

GRADUATE STUDENTS IN TEACHING MINI CONFERENCE 2019

DAY 1: TUESDAY, APRIL 30

All sessions take place in the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC), Lillooet Room 301

9:50 - 10 a.m.	On-site Registration
10 - 11 a.m.	Theatre of the Distressed: Exploring Conflict for TAs Facilitators: Liesl Lafferty and Roquela Fernandez, UBC <p>Teaching assistants from all disciplines deal with conflict from many different directions. Conflict Theatre @ UBC uses arts-based, experiential education with the objective of building skills for engaging in workplace conflict authentically and productively. In a sixty-minute participatory session, we will present the theories of conflict theatre and demonstrate with the performance of a conflict play, modeled to explore workplace conflict at UBC. The play is created and performed by community members and tells a story inspired by the lived experiences of participants, in this case, a diverse group of UBC TAs. During the performance piece, the play is presented to an audience of any size, who is then welcomed to intervene in the scenes by replacing actors on the stage and exploring how the story might play out differently, which inspires a guided discourse with the audience. Our Theatre of the Distressed: Exploring Conflict for TAs play is an interactive experience that mobilizes the assemblage, and allows them to reflect on conflict, consider alternative perspectives, recognize shared struggles, and rehearse new strategies for engaging in workplace conflict authentically and productively.</p> <p>By the end of this session, attendees will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understand the Conflict theatre process.• Reflect on workplace conflict, consider alternative perspectives, recognize shared struggles, and find new strategies for engaging in workplace conflict authentically and productively.
11 - 11:15 a.m.	Break
11:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.	ART/eaching: Exploring Arts-based Approaches Within Your Teaching Practice Facilitators: Carolyn Jepson, Paisly Symenuk and Janina Krabbe, UBC <p>In this session, participants will be introduced to and engage with arts-based approaches to teaching within higher education. By the end of the session, participants will be able to describe how arts-based approaches are positioned in higher education, compare how arts-based approaches can be integrated into all facets of teaching, and identify how arts-based approaches can be used within their disciplinary teaching contexts to enhance and support learning. Participants will explore the ways in which normative and dominant discourse of art and teaching both align and contend with one another. A variety of examples from diverse disciplinary contexts will be showcased including but not limited to visual, kinesthetic, word-based art or combinations of the three. Together we will explore how teaching can use arts-based approaches in all facets of teaching such as course materials and resources, assignments, research, and active learning techniques. The session will be facilitated through various participatory activities including pair and share, small group work including embodied techniques, theatre games, and a gallery walk. Participants will leave the session confident and willing to explore how to begin or expand their use of arts-based approaches within their teaching practices.</p> <p>By the end of this session, attendees will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe how arts-based approaches are positioned in higher education.• Compare how arts-based approaches can be integrated in teaching.• Identify how arts-based approaches can be used within your disciplinary teaching contexts.



12:15 - 1 p.m.

Lunch Break

1 - 2 p.m.

Round Table Discussions

1. Imposter Syndrome in Academia

Facilitators: Kyle Gooderham and Gillian Glass, UBC

Self-doubt about your abilities, successes, and accomplishments can be a persistent and intrusive pattern of thinking. The internalized fear of being exposed as a 'fraud,' commonly referred to as imposter syndrome, can have negative consequences on mental health. While no one industry is exempt from imposter syndrome, those pursuing a career in academia can be particularly susceptible to feelings of inadequacy. Academia is a highly competitive field where success is measured individualistically and the pressure to "publish or perish" is institutionalized. The constant demand, coupled with propensity to compare ourselves to others, breeds fears of being uncovered as incapable or worse, incompetent. However, these irrational fears should not be allowed to dissuade someone from the profession and therefore it is important for academics to be able to recognize, reframe, and counter these pervasive thoughts. In this session learners will learn to identify patterns in their own thinking that contribute to feelings of insecurity, consider approaches for altering their perspectives and managing expectations, and develop strategies for combating self-doubt. This lesson will include cross-disciplinary active learning involving independent and group work. Ideal learners for this session are those who have experience in graduate studies programs, will be entering graduate studies programs, or who believe imposter syndrome is prevalent in their field.

