**TA Preparation Course: EDUC T580 NBL 16375**

**General Description:** This is a special, free, one-credit course that is mandatory for all incoming teaching assistants. It consists of four days of workshops and assignments and one workshop during the Fall Term.

**Objectives:** This course is designed to provide teaching assistants with the following:

1. **Understanding of the role and value of the TA in the Drexel undergraduate academic experience**
2. **Awareness of the expectations and needs of a diverse student population**
3. **Awareness of support services, instructional resources and technology: audio visual and online,**
4. **Understanding of teaching tasks and opportunities to practice doing them:**
   - Prepare for a class
   - Create a lesson plan
   - Introduce yourself to a class
   - Create an interactive learning environment
   - Present material in different ways to accommodate different backgrounds and styles of learning
   - Field student questions
   - Give feedback
   - Grade
   - Evaluate good teaching practices
   - Manage challenging classroom and office hour situations

**Wednesday, September 16, 2015 (9:00 – 12:00)**
Graduate Student Lounge (Main 010A)
Basement of Main Building

8:30 - 9:00 am  Continental Breakfast

9:00 - 9:25  Ice Breaker: Speed Meeting

9:30 – 9:35  Welcome from Dr. James Herbert, Executive Vice Provost & Dean of the new Graduate College

9:40 - 10:15 Overview of Drexel; Value of Being a TA; TAs' Interaction with Dept. & Course Director. Dr. Teck Lim, Former Associate Vice Provost and Director of Graduate Studies

The Academic Structure of the University:
   - Our mission: Provost's Office, Colleges, Faculty, Teaching Assistants

Background to the Teaching Assistant Program
   - The Undergraduate Curriculum
   - Why we need TAs
   - How TAs fit into the undergraduate academic experience
   - How the TA's role fits into the graduate experience
   - Working with a Professor
10:15- 10:40 Campus Safety   Chief Eileen Behr / Officer Kim McClay & Communications Supervisor Colin Quinn

10:45– 11:00     Susan Harmon, our Assistant Director, Office of Disability Resources (ODR)

11:05 –12:00     What Do Students Want?  
Professor Alexis Finger (Chair, TA Excellence Sub-Committee)

Current experienced teaching assistants, including past nominees and winners of Drexel's TA Excellence Awards and undergraduate students provide useful advice on topics related to teaching and studying at Drexel. (20-minute -panel, 30-minute -group Q & A, 10-minute -sharing.)

Assignments for this week:

1. Look over the TA Handbook
2. Visit your department. Get a copy of the syllabus for a course you will/might teach or a basic course offered in your department.
3. Prepare for “first day class”: introduce yourself, your class and your syllabus during Friday morning's workshop. (10-minute mini lesson)
3. Prepare for Friday afternoon's: mini-lesson on topic in your major and fielding questions (10 minutes)

Alternative for Non- teaching TA if desired: 
Give a 10-15-minute presentation on one of the following topics:
- why you chose your field,
- hot topic in your field; your research,
- life as a PhD student / what you’ve learned so far as a PhD student.

Your lessons should be video-taped. Bring your phone.

Lunch: Advice From Faculty
Topics include: Differences in preparing for a class, lecture, recitation, and lab in different disciplines. Dr. Mira Olson (engineering); Dr. Jason Cross (chemistry); Dr. Karen Kabnick (Biology); Dr. Stella Volpe (nutrition sciences)

Afternoon Workshop: (1:00 – 3:00)

Instructional Resources and Technology (IRT)  
Michael Shelmet, Asst.Director – Online learning, (IRT)  
Graduate Student Lounge (Main 010A) Basement of Main Building

Using Blackboard and using media to enhance your classes
Thursday, September 17th

**Morning:** Time available to visit your department and get a syllabus of a course taught in your department and start preparing for Friday's mini-lessons.

**Afternoon Workshop:** (1:30 – 3:30)

**Good Teaching Practices Across Disciplines, Part One**  
Dr. Joel Oestreich, Director of International Area Studies, Associate Professor  
(History and Politics)  
Dr. Laura Duwel, Assistant Department Head, Teaching Professor (Biology)

Graduate Student Lounge (Main 010A) Basement of Main Building

- a. Introducing yourself,
- b. Introducing your course and creating interest in your subject;
- c. Reviewing your syllabus, including grading, attendance, homework and exam policies;
- d. Creating rapport and an interactive learning environment
- e. Fielding questions

**Late Afternoon Workshop:** (3:45 – 5:30)

**Preparing to Teach**  
Dr. Mary Jo Grdina, Associate Clinical Professor  
(Education)

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- a. creating Lessons Backwards
- b. aiming for higher order thinking skills

Friday, September 18th

**Morning Practice Teaching Session** (9:00 – 12:00)  
Rooms:
- First day mini lessons (introduce yourself, your course & syllabus (10 minutes)
- Office hour role-plays.

**Afternoon Practice Teaching Session** (1:30 – 3:30)

Mini-Lesson on topic in your major and fielding questions (10 minutes)

**Non-teaching TA:** Present a lesson on a topic that is common in your field (or)  
Give a 10-15-minute presentation on one of the following topics:
Workshops and Assignments During the Term

2nd Week of the Term  (Friday, October 2nd 1:00 – 3:00)

Workshop:  Good Teaching Practices, Part Two: Evaluation and Feedback
Dr. Yoto Yotov  (Economics)
Graduate Student Lounge (Main 010A) Basement of Main Building)

  a.  Grading,
  b.  Giving feedback
  c.  Making the most of office hours

3rd Week of the Term  (Friday, October 9th 1:00 – 3:00)

Workshop:  Teaching Across Cultures
Professor Alexis Finger (English & Philosophy/ ELC)
Graduate Student Lounge (Main 010A) Basement of Main Building)

  a.  Interviewing domestic/ international students;
  b.  Reflecting on the implications for teaching a diverse class.
  c.  Recommendations for teaching international students and utilizing university resources available.

4th week of the Term  (Friday, October 16th  1:00 – 3:00)

Practice Teaching Session

TA assigned to teach gives a lesson (10-15 minutes). Feedback (5 minutes)

Or

Non- teaching TA: Presents a lesson on a topic that is common in his/her field (or)
Give a 10-15-minute presentation on one of the following topics:
  ▪  why you chose your field,
  ▪  hot topic in your field; your research,
  ▪  life as a PhD student / what you’ve learned so far as a PhD student.

Assignments For Teaching TA’s (labs, recitations, tutoring in office hours).
Submit all assignments to Alexis Finger: fingerag@drexel.edu

5th week: Submit two observations by the end of the week: one of an experienced TA and one of a professor in your department.
6th week: Submit peer evaluation of your teaching. (Have an experienced TA observe your teaching. Ask the TA to give you verbal feedback and fill out an observation form (found on website) that indicates s/he observed you.

7th week: Beginning of the week: Have your students fill out midterm evaluations. (Midterm class evaluations for those who have classes and midterm tutoring evaluations for those who are tutoring)
End of the week: Submit a reflection paper that includes a response to your students’ positive and negative feedback. Discuss what you have gained from your teaching experience, as well as your goals for the future.

Assignments for NON-Teaching TA’s.
Submit all assignments to Alexis Finger: fingerag@drexel.edu

5th week: Observations (two): one of an experienced TA and one of a professor in your dept.

6th week: Reflection on the grading procedure that you are following and the rubric you are using. Discuss your satisfaction with the grading and rubric or your recommendations for improvement.

7th week: Solving Scenarios: choose two scenarios that are provided. Discuss how you would handle the situation and give your rationale.