MUST** wear goggles, closed-toe shoes, and long pants/skirt that sufficiently cover your legs (ie, no skin can be shown).

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-Keep all organic solvents away from open flames. NEVER heat a closed system. Turn off the gas as soon as you are done.

-All personal items must be stored in the designated area. Nothing except your notebook and a pen is allowed on the laboratory benches.

Violation of these rules within a laboratory period will result in the following penalties:

1st offense: Warning

2nd offense: A stern warning, and a closer watch will be kept on your group

3rd offense: Removal from the lab and a zero for the experiment

At the start of each experiment I will give a short (10-15 minute) safety talk. You MUST be present for the entire talk in order to participate in the lab. If you are late (meaning you enter the room after I have begun the safety talk) you will NOT be allowed to perform that day's experiment and will receive a zero.

Post-lab

It is imperative that you complete the experiment, completely clean up your area, and leave the lab before 5pm. At 4:40, you will be required to stop all work and begin cleaning up. At 5pm, if you are not done, I will be forced to kick you out. Successful time management is critical! In addition, a different group of students will be responsible for ensuring the common areas (balances, instruments, etc.) are cleaned each week. If everyone does their part to keep the common areas clean throughout the lab, this does not need to be a difficult job. Before you leave the lab, I must initial your experimental notes and you must turn-in a copy of your notebook. Without BOTH sets of my initials (pre-lab and post-lab), I cannot grade your work. Make sure you lock your drawers and take all personal belongings with you when you leave.

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Biology 1B, Section 124

Discussion and Lab, Spring XXXX

GSI contact info:

Tasha Teutsch [Former GSI, Integrative Biology]

Email: xxxxxxx@berkeley.edu

Phone: 000-0000 (lab)

Office hours: Mondays at 10am or by appointment

Office: VLSB XXXX (office hours will be held in 0000)

Meeting times:

Lectures: MWF at 8AMM in 2050 and 2040 VLSB

Labs: Section 124, Wed. at 2-5PM in 2007 VLSB

Discussion: Section 124, Fri. at 1PM in 2030 VLSB

Required text:

Biology 1B lab manual, 20th edition by Mike Moser

My teaching philosophy:

I am here at Berkeley because I love biology. I want to do all I can to make the material covered in this course come alive for you all so that you might love it the way that I do. I will do my best to put the material for this course in a more global context so that you can understand why learning about ecology, evolution and plant morphology is important. I like having an interactive classroom, so do not hesitate to ask me questions. Be bold in lab and discussion and answer questions that I pose to you. The only stupid question is the one that is not asked. I would like you all to give me feedback throughout the semester so that I can best help you succeed in this course.

Attendance:

I expect everyone to attend all lectures, labs and discussion sections for this course and to complete the reading in a timely fashion. Please review your lecture notes before coming to discussion and read the upcoming lab before coming to the lab. If you miss a lecture or discussion section, you are responsible for obtaining the notes and handouts from a classmate. Please be punctual to discussion and lab sections. Do not miss lab unless you absolutely have to! Unless you have a medical

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or family emergency, you must notify me in advance if you plan on missing lab. Attending and participating in the lab exercises is how you learn the material. If you do miss lab, assignments must be made up by the end of the week. The GSI of the lab section you attend must sign your lab to acknowledge that you attended and participated. You must attend a lab section in order to receive credit for the lab. If you attend another lab section, you are responsible for coordinating with your group to complete the assignment for that week.

Academic Honesty:

I encourage you all to consult outside resources in order to complete your assignments. If you choose to use an outside source, you must cite the source. Outside sources include websites, pictures off the internet, and other textbooks. Failure to properly cite outside sources will result in a zero on the assignment and I am required to report you to Mike Moser. So...when in doubt, cite, cite, cite!

Group work:

You will be assigned to a group of 4-5 students early in the semester. Unless otherwise specified, each group will turn in one assignment per lab. I understand that not everyone can contribute equally to every assignment; although I expect each group member to make some contribution to each lab. For each write-up note the percent contribution scores that accurately reflect the amount of work you think you did for a given lab. This way you can track each group member's overall contribution to assignments over the course of the semester. Everyone in the group is responsible for the work that is turned in regardless of his/her level of contribution. This group contract must be signed and included on the front of all lab reports. Reports without signatures from everyone will not be accepted. For essays and report write-ups, you must turn in both a rough draft and a final draft of the paper in hard copy. One group member, who was not one of the primary authors, must edit and proof read the rough draft. Remember that everyone in the group receives the same grade, so make sure you agree with the content of every lab that is turned in with your name attached. If you are having trouble with a member of your group, please note it on your contracts and let me know immediately so that I can intervene.

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Quizzes:

The quizzes are designed to help you review the material from lecture well before the midterms and to understand the labs. Any material from the lectures, lab, or discussion section could be on the quizzes. Additionally, I may, on occasion, quiz you to make sure you have read and understood the lab before coming to section. If you have any questions about lecture or lab, let me know so I can help you and so you will perform well on these quizzes. Please use these quizzes as a learning tool. They aren't meant to stump you! I will be giving both announced and unannounced quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes will be administered during the first 10 minutes of lab or discussion. Latecomers will not be given a full 10 minutes to complete the quizzes. There will be no make-up quizzes.

Grading:

Of the 700 points you could potentially score in this course, 250 of those points will come from lab. Of the lab points, the breakdown will be as follows:

- 60 points from ecology labs
- 60 points from the plant morphology labs
- 60 points from the evolution labs
- 10 points from the library exercise
- 30 points weekly quizzes
- 30 points enrichment assignment
- 250 lab points

I will weigh each of the labs and each of the quizzes more or less equally.

All GSIs for Bio 1B are required to maintain an 85% mean for their section, so if there are differences in grading style among GSIs, remember that we are all "standardized" so you won't be disadvantaged by having a "hard grader."

I generally return extensive comments with your lab report. Please use those comments when rewriting reports or studying to improve your understanding. If you are unclear about what I mean, please let me know!

Contacting me, emailing, and exchanging papers:

I encourage everyone to come speak with me to discuss any questions, problems or concerns you might have. If your questions are not addressed during class time, please visit me during my office hours. You may also visit a different GSI during his Graduate Student Instructor Teaching & Resource Center, Graduate Division, UC Berkeley © 2021 Regents of the University of California

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or her office hours if that would make your more comfortable. The office hour schedules will be posted soon. You may also contact me via email to ask questions or to schedule an appointment if you have a conflict during my office hours. I may anonymously forward my responses to your email questions to the entire class if they are applicable to everyone. I am usually difficult to reach by phone; however, as a last resort, you may call me in my lab in VLSB.

It is imperative that you check your email regularly and let me know if you aren't receiving the emails I am sending out. I will use email as my primary form of communication. Feel free to email me and/or the entire class with questions on the material. Although I do not check my email regularly over the weekend, I make sure to check it at least once a day during the week.

If you need to give me any papers outside of class time, you may place them in the locked slot box labeled 124 in room 2013. I will place any additional handouts in the open slot box labeled 124 in room 2013. I will only make enough copies for students in our section, so please only take one copy.

Enrichment Project

Due date: May 9th in discussion section

For your enrichment project, I would like you to read and write about biology. I have selected chapters from four of my favorite biology books for you all to read. Although each book uses biological terms that you have encountered in this course, none of them is as technical as the textbook. In fact, most of the readings I have selected are meant for everyday people to read and they are quite funny.