2. Help align Content and Assessment with Learning Objectives

Facilitators: Analise Hofmann, Connie Leung and Najah Adreak, UBC

As graduate students, we don't often get the opportunity to provide feedback on courses, however, as we are performing our TA roles there are different observations that we may or may not be making consciously that can help improve a course. Have you ever marked an assignment or exam and wondered why the students were doing particularly poorly on a concept? Maybe the concept was not explicitly covered in class, or maybe it was assumed to be covered in a previous class. Maybe this concept isn't even applicable to the students in this class because it does not fall under any of the course learning objectives. From your student's perspective, can you imagine how frustrating it must be for a student in the class to try and figure out what they need to know for an exam and be tested on something totally unexpected? In this session, we will be discussing and brainstorming ways graduate students can contribute feedback to instructors to improve undergraduate courses by evaluating how course content and assessments are aligned with course learning objectives.

3. Failure and Learning

Facilitator: Shawn Hetherington, UBC

In the modern academic platform, students can be focused on performance far more than their actual learning experience. Failure can be an incredibly powerful experience in the learning process. So how do we, as educators, create a learning environment that creates comfort with failure when students can be dreadfully fearful of that experience? How do we open students' eyes to the benefits of failure and what it can mean for the strength of their learning? This round table discussion will provide insights to this problem and create conversation on best practices across disciplines.



1 - 2 p.m.

Poster Session

*Please note this event will take place in IKBLC, Room 302

- 1. Creative Writing TA Training and Support**
Presenter: Roquela Fernandez, UBC
- 2. BioTAP, Building a Teaching Community through TA Training**
Presenter: Rhea Storlund, UBC
- 3. TA Development in the Department of Psychology**
Presenter: Grace Truong, UBC
- 4. Physics & Astronomy TA Training Program**
Presenters: Jeff Bale and Deborah Good, UBC
- 5. Sociology TA Training Program**
Presenter: Silvia Bartolic, UBC
- 6. Improving Student Readiness in Calculus with Learning Objects**
Presenter: Felicia Halliday, UVIC

2 - 2:15 p.m.

Break

2:15 - 2:45 p.m.

Teaching Assistants with Disabilities

Presenter: Laura Bulk, UBC

People with disabilities are an underrepresented group within the teachers assistants (TAs) workforce at UBC. This situation in turn disadvantages all members of the UBC community, from learners to those disabled students who are or would like to be TAs. Learners miss the opportunity to learn from people with disabilities, who offer unique strengths and knowledge; students with disabilities are denied valuable professional development, the financial benefit of having employment at the university, and the shared experience of being a TA, which contributes to a sense of belonging. Both the TA union (CUPE Local 2278) and the university therefore lack the valuable input of these individuals and the university does not enact its own policies and strategic goals regarding inclusion and equity. CUPE 2778 and the Department of Occupational Science & Occupational Therapy have thus partnered in a research project explore the barriers disabled students face to becoming TAs.

In this presentation, we will discuss our research methods, from recruiting participants to conducting focus groups, share the emerging findings from these focus group sessions with TAs and potential TAs with disabilities, and conclude with suggestions for greater inclusivity at UBC. This exploration of the perceived barriers and on-the-job difficulties will contribute to more members of the university community becoming and thriving as TAs at UBC.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Know how this research was undertaken, what barriers to employment exist for persons with disabilities at UBC, and how to foster greater and more meaningful inclusion and diversity among teaching assistants.

2:45 - 3 p.m.

Break



3 - 4:30 p.m.

Adult Learning Theory Beyond Kolb's

Facilitators: Natalie Westwood and Arnab Ray, UBC

Many of us are familiar with the adult learning model of Kolb's Cycle, the process in which learners must completely cycle through in order to learn something fully. However, while Kolb's Theory may be most frequently used and understood by graduate students, several other learning theories may be equally or more helpful in helping adults learn in certain situations. In this session, we aim to give graduate students the tools to support their learning outcomes using Transformative Learning Theory and Humanistic Learning Theory (Taylor & Hamdy 2013) by allowing participants to work in small teams to develop scenarios to utilize these theories. We will also facilitate discussion with participants to identify the strengths and weaknesses of each theory and how they might work differently across disciplines.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Appreciate why learning theories are important as an educator
- Identify the key principles of chosen learning theories
- Apply key principles to design activities based on learning theories

DAY 2: WEDNESDAY, MAY 1

All sessions take place in the Irving K. Barber Learning Centre (IKBLC), Lillooet Room 301

9:45 - 10:45 a.m.

Inclusivity in Learning: Minimizing Obstacles to Participation

Facilitators: Linda Horianopoulos and Kieran Forde, UBC

TAs come into their courses with a wealth of knowledge and experiences that they may be reluctant to share within an unfamiliar learning environment. Likewise, our learners often come from diverse backgrounds and being in new learning environments may impact their ability to engage with the course content or affect their comfort level with classroom activities.

