

Philosophy TA Workshop: Preparing a Teaching Dossier in Philosophy

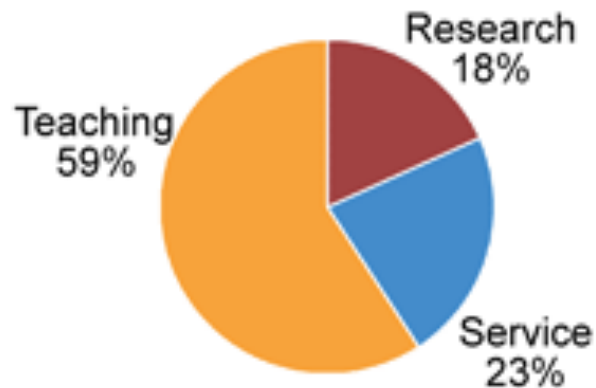
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with Melissa Jacquart
joined by Graduate Placement Officer, Chris Smeenk

(as well as help, and slide content from Nanda Dimitrov, TSC)

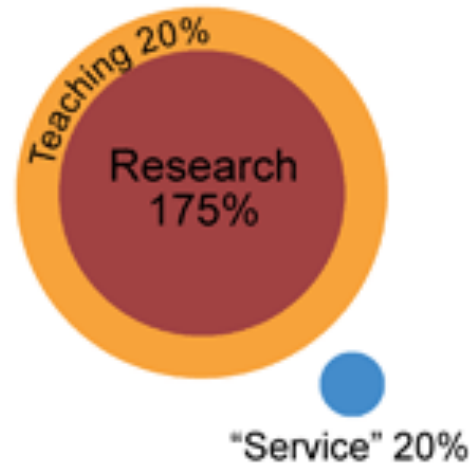
HOW PROFESSORS SPEND THEIR TIME

How they actually
spend their time:



Source: Higher Education
Research Institute Survey
(1999)

How departments
expect them to
spend their time:



How Professors
would *like* to
spend their time:

Don't tell me
what to do

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Teaching Dossiers/Teaching Portfolio

How Much do you Already Know?

I'm new, what is it?

I have an idea, want to understand exact expectations.

I already have a dossier, I'm just trying to refine it.

Your teaching dossier is the single most important part of your application for a job.

True or False?

Agenda

- Components of the Teaching Dossier
 - from the “TSC” Perspective
 - as well as Philosophy
- Real Examples of Philosophy Teaching Dossiers
- Feedback

Teaching Dossier Components

What is a Teaching Dossier?

- Used as part of job search, application for tenure or teaching awards
- Summarizes your teaching accomplishments and strengths
- Provides *evidence* that demonstrates the candidate is an *effective teacher*



What counts as effective teaching?

- Commitment to Teaching
- Communication Skills
- Course Design and Teaching Methods
- Self-evaluation and Reflective Practice
- Curriculum Development
- Teaching Scholarship
- Facilitation and leadership skills

What counts as evidence?

- Teaching Ratings
- Comments and letters from students, supervisors, etc.
- Colleague evaluations of your teaching
- Quotes from student comments on teaching
 - TSC: 5 – 10 max
- Objective indicators of amount learned
 - (e.g. Learning objectives paired with exams)

The “Must-Have” Components

- Teaching Philosophy Statement 
- Summary of Student Evaluations 
- Previous Teaching Responsibilities
 - List of Courses Taught/TA'ed/Graded for, and responsibilities
 - Outline of courses taught in last 2 years
- Teacher Professional Development

Additional Components

Additional information to include if possible:

- Teaching Awards
- Invited Lectures
- Presentations on Teaching
- Teaching Related Publications
- Teaching Innovations

Often, these will be presented in a Teaching CV

What is a Teaching Philosophy Statement?



“A teaching philosophy statement is a systematic and critical rationale that focuses on the important components defining effective teaching and their impact on student learning in the post-secondary setting and is sensitive to contextual factors.”

Schonwetter, D.J., Sokal, L., Friesen, M., and Taylor, K.L. (2002). *Teaching philosophies reconsidered: A conceptual model for the development and evaluation of teaching philosophy statements. International Journal for Academic Development*, 7(1), 83-97.



Teaching Philosophy Statement

With your neighbor, briefly discuss...

- *What are the types of knowledge/skills students learn in your class and how?*
- *What methods or styles of teaching do you use in your discipline? Why?*
- *How you engage and motivate students?*



Teaching Philosophy Statement

- Should be clear and concise reasoning
- Discuss your beliefs about teaching
- And how these influence what practice and your teaching method choices

- In other words, why do you teach the way you teach?
- 1 – 2 pages long



Teaching Philosophy Statement

A good teaching philosophy statement will...