Each book I have chosen addresses concepts that we will cover in this course. I would like you to **select and read all the suggested sections from ONE of the FOUR books** listed below. Once you have read the selection, I would like you to reflect on what you have learned in a **BRIEF essay** (maximum 3 pages double spaced, 12 font). In that essay, I would like you to explain how the reading either exemplifies, supports, or refutes one of the major concepts we have talked about in lecture, lab or discussion. You must evaluate the author's argument using information from lecture and lab. The best essays will relate the reading in its entirety to one or two major concepts we have covered in the course. Summaries of either the book or the class material are insufficient. I am looking for a synthesis

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and analysis of the two. Go out of your way to integrate different ideas from the whole book together. These essays will be graded on:

1. How well you demonstrate an understanding of the text.
2. How well you integrate **all** parts of the reading assignment. In other words, I have chosen particular chapters for particular reasons and I want you to show me that you have read all the assigned chapters and recognized the dominant themes found therein.
3. How well you link the enrichment readings to the major concepts we have covered in the course. These concepts may include but are not limited to: theories of evolution, sexual selection, biodiversity, population dynamics, symbiosis, competition, the interaction of climate and biomes, microevolution, and natural history. It is imperative that you connect the reading to what we've learned in class and discuss whether the reading supports what you've learned, deepens your understanding of what you've learned, provides important examples for what you've learned, etc.
4. How well-written the essay is. I am looking for essays with a clear argument, main point, or thesis. I am reading 30 of these essays, so if your writing is unclear or if your essay is poorly structured, I'm not going to spend a lot of time trying to figure out what you mean. Get a friend or classmate to proofread your essay before handing it in.

I will give each group a binder of all the readings for this project. You are responsible for returning the readings to me in discussion on May 9th.

Please choose one of the following 4 reading assignments for your enrichment assignment. I have made selections that should take you about the same amount of time to read (shorter assignments correspond to more difficult texts), so choose a book that interests you, not the one with the fewest pages assigned. I recommend that you look at some reviews online to get a better sense of the topics covered in the books. If you're stumped on how to start writing your essay, come see me **WELL IN ADVANCE** so we can talk about ideas.

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Gould, Stephen Jay. 1980. *The Panda's Thumb: More Reflections on Natural History*. Penguin Books, England.

- Chapter 1—"The Panda's Thumb" pp. 19-25
- Chapter 8—"Caring Groups and Selfish Genes" pp. 72-78
- Chapter 9—"A Biological Homage to Mickey Mouse" pp. 81-91
- Chapter 10—"Piltdown Revisited" pp. 92-104
- Chapter 14—"Women's Brains" pp. 127-132
- Chapter 17—"The Episodic Nature of Evolutionary Change" pp. 149-154
- Chapter 20—"A Quahog is a Quahog" pp. 170-177
- Chapter 21—"An Early Start" pp. 181-188
- Chapter 27—"Nature's Odd Couples" pp. 231-239
- Chapter 28—"Sticking up for Marsupials" pp. 240-245
- Chapter 29—"Our Allotted Lifetimes" pp. 249-253
- Chapter 30 - "Natural Attraction: Bacteria, the Birds, and the Bees" pp. 254-261
- Chapter 31—"Times' Vastness" pp. 262

Dawkins, Richard. 1976. *The Selfish Gene*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, England.

- Chapter 2—"The Replicators" pp. 12-20
- Chapter 3—"Immortal Coils" pp. 21-45
- Chapter 4—"The Gene Machine" pp. 46-65
- Chapter 6—"Family Planning" pp. 109-122
- Chapter 7—"Battle of the Generations" pp. 123-139
- Chapter 13—"The Long Reach of the Gene" pp. 234-266

Forsyth, Adrian and Ken Miyata. 1995. *Tropical Nature: Life and Death in the Rain Forests of Central and South America*. Simon and Schuster. New York, New York.

- Introduction: A Temperate View of Tropical Life* pp. 1-6
- Chapter 1—"In the Realm of the Tropics" pp. 7-16
- Chapter 2—"Fertility" pp. 17-30
- Chapter 3—"Canyons of Light" pp. 31-40

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Chapter 6—"Listen to the Flowers" pp. 65-76

Chapter 9—"Creeping Socialists" pp. 103-114

Chapter 11—"Artful Guises" pp. 125-138

Chapter 13—"Jerry's Maggot" pp. 153-168

Chapter 15—"Night Walks" pp. 185-196

Chapter 16—"The Eternal Tropics" pp. 197-206

Chapter 17—"Paradise Lost?" pp. 207-218

Judson, Olivia. 2002. *Dr. Tatiana's Sex Advice to All Creation*. Henry Holt and Company, New York.

Part I: Let's Slip the Whores of War pp. 7-9

Chapter 1—"A Sketch of the Battle Field" pp. 9-20

Chapter 2—"The Expense is Damnable" pp. 21-39

Part II: The Evolution of Depravity pp. 93-94

Chapter 6—"How to Make Love to a Cannibal" pp. 95-104

Chapter 8—"Hell Hath No Fury" pp. 122-131

Chapter 10—"Till Death Do Us Part" pp. 152-156

Part III: Are Men Necessary? Usually, but Not Always pp. 167-168

Chapter 11—"The Fornications of Kings" pp. 169-186

Chapter 12—"Eve's Testicle" pp. 187-211

Chapter 13—"Wholly Virgin" pp. 212-232

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PS 1 - Introduction to American Politics (Fall 2021)

Discussion Section Information Sheet

Sections:

Section 111: 2:00-4:00 PM 242 Dwinelle
Section 112: 4:00-6:00 PM 242 Dwinelle

GSI:

Ben Krupicka

Graduate Student in Political Science

btkrupicka@berkeley.edu

Political Science Main Office: Barrows 210 (GSI mailboxes located here)

Office Hours:

Tuesday, 1:30-3:30 PM
715 Barrows

You should all plan on visiting me in office hours at least once within the first three weeks of the semester. If necessary, I can also be available by appointment.

Technical and administrative questions about the course can be asked via email, but I would prefer to discuss substantive questions about course content in person during office hours. I do check my email regularly but will not be responding to student emails after 5pm or on Saturdays and Sundays (except under extraordinary circumstances or with prior notification).

Discussion Section Objectives:

- Further student understanding of major concepts and issues in the course readings and lectures.
- Encourage intellectual engagement with the course material and with other members of the class by promoting critical thought and discussion.

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- Help develop your analytical skills by focusing on close and careful reading of the course materials, effective note-taking strategies, and sharpening your ability to construct and critique theoretical arguments.

I see my role primarily as a facilitator of discussion. You do not come to section to hear me talk about issues that are of particular interest to me. This is your time and it is your opportunity to ask questions and more closely examine the readings and lectures. My job is to ever so gently guide our discussions or structure activities so that we adequately cover the course material and allow every opportunity for you the student to pursue your interests in the class.

In order to achieve these goals, a positive learning environment must be maintained. To this end let me make it perfectly clear that racist, sexist or otherwise inappropriate language or expressions will not be tolerated. Not only does this behavior disrupt the learning environment but it also reflects incredibly poorly upon the student(s) involved.

Grading:

Section attendance and participation: 15% of your total course grade Attendance, participation in section and the completion of all assignments are the main determinants of your section grade. Your section grade is broken into three equally weighted parts:

Attendance/Participation	5%*
Reading Quizzes	5%
Politics Live! Assignment	5%

*(representing percentages of total course grade)

All assignments will be graded fairly following the rubric and/or guidelines set forth by the professor and the other GSIs. As we near the first assignment, we will discuss these issues in greater detail so that the students will be well aware what is being expected of them and how their assignments will be graded. Lackluster

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participation throughout the semester and the failure to complete assignments on time will, obviously, negatively affect your section grade.

