

Teaching Commons News For Graduate Students

Jump into something new!



It is time to start a new academic year! The Teaching Commons is ready to go and has lots to offer every graduate student regardless of your level of teaching experience. From certificate courses and workshops to individualized and tailored approaches to supporting your teaching, we want to support you and assist you in achieving your pedagogical goals. We are located in the Victor Phillip Dahdaleh Building, DB 1050, or for a list of what we have available for the 2016/2017 academic year please

visit: <http://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/graduate-students/> . Jump into something new!

The Fall Line Up

Teaching Assistant Certificate in Teaching

This [SEDA](#) accredited course is for Teaching Assistants to learn more about teaching in postsecondary education. It comprises 5 three hour face to face sessions plus an additional online component (4 online modules).

The course aims to build on your current experience in an iterative way by bringing in new knowledge and skills to enable you to develop your own teaching style; thus making your TA experience easier and more enjoyable. The accreditation you receive helps further develop your CV, which will be used for your future aspirations. Over the duration of the course you will develop your teaching dossier, which will then be your final assessment for the course. It can be later refined and used to obtain future employment in teaching.

There are limited spaces available in the Fall TACT course, so if you have at least one term of teaching experience and are available for the following dates, please [register for the Fall TACT course](#).

All Sessions will run 10am to 1pm in DB 1014

Monday September 12, 2016

Monday October 3, 2016

Monday October 24, 2016

Monday November 14, 2016

Monday December 5, 2016

Workshops and the 'Record of Completion' Certificate

If you are new to teaching at York and do not yet qualify for the TACT course, or are interested in a more flexible teaching certificate program, or are just looking for additional support, we offer a variety of workshops that can count toward our ['Record of Completion' Certificate](#). The Junior Certificate is for new TAs and requires attendance to at least 5 workshops. The Senior Certificate is for experienced TAs and the requirements include attending at least 4 workshops and the [STAY Symposium](#).

New Initiatives

Monthly Blog

We will be publishing a monthly blog on teaching and learning at York, written by and written for Graduate Students.

Did you know?

The Teaching Commons offers support for all Graduate Students at all levels of experience? [Contact us to book an appointment!](#)

We offer both Teaching Assistant and International TA Orientations during the first week of September. Each count toward earning the Junior ['Record of Completion' Certificate](#)

Do you need to learn more about Moodle? Learning Technology Services offers a variety of workshops on using and teaching with Moodle. [See a complete list of their workshops](#)

If you are not receiving a copy of this monthly newsletter in an email, you can subscribe by emailing teaching@yorku.ca

[Register for Marking and Grading Workshop for Graduate Students](#)

Thursday September 8, 2016, 10am – 4pm in DB 1014

[Register for Designing your Tutorial](#)

Tuesday September 13, 2016, 10am – 12pm in DB 1014

[Register for Teaching Students with Disabilities: Tips for Teaching Assistants](#)

Wednesday September 21, 2016, 12pm – 1pm in DB 1014

[Register for Teaching with Technology and in an Online Environment](#)

Monday September 26, 2016, 12-1pm in DB 1014

Monthly Blog



Teaching a New Course

By Mariela Giuliano

I can still remember the precise moment, when I received the e-mail from my department coordinator letting me know that I would be the Teaching Assistant for a

Statistics Course. I stared at the computer for about 10 minutes, utterly dumbfounded that such a selection could have been made. As a psychology major whose strength has always been relationship-building, it seemed far from an ideal choice. People, not numbers, were the tools of my trade. Statistics were more of a “let’s-get-this-over-with” part of the field. Even though I had a background in education and regularly got good grades in statistics, I still felt exceptionally unqualified for the job. Knowing the basics of a concept does not necessarily mean one is qualified to teach it! With fear setting in, I began to mentally quiz myself: What was the standard error again? What was the Kruskal-Wallis test? I was certainly not a statistics specialist, but I believed I could see the path more clearly...

So, I decided to interpret the offer as a challenge to be embraced rather than an unwanted responsibility. What’s more, it was a challenge I would be ready for! Much preparation was necessary but I was certain the experience would turn out to be extremely rewarding. As the teaching started in earnest, I began to enjoy explaining concepts, looking for alternate ways to present ideas, and coming up with engaging examples. Of course, there was still an occasional question I was unsure of. But as a professor remarked at the last [Teaching in Focus Conference](#) (TIF) here at York: “students are more forgiving than we think”. I learned that if everything else in a tutorial is well prepared and students can see that you are invested in the process, they will certainly understand and even wait to get their answers. Needless to say, I have continued to TA for statistics for a number of years and it has become one of my absolute favourite courses to teach.

I relate this story to reinforce that we, as TAs, are not alone. It’s something we all need to remember. On my first day in the [TA in Certificate Teaching](#) (TACT), we were asked about various challenges that we face as teaching assistants. We went over time constraints, stress, difficult students, etc. Then the facilitator hit upon one of my biggest fears: having to TA for a course for which the subject matter was not all that familiar. But through our group discussion I realized I was not alone; that teaching is really about the journey rather than the destination, and that it’s as much our journey as it is the students’. It’s a lesson that has remained with me to this day.

TACTFUL TEACHING

What do participants say about the TACT course?

“So I started off not really knowing what to expect but I’m happy with how useful this program has been in helping me develop better skills as a TA.”

“Well organized, coherent, relevant, key concepts/messages, excellent modelling of effective teaching.”

“The teaching dossier is an invaluable assignment.”

Attention!

The TC is looking for contributors for a featured blog in this Newsletter. Any topic related to teaching and learning is welcome!
Contact: maynat@yorku.ca

If you are not receiving a copy of this monthly newsletter in an email, you can subscribe by emailing teaching@yorku.ca