- Discuss how students learn in your discipline
- What the learning objectives are in your classroom and how you achieve these goals
- How you approach teaching
- How you engage and motivate students
- What type of knowledge students learn in your class and how



Teaching Evaluations

- Scales vary, so describe the scale being used
(7 = Outstanding, ... 1 = very poor)
- Report to the first decimal. Don't round!
- Describe the context of the class
Elective or Required? Class Size?



Teaching Evaluations

Questions	Intro to philosophy 1300E 2008-2009			Basic Logic 2020 2010			Philosophy of Science 2030G 2012		
	Aver	St.Dev	Med	Aver	St.Dev	Med	Aver	St.Dev	Med
1. Displays Enthusiam	6.5	0.8	7	6.1	0.8	6	6.7	0.5	7
2. Well organized	6.2	0.9	6	6.0	0.9	6	6.6	0.5	7
3. Explain concepts clearly	5.3	1.3	6	5.6	1.3	5.5	6.5	0.5	6
4. Encourages participation	6.3	0.9	7	5.8	1.0	6	6.2	1.0	7
5. Responses clear and thorough	5.8	0.8	6	6.1	0.8	6	6.6	0.7	7
6. Interesting presentation	6.3	0.9	7	5.6	0.9	6	6.2	0.6	6
7. Shows concern	6.5	0.7	7	6.0	1.1	6	6.8	0.4	7
8. Available for consultation	6.5	0.8	7	6.3	0.7	6	7.0	0.0	7
9. Communicates well	6.1	1.0	6	5.8	0.7	6	6.5	0.8	7
10. Adheres to course objectives	6.4	0.7	7	6.3	0.7	6	6.5	0.7	7
11. Relates topics well	5.9	1.0	6	5.3	1.0	5	6.5	0.8	7
12. Provides fair evaluations	6.2	1.1	7	5.4	1.9	6	6.5	0.7	7
13. Grades work promptly	6.4	0.7	7	6.5	0.5	6.5	6.9	0.3	7
14. Good motivator	5.9	1.5	6	5.4	1.1	5.5	6.1	1.1	6
Average of 1 to 14	6.2	1.0		5.9	1.0		6.5	0.7	
15. Overall effectiveness	6.5	1.0	7	6.1	0.8	6	6.8	0.4	7
Course as learning experience	5.6	1.6	6	5.9	1.2	6	6.1	0.8	6

<https://www.ipb.uwo.ca/evaluation/search.php>

Building Your Teaching Dossier Now

Discuss: What can we do now, while in graduate school to prepare and build our teaching dossier?

Building Your Teaching Dossier Now

What can you do while in graduate school to build your teaching dossier?

Attend or Present at Conferences

- [American Association for Philosophy Teachers](#)
- [International History, Philosophy and Science Teaching Group](#)

Attend Teacher Development Workshops

- Lead TA program or the TSC's Future Professor Workshop Series

Obtaining Teaching Experience

- Guest Lecture for Instructors
- Work with Education outreach programs (e.g. Rotman's K-12 Program)

Document, Document, Document!

- TA positions are an opportunity to gain skills valued in both academic and non-academic careers!
- Document your teaching experiences now, so that you can demonstrate these skills during the job search later (be it for an academic or non-academic job).
 - Remembering things can be hard.
- Keep copies of everything!
 - Syllabi, course evaluations, feedback and e-mails from students

and Observe!

- See every graduate course you take as one that you may teach one day – your notes should be clear enough to teach from.
- In the courses you TA for, take notes about HOW a professor teaches, not only WHAT they teach (activities they use, questions they ask, etc).
- Be observant of what your instructors are including on course syllabi, as assignments, in exams, etc.

Non-Academic Jobs

Your teaching experience provides a wide variety of skills you can draw on for applications to non-academic jobs.

Buzzwords:

- Leadership
- Group facilitation
- Conflict management
- Assessment experience
- curriculum development

Real Sample Dossiers

Caveat!!!

These people have been generous enough to let us look at their dossiers, they are only to be used in the context of this workshop.

Please be respectful, DO NOT copy text or keep these dossiers beyond this workshop!

Examples

Name	Ph.D. Institution	Current Placement
Rachael Brown	Australian National University	(Rotman Post-Doc) Macquarie University
Nic Fillion	Western University	Simon Fraser University
Dan Hicks	Notre Dame University	Rotman Post-Doc
Jason Marsh	Western University	St. Olaf College

Sample Dossiers

- Identify at least 3 things you find effective about the dossier,
- Identify ways in which the candidate could improve the presentation,
- And any general questions about dossiers that come up in discussion.

Additional Resources

Teaching Support Centre. Dossier consultation available in the TSC when you register for the Certificate in University Teaching and Learning (as part of the certificate)

Additional TSC Resources:

- [Sample teaching dossiers](#)
- [Writing a teaching philosophy statement and examples of statements](#)

Recommended by Others. Arrange a time with other grads for a dossier swap to give feedback on teaching philosophy statement, as well as overall presentation

Feedback Survey

Contact: mjacquar@uwo.ca

Thanks!