I am more than happy to discuss your assignment grades with you in office hours, but not within the first 48 hours after you receive your graded assignment. If you wish to dispute an assignment grade, you must document and explain in writing each aspect of your assignment that you feel was graded incorrectly or unfairly. Be aware that a regrade may lower rather than raise your assignment score.

Attendance:

You are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections. Any more than 2 unexcused absences from section will negatively impact your grade. Contact me in advance if, for some appropriate reason, you must miss a section so we can discuss any assignments due and/or the possibility of attending a make-up section.

Academic Honesty:

Any assignments submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not been submitted for credit in another class (unless you have obtained permission from the instructor to submit an assignment from another course).

In your essays and other assignments you are encouraged to work with and use the words and/or ideas of other individuals or publications, but only with proper attribution (e.g. citing sources). If you are unclear on what constitutes proper attribution, see me or seek clarification from campus resources like the Office of Student Conduct's "Understanding Plagiarism."¹ The Student Learning Center and the Library can also provide information and advice on how to avoid plagiarism. It is always best to ask questions as opposed to face the consequences of academic dishonesty. Make no mistake, the consequences – ranging from the creation of a formal disciplinary file to denial of future employment or admission to graduate or professional education – are severe.

¹ http://students.berkeley.edu/files/osl/Student_Judicial_Affairs/Understanding%20Plagiarism.pdf
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As a member of the Berkeley campus community you are expected to demonstrate integrity in all of your academic endeavors and will be evaluated on your own merits without bias. Be proud of your academic accomplishments and protect and promote academic integrity on campus.

Campus Resources

Students with Disabilities:

If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, if you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building needs to be evacuated, please inform me immediately in private, after class or during my office hours. For more information on services available to student with disabilities please visit the website or office of the Disabled Students' Program: <http://dsp.berkeley.edu/>.

Student Learning Center:

Cesar Chavez Student Center, Lower Sproul Plaza

<http://slc.berkeley.edu/general/index.htm>

The Student Learning Center provides a variety of services for students to assist them with their coursework and assignments. Study groups, writing consultations and a variety of workshops are all available.

Counseling and Psychological Services:

Tang Center, 2222 Bancroft Way

<http://uhs.berkeley.edu/students/counseling/cps.shtml>

The Tang Center provides counseling and psychological services for students struggling with any number of concerns: adjusting to school, deciding on a career or major, dealing with family or relationship issues, coping with personal crises. If you're struggling, they're here to help.

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Brandon Schneider

brandonblairschneider@berkeley.edu

Dwinelle 6227 WF 1-2

Italian R5B, Sec. 1:

Function, Form, Fiction

The Idea:

Like any good machine, stories are built to perform specific functions: personal, political, economic, or otherwise. In this course, we will explore how stories work by examining their functions across genres, media, and cultures. The principal means of this exploration will be in-class discussion, short writing exercises, and several research papers. The goal for the course is for students to develop writing and research skills that will allow them to make eloquent, informed arguments in support of a given idea.

The Texts:

Literature:

Cavalleria Rusticana, Giovanni Verga

A Farewell to Arms, Ernest Hemingway

The Talented Mr. Ripley, Patricia Highsmith

The Day of the Owl, Leonardo Sciascia

Gomorra, Roberto Saviano

Opera/Film:

Cavalleria Rusticana, Franco Zeffirelli (Pietro Mascagni/Giovanni Verga)

Television:

The Sopranos, David Chase

Detective Montalbano, Andrea Camilleri/Alberto Sironi

Film:

The Talented Mr. Ripley, Anthony Minghella [and script]

Gomorra, Matteo Garrone

Teaching Guide for GSIs

Brandon Schneider brandonblairschneider@berkeley.edu

Dwinelle 6227 WF 1-2

The Assignments:

Attendance & Participation: 15%

Diagnostic Essay: 5%

Assigned: January 19

Due: January 24

Paper 1: 10%

Assigned: January 31

First Draft Due: February 7

Final Draft Due: February 21

Paper 2: 30%

Assigned: February 28

First Draft Due: March 8

Final Draft Due: March 22

Paper 3: 40%

Assigned: April 3

Draft 1 Due: April 10

Draft 2 Due: April 19

Final Draft Due: May 4

The Calendar:

Note I: YOU ARE EXPECTED TO HAVE READ THE ASSIGNED READINGS BEFORE WE DISCUSS THEM IN CLASS. IN THE CASE OF VISUAL MEDIA, WE WILL VIEW THESE TOGETHER IN CLASS, UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.

Note II: I will provide you with electronic or paper copies of secondary readings before we discuss them in class.

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DATE	TEXTS
1/17	-----
1/19	<i>Cavalleria rusticana</i> , Verga
1/24	<i>Cavalleria rusticana</i> , Zeffirelli (in class); Laughey, "What is Media Theory?"; Frow, "Introduction" and "Approaching Genre"
1/26	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i> , pp. 1-40
1/31	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i> , pp. 41-160
2/2	Laughey, "Structuralism and Semiotics"; Frow, "Implication and Relevance"
2/7	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i> , pp. 161-280
2/9	<i>A Farewell to Arms</i> , pp. 281-320
2/14	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> , pp. 1-60; Laughey, "Feminisms and Gender" and "Political Economy and Postcolonial Theory"
2/16	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> , pp. 61-100
2/21	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> , pp. 101-220
2/23	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley</i> , pp. 221-273
2/28	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley (film)</i> (in class); Thompson, "The Dispersal of Narrative: Adaptations, Sequels, Serials, Spin-offs, and Sagas"
3/1	<i>The Talented Mr. Ripley (film)</i> (in class)
3/6	<i>The Day of the Owl</i> , pp. 1-80; Frow, "Genre and Interpretation"
3/8	<i>The Day of the Owl</i> , pp. 81-136
3/13	<i>Gomorra</i> , pp. 1-80; Frow, "System and History"
3/15	<i>Gomorra</i> , pp. 81-200
3/22	<i>Gomorra</i> , pp. 200-240
4/3	<i>Gomorra</i> , pp. 240-320
4/5	<i>Gomorra</i> (film) (in class)
4/10	<i>Gomorra</i> (film) (in class)
4/12	<i>The Sopranos</i> , episode TBD; Thompson, "What Do They Think They're Doing? Theory and Practice in Screenwriting"
4/17	<i>The Sopranos</i> , episode TBD
4/19	<i>Detective Montalbano</i> , episode TBD
4/24	<i>Detective Montalbano</i> , episode TBD

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4/26 TBD

May 4: Final Paper Due

The Details:

Course Requirements:

The writing component of the course will focus on the drafting and revision of several essays of varying length, culminating in a final research paper of 10-12 pages. Other coursework will include short reading comprehension exercises and brief writing assignments designed to guide students through the processes of conducting research and incorporating secondary material into a research paper. Peer-response groups will play a central role in the course, as students will read and critique each other's writing as part of the revision process. Regular attendance and active participation are required.

Prerequisites:

Successful completion of the "A" portion of the Reading & Composition requirement or its equivalent.

Disability-Related Accommodations:

If you need disability-related accommodations, please inform me immediately. You can see me privately after class or during office hours. In order to appropriately assist you in this course, I require documentation from the Disabled Students' Program.