In this workshop, we will invite TAs to share their experiences and concerns about what barriers exist to engaging a diverse set of learners. We will work in small groups to develop strategies that can be used throughout lessons and courses to ensure we are providing opportunities for all learners to participate. We will also provide some examples and suggestions of ways in which you can invite a diverse set of learners to be a part of the learning experience.

This workshop is applicable for all TAs as diversity is ubiquitous across faculties at UBC. In particular, UBC attracts a high number of international students (over 25 per cent of students in 2017/18) which presents exciting learning opportunities but may be intimidating to TAs who are unsure how to engage with learners with such differing experiences. It is our objective that, by the end of this workshop, our learners will be able to identify the barriers our learners may have to participate in lessons, plan lessons which mitigate these barriers and invite their learners to contribute to the learning experience.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Describe barriers to participation
- Plan lessons with strategies to mitigate these barriers
- Invite their learners to contribute to the learning experience

10:45 - 11 a.m.

Break

11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Panel: Graduate Students in Teaching

- Isabeau Iqbal, PhD, Educational Developer, Centre for Teaching, Learning and Technology, UBC
- David Oliver, PhD, Instructor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology, UBC
- Rowshan Rahmanian, PhD, Post Doctoral Fellow, SFU
- Lacey Samuels, PhD, Professor, Botany Department, UBC



12:30 – 1:15 p.m.

Lunch Break

1:15 – 2:45 p.m.

Incorporating Reflection into Teaching

Facilitators: Kaylee Byers and Kyle Gooderham, UBC

David Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory suggests that learners participate in a four-stage cycle as they integrate and encode information and experiences into a body of knowledge. Evaluative techniques, in the form of tests and assignments, suppose that learners have completed the Kolb's cycle and have effectively scaffolded information at each stage to prior knowledge. However, due to limitations in instructional time, instructors must often compromise components of the cycle in favour of delivering additional material. The Reflective stage is frequently offloaded to non-class time and is seldom scrutinized for its fulfillment. According to Kolb's Learning Theory, a failure to effectively reflect on preceding stages of the cycle can lead to the breakdown of the learning process at future stages. Therefore, it is essential for instructors to incorporate evaluation of the Reflection stage into broader learning plans. In this lesson, learners will develop an appreciation for promoting reflection in the learning process and develop tools for incorporating and assessing reflection into learning plans across disciplines. The session will include cross-disciplinary active learning involving independent and group work. Ideal learners for this session are those who plan to or are actively involved in teaching and those interested in incorporating evaluative techniques on qualitative learning outcomes.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Identify the value of reflection to learning in your discipline
- Design two activities that incorporate reflection relevant to your discipline
- Develop methodologies for assessing reflection-based activities
- Articulate ways in which you can incorporate reflection into your future teaching

2:45 – 3 p.m.

Break

3 – 4:30 p.m.

Empathetic Provocation for Teaching Difficult Knowledge

Facilitators: Paisly Symenuk and Dawn Tisdale, UBC

Empathy within the classroom can be understood as to how teachers care for learners through a willingness to engage with them and the ways they experience, understand, and think about the world. In an era where systems of harm, including xenophobia, sexism, homophobia, and anti-Indigenous racism are exceedingly visible to our learners in their everyday life, we must also push them to acknowledge and engage with the idea that they are participants in these harmful systems irrespective of discipline. Empathetic provocation can be a valuable tool to create safe learning spaces for engaging students through difficult knowledge that interrogates these critical issues. Difficult knowledge provokes a deeper connection to learning by challenging the learners espoused values, beliefs, and experiences. Learning is often lost and found within the stages of resistance to difficult knowledge by both the teacher and the learner. In this session we will engage participants in participatory activities (fishbowl, jigsaw, & small group work) that explore how empathy, within the context of difficult knowledge, does not mean blind affirmation, non-confrontation, or sugarcoating but rather can be understood as reciprocal learning through confronting hard truths and provocation that leads to deeper learning. We will discuss how empathy is a strategy that can be successfully applied by educators across diverse disciplines and is relevant to all learning contexts. Building on this, we will explore the challenges and merits of developing an empathetic approach to teaching through group activities that are specific to the practice setting of each participant.

By the end of this session, attendees will:

- Describe the components of empathy in the context of teaching in learning (cognitive)
- Illustrate how "difficult knowledge" is embedded or embodied in their respective disciplines
- Discuss and use empathetic provocation in the context of "difficult knowledge" to facilitate deeper learning