Attendance & Participation: You are allowed two free unexcused absences; each unexcused absence thereafter will result in a one-third grade deduction (e.g. from B+ to B) from your participation grade. If you are repeatedly late to class I will begin to mark you absent. Excused absences must be requested before the missed class begins.

Participation is a vital aspect of this course, and an important part of your grade. In order to get full marks for participation, you must come to class with your assignments prepared and be ready to discuss them. Listening respectfully to the contributions of others is just as important as adding to the discussion yourself.

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Cell Phones, Laptops, etc.

You are welcome to bring whatever devices you like to class, but you are expected to respect others, including me, by giving them your attention during class discussions, activities, etc. Failure to do so will result in a lowering of your participation grade and potentially the banning of certain devices from class.

Food and Drink:

Food is not allowed in class. Drinking is acceptable, as long as it does not interfere with your active participation in class, or bother other students.

Assignments:

Papers:

More details on each paper assignment will be given as the class progresses. Assignments will likely include a series of gradual steps meant to guide you through the research and writing process.

Unless otherwise noted, I will only accept paper copies of assignments. Papers are due at the beginning of class on the specified date. Papers not submitted at or before the beginning of class will be marked down 1/3 letter grade per day (for example, a B+ will be marked down to a B).

Our basic formatting reference for the course will be the Modern Language Association (MLA) Formatting & Style guidelines. While we may explore other formatting and style references, please assume that your papers need to adhere to MLA guidelines, which include (but are not limited to) 1" margins on all sides, 12-point font, double-spacing of all text, page numbers, and a header on the left corner of the first page that includes your name, my name, the course, and date.

Short Writing Assignments:

These assignments are designed to develop your writing and critical thinking skills. While the exact nature of these exercises will be determined by the flow of the course, in general they will be used in conjunction with assigned texts and your own writing, as well as that of your peers. Assignments may take place in class as well as out of class. bSpace might be used to facilitate the execution of these exercises.

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Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a serious offense and will result in a failing grade for the plagiarized assignment and a report to the Center for Student Conduct. You can find a quick overview of plagiarism and how to avoid it at

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/instruct/guides/citations.html>

Resources

You may find yourself with questions on research or paper writing as the semester progresses. While you are always encouraged to e-mail me or visit my office hours, you may also find the following resources helpful.

Student Learning Center – <http://slc.berkeley.edu>

Research Advisory Service – <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/doemoff/ras.html>

Purdue Online Writing Lab – <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

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Get to Know Your Office and Classroom

Office

Departments typically provide space for GSIs to hold their office hours. Check with the staff in your teaching department to find out where your office space is located and obtain a key. Find out whether it is a shared space. If it is, you may wish to work with your office mate(s) to stagger office hours. Be considerate in sharing this space.

Classroom

Visit the classroom where you will be teaching before your first class day. Scope out the route and time how long it takes to get to the classroom from your office. Notice the chalkboard or whiteboard and envision how much space it will afford for outlines, notes, etc. Think about how you will set up the desks in the classroom to facilitate learning. Speak aloud to see how your voice sounds in the room and how much you will need to project.

During the week before courses start, check the [Classrooms Information Database](#) to find out what equipment is available in your classroom. This is an extremely useful page, with detailed information about using each piece of equipment and ways to troubleshoot problems. Take your computer or any other input devices you plan to use in your section to your assigned classroom and do a test run. Do you have all the right cables? Does your computer talk to the projector? Do all the programs you plan to use work in the room set-up? If you have videos embedded in PowerPoint, for example, do they play the way you want them to? Is the campus wireless network signal strong enough? Is the audio coming through the room's sound system? What further questions do you have?

Detailed information about classroom equipment appears on the page [Tools for the Classroom Setting](#).

Educational Technology Services (ETS) Classroom Support

Staff members at ETS can help you get started with classroom sound, projection, recording, or other technology. Here are ways you can learn about ETS support for classrooms, look up frequently asked questions, or request assistance:

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- [ETS's Instructors Getting Started](#) page
- [Classroom Technology Support](#)
- [Request a classroom technology orientation](#)
- Classrooms Hotline: 510-642-2800 (from a campus telephone, 2-2800)

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Consider Your Tone with Students

Think about how you want to portray yourself before stepping into the classroom. Undergraduates often get a sense of the GSI's style and expectations from the first day of section. Some things you may wish to consider include:

- **Appearance:** Students get first impressions of a GSI's teaching style and general disposition through attire and general physical appearance (casual, professional, etc.). It is important to consider how you want to be seen by students and to dress appropriately to fit that image.
- **Language:** The language you use in class also communicates to students the type of relationship you want to establish with them. Do you talk authoritatively, casually (with lots of colloquialisms), or hyper-academically (using jargon and neologisms)?
- **Attitude and Physical Bearing:** Body language is important, for it signifies a GSI's excitement (or lack thereof) for teaching, attentiveness to student responses, and authority. GSIs who lounge around the class, slump down in their chairs, and show little enthusiasm risk losing students' respect and commitment to the class. GSIs who exhibit interest and dedication have a greater chance of getting students to participate actively in section and to feel excited about course content.
- **Policies:** GSIs can help set the tone for the class and establish authority with students by setting clear, firm, and reasonable course policies. GSIs can communicate a desire to work with students by having students participate in [creating community agreements](#).
- **Ethics:** Keep in mind the ethical principles that should guide your work with students. These principles, and related policies, are discussed in the [GSI Professional Standards and Ethics Online Course](#) for first-time GSIs.

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Plan the First Day's Session

The first day of section, studio, or lab will set the tone for the semester. That being said, do not stress if your first session doesn't feel like a resounding success. Many experienced GSIs have entertaining stories about disastrous first days. Even though undergraduates have high expectations of GSIs at UC Berkeley, they tend to be forgiving, appreciative, and respectful of GSIs who improve their sections as the semester progresses.

Create a lesson plan for the first day or week of class that lists your goals and objectives, the steps or activities that you will undertake to accomplish those objectives, and the amount of time you will spend on each activity.

To assist you, we present a sample lesson plan for the first day of a course section and walk you through the activities that a GSI can use to accomplish the stated objectives. This sample plan suggests far more activities than anyone could complete in a single session, especially if your class period is 50 minutes, so select according to your primary objectives for the first day.

Several helpful readings on conducting the first day's class can be found in the texts listed at the end of this article.

[Objectives for the First Day](#)

[Sample Outline for the First Day](#)

[For Further Reading](#)

Objectives for the First Day

1. Establish a welcoming classroom environment.
2. Define objectives for the section or lab and for your role as the GSI.
3. Discuss course and campus policies.
4. Introduce yourself and have students introduce themselves.
5. Begin to learn students' names.
6. Gather student information.
7. Establish and discuss guidelines for discussion.
8. Discuss course and section grades, readings, and assignments.

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9. Get the students talking to each other.
10. Have students engage with class material.
11. Deal with enrollment issues.

Sample Outline for the First Day

1. [Before Students Arrive](#)
2. [Introductions and Attendance](#)
3. [Enrollment Issues](#)
4. [Going Over the Section Syllabus or Information Sheet](#)
5. [Creating Guidelines for Discussion](#)
6. [Icebreaker](#)
7. [Group Learning Activity](#)
8. [Wrapping Up and Getting Student Feedback](#)

Before Students Arrive

There are several things you can do to ensure a smooth first session, even before the session begins.

- Obtain the most recent enrollment information for your section from the campus website, your department, or the professor. (In CalCentral, you can find your course enrollment information and roster by clicking on your course number under the “Teaching” heading on the “My Academics” tab.) Print out the roster and review students’ names before going to class. When you get to the room, make sure the room has chalk and enough chairs.
- If possible, arrange the chairs in a circle or in groups. Rows of chairs facing the instructor’s desk or podium may suggest to the students that the teacher is going to lecture at them while they passively take notes. By contrast, a circle of chairs or groupings of chairs may suggest that the GSI encourages participation and expects students to share the responsibility for learning in section.
- Write an outline for the first day of class on the board before students arrive. Many undergraduates find it helpful to see this information up front. Also, write information about yourself and the section on the board. Some

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information to include: name, email address, office number, office hours, name of the course, and section number.

- Greet students as they enter the classroom. Distribute the syllabus and other handouts as students enter, or after they are settled in their seats.
- Often GSIs use the first few minutes of the first session to gather information about their students. You can prepare a survey form, or bring some index cards for students to put their answers on. (Alternatively, you can send students a pre-course survey electronically, such as a Google Form, in the week before classes begin.) The survey should at least ask for each student's name (the name they prefer to be called), major, year, email, preferred pronouns (if they wish to state them), and related classes they have taken. (If you use cards, you will need to make the instructions available either on the board or on a slide.) You will want to develop your own survey to fit your teaching context, but you might want to consult this [document \(doc\)](#) or [this sample first-day survey \(pdf\)](#) for ideas.

Introductions and Attendance

As students enter the room, you can hand out the survey form or index cards. Once students are settled, introduce the section (time, day, and number) and yourself. Tell the students your name, department, office hours, and email address. Consider telling the students some personal information about yourself, such as why you came to Berkeley, your academic interests, your hometown, undergraduate college, etc. By sharing information, GSIs demonstrate that they are personable and approachable. In deciding which information to share, however, keep in mind that you must maintain a professional boundary between yourself and your students.

Have class members go around the circle and state at minimum their name, major, and year. Take attendance as the students say their names, and be sure to write on your attendance sheet any variant names students want to be called that do not appear on the roster. Write challenging names phonetically to help you pronounce them correctly. Consider having the students say their names each time they speak for the first couple of weeks. You may also consider having the students write their names on folded pieces of thick paper (tent cards) that can be displayed on their desks for the first couple of weeks.

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Enrollment Issues

If you have discussed enrollment policies and procedures with the Instructor of Record before the first day of class, you will be able to deliver accurate and consistent information to your students on the first day. Do your best to gather current information and alleviate student concerns.

Announce the enrollment policies about adding and dropping the class, switching sections, students on the waitlist, etc. Will you drop students from the roster who miss a class during the first three weeks? When will you enroll people from the waitlist?

Going Over the Section Syllabus or Information Sheet

If you are distributing a [section syllabus or information sheet](#), make sure each student has a copy. You may also want to post it to the bCourses site for your section of the class. It is important to thoroughly discuss the elements of this document with your students. A few pointers to consider when presenting the syllabus or information sheet:

1. Have students take turns reading portions aloud. Explain each policy and your (or the instructor's) rationale for the policy. Ask the students if they have questions and welcome them to ask questions during office hours or after class if they do not want to ask during the class.
2. Emphasize the extent and limits of your role as a GSI and specify the types of activities that will occur in section. Share with students what the function of section will be.
3. Explain the purpose of office hours and encourage students to visit you in your office. Some GSIs prefer to tell students that, whenever possible, they should ask you questions about the course during class or in office hours. Consider scheduling your office hours to accommodate the maximum number of students.
4. Discuss course readings. Where should students go to purchase the books and reader? What should they read for the following meeting? [Provide tips](#) on how to read the texts and consider providing reading questions for the students to answer or think about.
5. Mention key dates and reiterate your [policies](#) for late assignments. Answer questions students have about assignments, homework, and exams.

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6. Review the policies covering schedule conflicts with student extracurricular activities, accommodation for students with disabilities, and academic misconduct in your [section syllabus or information sheet](#). You might also adopt a policy on students' use of laptops, phones, etc. in the classroom.
7. Discuss grading of participation (if applicable), assignments, and exams for the section and the course. Explain your [grading policies](#) and [criteria](#).
8. Describe campus resources and direct students to the list of resources on your syllabus. Some GSIs announce the first day of section that they periodically refer students to the [Student Learning Center \(SLC\)](#) to get additional help with writing, reading, problem solving, study strategies, etc.

Creating Community Agreements

Consider developing with the students a set of [community agreements for class discussion](#). (You might take this up the second week when the roster has more or less stabilized.) We recommend a class activity to establish community agreements because it

- includes students in the process of establishing guidelines for discussion,
- makes students take responsibility for developing guidelines with you, and
- produces an agreement to which you and the students can refer throughout the semester.

If you decide not to conduct an activity to establish community agreements, we suggest that you discuss the statements you have written on your syllabus or information sheet about respectful discussions.

Icebreaker

It is important to get the students talking to each other and participating in class the first day or week. Many GSIs accomplish these goals by conducting an icebreaker activity. Whatever the format, you want to invite all voices to speak while keeping the level of self-disclosure appropriate and comfortable. Sample icebreakers include:

- **Favorite Place or Favorite Dessert in Berkeley:** Have each person in the room, beginning with yourself, give his or her name, major if known, and a favorite place or dessert they've found in Berkeley (such as Codornices Park or the cheesecakes at Strada). Students will often find each others' favorites

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interesting and want to compare notes. If the section or lab is large (25 or more people), you might ask students to do this activity in small groups and then report some of their answers to the class as a whole.

- **Partner Interviews:** Organize students in pairs. Have the students interview each other for about three to five minutes; provide interview questions that promote interest but do not put students on the spot. Have the interviewers introduce their partners to the class.

Again, the goal of icebreaker activities is to get the students to talk to and learn about each other. Students who speak up in class early are more likely to keep speaking up later in the semester. Icebreaker activities also help the students and GSI learn each other's names. Try to choose icebreakers that will not put students on the spot or make them overly uncomfortable.

Group Learning Activity

Students (and GSIs) often come to the first day of section with their heads still on vacation. An effective way to ease people back into school (and keep them talking to each other) is to have them do a group activity dealing with class material. Here are some examples of activities for various types of courses:

- Reading and Composition: closely observe and analyze a short text
- Math: share visual demonstrations or proofs of familiar concepts
- Biology Lab: conduct a simple demonstration or explore a curious anomaly
- History: interpret a brief archival document
- Sociology: discuss social explanations for putatively individual problems
- Political Science: in small groups, read a short text for critical bias
- Any course: have students fill out a brief, fun quiz on the course topic. This becomes a basis for discussing common misconceptions or important concepts.

The activities should not be pitched too high. The objective of the exercise is not to test students or point out gaps in knowledge but rather to introduce students to the course material and have them work through a problem together with peers.

Using the worksheet [Creating an Activity for the First Day of Class \(pdf\)](#) will help you plan to get the most out of an activity.

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Wrapping Up and Getting Student Feedback

You can give the session a sense of closure by leaving several minutes at the end to tie together any information or concepts you want the students to take away from the first session's activities. What do you most want them to remember?

Make sure students have clear information about any assignments they should start working on and what resources are available for it. As much as possible, link the assignment(s) to the learning objectives or major concepts of the course.

Consider giving the students a few minutes at the end of the meeting to summarize or anonymously evaluate the first day of class. (You might have them write on the survey form or index card you distributed at the beginning of class, or a different sheet or card if they want to make anonymous comments.) For example, you might have them write questions they still have about the course or the material, or state concerns they have about the section or the class. You might ask students to write one or two things they felt worked well or not so well for them the first day, or what thoughts they will take away from the session. This feedback will help you prepare for the following section meeting as well as for the first day of class the next semester you teach as a GSI.

Finally, it can also prove useful to leave at least five minutes open at the very end of class to answer individual students' questions, particularly about enrollment.

For Further Reading

All books listed are available at the GSI Teaching & Resource Center.

Boice, Robert (2000). *Advice for New Faculty Members*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Brookfield, Stephen D. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Curzan, Anne and Lisa Damour (2000). *From First Day to Final Grade*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

Davis, Barbara Gross (2009, 1993). *Tools for Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Gender Equity Resource Center, UC Berkeley. [Creating Inclusive Classrooms for Trans* and Gender Expansive Students](#).

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McKeachie, Wilbert J. and Marilla Svinicki (2006). *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research, and Theory for College and University Teachers*. 12th ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company.

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Creating an Activity for the First Day of Class

<p>Teaching objective/desired outcome What would you like your students to know or demonstrate by the end of this activity?</p>	
<p>Mode(s) of interaction How will students interact? Possible modes of interaction include beginning solo and then moving to a group; working in pairs or a small group; or the whole class interacting together.</p>	
<p>Type of activity What type of activity is it? Possible activities include reading, writing, viewing, listening, problem-solving, and discussing in various combinations.</p>	
<p>Materials needed Possible materials include photocopies, index cards, and audio-visual equipment.</p>	
<p>Information needed by students What information sets up the exercise? Will students receive verbal or written instructions?</p>	
<p>End result of activity How will you assess whether the activity has met your learning objectives? Will students complete a worksheet, report back verbally, write a one-minute paper?</p>	

Timing for Activity (not to exceed 20 minutes)

Minutes Activity

- _____ Introduce exercise: give instructions, hand out materials, take questions
- _____ Prep work: move into groups, pre-discussion reading/writing/listening
- _____ Whole-class discussion
- _____ Post-activity wrap up: summarize what was accomplished through this activity; answer any additional questions

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*Please include a copy of your own first day lesson plan, if you do not have a first day lesson plan to share, feel free to distribute this lesson plan sample.

Sample First Day Lesson Plan	
<u>Topic/Task</u>	<u>Time Allotted</u>
1. Introduce learning objectives for the lesson.	
2. Before class begins, write on the chalkboard (or display via a projector): course/section info (course name and number, professor), your name and contact information.	
3. Welcome students to section/lab and pass around attendance sheet.	
4. Introduce yourself and explain your role as the GSI.	
5. Icebreaker (get to know your students via an activity and/or index cards)	
6. Distribute and review (as a class) section syllabus and discuss class policies and expectations.	
7. Remind students about key enrollment dates (attending section during the first two weeks, deadline for switching sections (if applicable), waitlist, add/drop and pass/not pass deadlines)	
8. Give students guidance on how they can successfully prepare and study for this course/section (critical reading strategies, for instance)	

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9. Answer any additional questions and concerns.	
10. Begin introducing substantive course material. Check with the professor beforehand to discuss relevant first-day content.	

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Pre-Course Survey

Using a pre-course survey is an effective way to gather information that will help you best support your students and prepare to teach. You can include survey questions that will give you information about students' prior preparation for the course, their access to technology, the learning activities that they find most useful, their identities and the situational factors that may impact their learning. Some GSIs also like to include survey questions that give them a sense of students' nonacademic interests, or that they can use anonymously in icebreaker activities (see the example questions below).

A pre-course survey can help students feel a sense of inclusion and belonging from the beginning of the semester—if GSIs “close the loop” by reading students' responses and following up, where appropriate, to connect students to course and campus resources (see [Campus Resources for Section Syllabi](#) doc). Over the course of the semester, GSIs can also review students' survey responses in preparation for individual meetings, when students appear to be struggling, or to anonymously incorporate responses into teaching activities or examples used in the classroom.

Please note that, while students may volunteer personal information on your pre-course survey, it is important not to ask questions that require them to share specific personal information (e.g., about their childcare responsibilities, disabilities). The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) will contact the Instructor of Record for your course to provide them with specific academic accommodation needs students may have. Below are instructions and questions that you might consider using on your pre-course survey. Many GSIs use Google Forms for this survey; you can also choose to have the students fill it out in class on the first day.

Welcome to [title for your class/section/studio/lab]! I will be your GSI this fall. So that I can start to get to know you and understand how best to support your learning, please answer the questions below and submit this survey by [date and

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time]. NOTE: While I will know how you answer these questions, I will not share any personal information, and I will only refer to your responses in section anonymously and in aggregate*.

1. What is your name?
2. What is your major (if declared)? What majors are you considering (if undeclared)?
3. Which of the following forms of technology will you be able to use outside of class/section/studio/lab this fall?
 - Computer/laptop
 - Tablet
 - Smartphone
 - Printer
4. Which of the following forms of technology will you be able to bring to class/section/studio/lab for learning activities?
 - Laptop
 - Tablet
 - Smartphone
5. Because we may need to pivot to remote instruction this semester, please indicate how reliable your connection to the Internet is in your living space:
 - Very reliable
 - Reliable
 - Moderately reliable
 - Unreliable
 - Very unreliable
6. Which of the following [check all that apply] are effective at helping you stay engaged with your peers and the instructor during class?
 - Large group discussions
 - Small group work
 - Polls
 - Ungraded mini quizzes
 - Graded participation assignments

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- Other: _____
7. Which of the following, if any, might be helpful to you this semester?
 - Optional study groups
 - A how-to session on [the skills that students will need to apply in the course, e.g., essay writing in a particular discipline, pipetting, etc.]
 - Peer review of essay drafts/lab reports/etc.
 - One-on-one writing consultations/tutoring at the Student Learning center
 - Review sessions for exams
 8. What do you want me to know about your identity? If you'd like, please include your gender pronouns and whether or not you would like me to use them when referring to you.
 9. What factors, if any, might limit your full participation in this class? Do you anticipate any barriers to your learning? NOTE: Please provide only as much information as you feel comfortable sharing. You are never required to share personal information with me.*
 10. So that I can get a sense of you and your interests, please share:
 - a. What media you have been enjoying recently (for example, a book, film, TV show, song or artist, etc.).
 - b. One activity that you particularly enjoy doing when you are not studying.
 11. Finally, I will use your anonymized answers to the following questions for community-building activities in our section.
 - a. Are you a morning person or a night owl?
 - b. If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

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- c. If you could bring only three things with you to a deserted island, what would they be and why?

*As a GSI, I am an employee of the University and am required to report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual violence that are disclosed to me.

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Celtic Studies R1B

Instructor Name _____

Day 1 Survey and Quiz (Ungraded!)

Consider this one way I can get to know you and your academic objectives. It will help me in preparing for section meetings and making class time as useful as possible for everyone.

Name _____ Year at Cal _____

Major, if known _____

Are you now enrolled in the course, on the waiting list, or hoping to add it?

What do you want or expect to learn in this course?

What previous exposure or courses have you had that relate to things Celtic?

What do you consider to be your strengths and weaknesses in academic writing?

Name one book and one movie you've enjoyed in the last six months.

Is there anything else you would like to tell me at this point?

Quiz Questions

1. What does "Celtic" mean? _____

2. How many kings ruled over Ireland at any given time in the early medieval period? _____

3. What characteristics are associated with pigs in medieval Welsh tales?

4. Was St. Patrick (a) Irish; (b) Roman; (c) British? _____

5. The earliest surviving written references to druids occur in (a) Old Irish; (b) Latin; (c) Greek; (d) Celtic. _____

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Starting Conversations in Office Hours

Based on a handout by Laurel Westbrook, PhD, Sociology

Many GSIs require students to attend office hours as a way to enhance the learning process. What happens, however, if students don't bring questions? Below are some ideas about how to start up a conversation with students in office hours.

- **Ask students to talk about their previous academic experience.** This may give you a better sense of their current skills and knowledge, as well as expectations they may hold for your course.
- If you have students fill out an information sheet or pre-semester survey at the beginning of the term, you can **use their responses as a starting point.** This information sheet or survey can ask about their background in the subject area, what they hope to learn in the class, their known academic weaknesses (things they would like to get better at during the class), and their outside activities or hobbies. This can be a great starter for conversation in office hours. ("I see here that you say completing work on time is hard for you. Do you have any plans on how to get better at this during the semester? Would you like to brainstorm some ways to get better at meeting deadlines?")
- **Ask students about why they signed up for the class** and whether there are any aspects of the class or syllabus that they are especially excited about.
- **Ask students how they got interested in the subject area** or the specific topic for the class. These stories often reveal a lot about what sort of student they will be and how you can best reach them as a teacher.
- **Talk with students about their progress in the course.** Ask them what their goals were for the course and whether they feel like they are meeting them. If they feel they aren't meeting their goals, brainstorm with them about ways that they could do that, including asking them about how they read, how they study, how far before the due date they start writing papers for the class, what teaching techniques work well for them that you could try to include more of, etc.

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- **Go over past course work with students.** Ask students to bring their papers or exams with them to office hours. Have them take out one they did well on or one they were disappointed with and go over what you thought was really great about it and/or how you think they can improve.
- **Discuss students' plans for next semester.** Once the class schedule for the next semester has been announced, you can talk with students about what they plan on taking the next semester, possibly steering them towards classes you think they might really like in your department.
- **Talk about career options.** If a student is interested in going to graduate school, talk about your experience and let them ask you questions.

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Time Management Strategies

by Sarah Macdonald, PhD, Sociology

Time management can be an issue for both first-time and seasoned GSIs as they juggle teaching, research, studying, writing, and other priorities. This page suggests practical strategies that you can employ to manage the amount of time you allot for GSI-related tasks. You will benefit by thinking about time management techniques before you begin and throughout the semester.

GSI appointments are overseen by the Graduate Division and are covered by a collective bargaining agreement with the UAW. (See the Graduate Division guide to [Graduate Student Academic Appointments](#). See also the [union contract](#).) If you are hired to work half-time (most GSI appointments are half-time, though lower-percentage appointments do exist), you will be expected to work an average of 20 hours per week during the full term of your appointment as stipulated in your appointment letter. Your letter of appointment or supplemental documentation should outline your duties.

Here is a rough example of how GSI time might be distributed:

Activity	Time
Lecture Attendance	3 hr
Office hours	2 hr
Meeting with instructor and GSIs	1 hr
Section or lab	2-4 hr
Reading course material, preparing lesson plans, creating handouts and assignments, grading, and responding to student emails	10-12 hr

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Note: GSIs are responsible for talking with the course instructor or supervisor as soon as they anticipate any workload-related issues that would result in working more than their assigned hours so that adjustments can be made.

The following are some practical strategies that you can use to manage your time effectively.

[General Strategies for Time Management](#)

[Preparing for and Leading Section](#)

[Email and Communication](#)

[Office Hours](#)

[Preparing for Exams, Assignments, and Review Sessions](#)

[Grading](#)

[Time Management Worksheet](#)

[Final Comments on Time Management](#)

General Strategies for Time Management

1. **Make weekly and daily schedules.** Allot particular times of the day to complete GSI-related activities. Try to complete all of the activities during these allotted times. It is wise to start making these schedules before the start of the semester. Using the [Time Management Worksheet \(doc\)](#) can help.
2. **Keep a teaching log that tracks how you spend your time.** As you prepare for the beginning of the semester, start writing down in a journal the amount of time you spend on GSI duties. You may find that you are spending too many hours per week answering student emails, meeting with students outside of class and office hours, grading, or writing elaborate homework assignments. The log will also help you reflect on which activities are the most and least effective. Once you identify the activities that eat up excessive amounts of time, you can figure out how to reduce the time you spend on these activities. (For example, stop writing lengthy responses to each

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question students send you over email, or make simple review sheets rather than elaborate sheets with beautiful graphics, three-dimensional diagrams, text boxes, and annotated bibliographies.)

3. **Cooperate and collaborate.** GSIs are not lone rangers; you have numerous resources you can tap into for help. Many of the following resources can assist you in managing your time.
 - Experienced GSIs often have lesson plans, assignments, handouts, and copious tips that they would love to share with current GSIs. Take advantage of this valuable resource!
 - If your department has files for courses, pull lesson plans and other documents to use or modify. Make a folder of course-related documents to use during the present and future semesters. (Remember that you may teach in this course again.) Pass along a copy of the folder to other GSIs when you are through with it. Save your own work for your teaching portfolio.
 - Meet regularly with the other GSIs for the class and divide work on lesson plans, assignments, handouts, grading rubrics, review sheets, etc. Ask the other GSIs what they are doing to manage their time (if they are managing their time successfully).
 - Seek out advice about time-effective teaching strategies by making an appointment with a [teaching consultant](#) at the GSI Teaching & Resource Center.
4. **Teaching style.** GSIs are facilitators of student learning rather than lecturers. Writing lectures can be very time consuming. While you must prepare short presentations or lectures periodically to provide background information and clarify issues, you need not feed information to students. Preparing [group activities](#) rather than lectures saves time and increases student participation in the learning process.
5. **Keep accurate and organized records.** Think in advance about the system you will use (e.g., paper printout or electronic spreadsheet) to keep track of students' attendance, participation, and grades. These files will help you stay organized throughout the semester. In addition, you can refer to these files

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when students inquire about their progress in section. Though it does not happen often, you may become involved in a grade dispute at one time or another as a GSI. Maintaining good records will help you respond in a professional manner and will minimize the stress that such a situation can cause.

Preparing for and Leading Section

1. Send out reading questions to your students a few days before section. It will help them to be prepared and will save you time in lesson planning because you will have identified the important points ahead of time.
2. Figure out how much time you need to plan a good section, then time yourself and stick to a set amount of time when planning each lesson.
3. Have students sign up for days when they will be on call and responsible for being able to answer some question or summarize the main points of a reading. This takes some of the pressure off of you and also gives the students a structured way to learn the material and participate in section.

Email and Communication

Although email is not the medium of choice for many students, most will use it and prioritize instructor communication when the instructor clearly communicates the expectation.

1. Clearly communicate your policy on responding to students' email messages.
2. Establish set times for responding to emails, so that you do not spend more time than allotted on responding to student queries. Let students know that you will only respond to emails once a day.
3. Set up a filter for your email based on your course number or set up a separate email address where students can email you. Only check this email when you plan to respond to students. Be clear with your students about when you will be available, how often you check your email, and how much time they should allow for you to get back to them.

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4. Give students a deadline for sending questions electronically before exams and assignments. Let them know when you will stop responding to emails.
5. If a number of students email questions that are similar in nature, send one response out to a group of students (using bcc), or if appropriate send an announcement to the whole class. This will help you to avoid having to repeatedly answer the same question.
6. Consider answering some questions in section instead of through email. This is especially important for common questions or more complex questions that may be of concern to many students.
7. Set up a bCourses discussion for students to post questions to each other. Give students participation credit for posting and answering questions on the discussion or forum. This works especially well around exam time.
8. Be clear with students about what kinds of questions (e.g., administrative inquiries) are appropriate for email and what kinds of questions are more appropriate for class or office hours (more complicated substantive questions about course material).
9. Refer students to the course website or course syllabus if they have questions that can be answered by those materials.
10. Video-conference conversations often take less time than email exchanges. Consider setting up office-hour meetings over Zoom. Again, we recommend that GSIs not provide students with their phone number.

Office Hours

1. If your department allows it, schedule one office hour by appointment. There will always be students who cannot make your office hours because of some other commitment. Having an office hour by appointment gives you built-in time to set up appointments with students. Some weeks you will have no students who need to see you by appointment and you can save up these extra hours to use around exam/assignment time.

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2. If not many students come to your regular office hours, have sign-ups for office hours during busy times in the semester to make sure everyone has a chance to see you.
3. Remind students at the beginning of scheduled office-hour appointments how much time you have before the next student arrives. This will help your students prioritize their questions.
4. Try to schedule your office hours so that they overlap with two class periods, e.g., 1:30–2:30. This means that more students will be able to meet with you.
5. Have office hours at different times on different days so that the maximum number of students can attend scheduled office hours. This policy helps reduce the number of appointments GSIs make to accommodate students who cannot attend regularly scheduled office hours. Some GSIs determine their office hours after asking students about their availability.
6. While your office hours should primarily be devoted to meeting with students, GSIs can save time by working on GSI-related tasks between student visits during office hours. Make sure you always have some course-related work with you in case not many students show up and you have extra time.
7. Be clear with students about what types of questions are appropriate for office hours and what types of questions are better answered in class or via email.
8. Be clear about the purpose of office hours and what students can expect of you. For example, will you read essay drafts in office hours? Are you willing to meet with groups of students during office hours?

For further suggestions about making use of office hours, see [Starting Conversations in Office Hours](#).

Preparing for Exams, Assignments, and Review Sessions

1. Instead of preparing a lesson plan for review sessions from scratch, solicit student questions about what they are still having difficulty with and use them as a basis for review sessions.

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2. Consider running review sessions with another GSI to save in preparation time.
3. Find out in advance about upcoming exams and assignment details. This can help to give you an idea of which parts of the semester will be most work-intensive.
4. Plan to allot more of your GSI time to office hours around exams and assignment due dates. Consider having students sign up for office hours ahead of time or have them attend in small groups to save time.
5. Go over assignment prompts with the entire class to avoid too many individual questions over email.
6. Consider making peer review either required or optional; some of the smaller problems with papers can be solved by other students.
7. Consider giving your students a checklist to hand in with their papers or assignments to make sure they haven't forgotten anything. (An example is the [Checklist for All Assignments \(Biology\) \[pdf\]](#).)

Grading

1. Discourage late assignments by deducting points for unexcused late assignments and by not accepting late papers after specified dates. It is very time-consuming to grade papers that continually trickle in throughout the semester.
2. Together with the professor and fellow GSIs, create and use a [grading rubric](#) to facilitate effective and efficient grading. This will help you focus your written comments on the major objectives of the assignment or question, ensure fairness, and minimize grade challenges.
3. Grade disputes will be kept at a minimum if you use a [grading rubric](#) and outline [grading policies](#). Keeping a specific protocol for disputes, including having students present their disputes in writing before coming to see you, will enable you to put limits on the amount of time this entails.
4. Develop and borrow from other GSIs' repertoires of responses to student work and consider typing your comments so that you can cut and paste

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comments that are applicable to several students. GSIs tend to address similar issues when assessing students' papers, exams, lab reports, and homework. GSIs who have a set of responses for common errors (e.g., unclear thesis statements, poor organization of lab reports, and awkward sentence constructions) save valuable time when grading.

5. Grade with other GSIs. It makes the work more fun and it is easier to pace yourself when you are grading with someone else.
6. Ask the professor with whom you are teaching how much time it should take you to grade each paper and how detailed he or she expects your comments to be on exams and papers. Make sure that you are not spending too much time or writing too many comments.
7. Once you have determined the amount of time you will spend on each paper, time yourself. You can give yourself a certain amount of time to grade one paper (e.g., 15 minutes) and then begin writing comments five minutes before the end of time. Another alternative is to give yourself a certain amount of time to grade multiple papers as some papers will take more or less time to grade (e.g., 60 minutes for four papers).
8. For assignments or exams with lengthy problems or essay questions, grade a single question on all of the exams before moving on to the next question.
9. If it is allowed, split up the grading and consider having each GSI grade the same one or two questions on all the exams in the class instead of each person grading the entire exam. Debrief together so that all of you know the common problems students had on all the questions.

For further suggestions about grading, see the [Grading Student Work](#) section of the Teaching Guide.

Time Management Worksheet

You can download a [Time Management Worksheet \(doc\)](#) to work out in detail how you will organize your GSI duties through the semester.

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Final Comments on Time Management

Remember that professors and students do not expect you to be the absolute master of the material you teach, especially in the first semester. They expect you to be prepared, organized, relatively energetic, and helpful. However, you do not have to spend countless hours studying until you have an exhaustive command of the course material. While it is important to prepare thoroughly for section, over-preparation is counter-productive and extremely time consuming.

That said, don't stint on reflecting upon your teaching experiences — it can actually save you some time. According to a study by Robert Boice entitled "Quick Starters: Faculty who Succeed," spending time reflecting on and talking with other teachers about teaching decreases, rather than increases, the amount of time spent on teaching. So, try meeting regularly with other GSIs and professors to discuss teaching issues, and participate in pedagogical workshops and other teaching-related forums. The minimal time you devote to these activities will help you become a more effective and efficient teacher, and free up time for other aspects of your academic and personal life.

For many GSIs, the first couple of semesters can be overwhelming and take up considerable time. Rest assured that teaching becomes much more manageable and enjoyable with experience.

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Time Management Worksheet

Use this format to brainstorm and review the tasks that you will need to complete as a GSI, indicating how much time they will take each week in the space provided.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Meet with faculty and GSI team				
Attend lecture				
Facilitate section/lab				
Hold office hours				
Prep for section				
Do readings				
Answer student emails				
Grade small assignments				
Hold review sessions				

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Grade large assignments/exams				
Total Hours:				

	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Meet with faculty and GSI team				
Attend lecture				
Facilitate section/lab				
Hold office hours				
Prep for section				
Do readings				
Answer student emails				
Grade small assignments				
Hold review sessions				

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Grade large assignments/exams				
Total Hours:				

	Week 9	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12
Meet with faculty and GSI team				
Attend lecture				
Facilitate section/lab				
Hold office hours				
Prep for section				
Do readings				
Answer student emails				
Grade small assignments				
Hold review sessions				

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Grade large assignments/exams				
Write letters of recommendation				
Total Hours:				

	Week 13	Week 14	RRR Week	Final Grading
Meet with faculty and GSI team				
Attend lecture				
Facilitate section/lab				
Hold office hours				
Prep for section				
Do readings				
Answer student emails				
Grade small assignments				

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Hold review sessions				
Grade large assignments/exams				
Write letters of recommendation				
Total Hours:				