

# UCLA 2009

36th Annual

## Teaching Assistant Conference



Monday,

September 21st

Dickson Court South  
(Schoenberg Quad)

The 36th annual TA Conference is for both new and experienced Teaching Assistants who wish to improve their teaching skills.

### INTRODUCTION

For over three decades, the UCLA Office of Instructional Development TA Training Program has organized a campuswide Teaching Assistant Conference in the fall as a means to help both new and experienced teaching assistants improve their teaching skills. Conference participants attend general sessions, teaching panels, and hands-on workshops which examine a variety of different aspects of teaching at the undergraduate level. Come to learn strategies for the first day of class, overcome your fear of public speaking, learn how to lead effective discussions, and much more! You can register for any portion of the conference; come for one workshop or come for the entire day - you decide!

### REGISTRATION

There are two ways to register and both are free:

1. Online Registration: The easiest way to register is to visit our website between August 26th and September 16th. You can view the current availability of workshops in real-time.

<http://www.oid.ucla.edu/units/tatp/conference/reg>

2. Same-day registration: If you miss the online registration deadline, you can still register on the day of the conference at Dickson Court South/Schoenberg Quad (north of Schoenberg Hall and west of Murphy Hall). Same-day registration begins at 8:30am on September 21st and will be available all day. Workshops will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis.

### CHECK-IN

All participants **must** check in on September 21st at Dickson Court South to receive conference packets. Your workshop room assignments will be given at this time. Check-in is open all day. Keep in mind that all online registrants must check in at least 20 minutes before the start of their first session to guarantee their spot.

### RESOURCE FAIR

At UCLA the TAs are often the primary source of information for undergraduates about available resources and policies on campus. If you have questions such as, "what do I do when a student asks for more time on an exam because s/he is disabled?" or "what resources does UCLA library offer to help undergraduates with research papers?" you will find the answers from one of the departments or resource centers represented at the Resource Fair from 8:30 - 9:30 am in Dickson Court South. For more information, see: <http://www.oid.ucla.edu/units/tatp/conference/resourcefair>.

## CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2009

8:30	REGISTRATION STARTS; OPEN ALL DAY (DICKSON COURT SOUTH*)
8:30 - 9:30	RESOURCE FAIR AND BREAKFAST (DICKSON COURT SOUTH*)
9:30 - 10:30	MORNING SESSIONS I
10:30 - 10:45	BREAK
10:45 - 11:45	MORNING SESSIONS II
11:45 - 12:00	BREAK
12:00 - 1:00	NOON SESSIONS
1:00 - 2:00	BREAK
2:00 - 4:00	AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS
4:00 - 4:30	COFFEE AND PASTRIES (DICKSON COURT SOUTH*)

\*DICKSON COURT SOUTH/SCHOENBERG QUAD IS NORTH OF SCHOENBERG HALL AND WEST OF MURPHY HALL.

If you have additional questions or require further information, please contact:

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## MORNING SESSIONS I & II

[The following sessions are offered twice:  
9:30-10:30am and 10:45-11:45am.]

### SURVIVING YOUR 1<sup>ST</sup> QUARTER OF TEACHING

Are you nervous about your first quarter of teaching? This workshop will discuss how to prepare for the first day and beyond. Topics will include: bridging the gap between faculty and students, managing classroom dynamics, handling academic dishonesty, and grasping the TA's role in undergraduate education. Participants will also take home practical skills such as best practices for syllabus and section policy sheet design.

### THE NUTS & BOLTS OF LESSON PLANNING

Good lesson plans mean more effective instruction. This workshop provides strategies on how to define topics, how to formulate teachable objectives and reach them through guided practices, how to assess student learning, and how to revise lesson plans after teaching them.

### WHY TEACH WITH TECHNOLOGY?

Technology can help make teaching more effective and more efficient, but it can also be a hindrance if not used properly. This discussion of teaching with technology inside and outside the classroom will help TAs devise a sound rationale for including technology in their teaching and will give practical ideas for using technology in teaching. Through a discussion format, this session will address answers to the question "why teach with technology?" For a more hands-on approach, check out the computer-lab session "Technology for Teaching at UCLA: The Basics & More."

### INFORMATION LITERACY IN A GOOGLED SOCIETY

What can TAs do to help their students write well-researched papers? This workshop will focus on how to teach undergraduates to evaluate sources and how to find relevant scholarship when they are often content to use information they find on the first page of a Google search. There are many steps that a TA can take throughout the quarter that will help students to become not only informed and competent consumers of information, but will instead transform those students into scholars. The workshop will provide practical skills for creating and incorporating research mini-assignments into discussion sections. Discussion topics will also include: undergraduates' understanding of information literacy—including what is acceptable, reliable information on the Internet—and issues regarding proper citation, including plagiarism.

### TECHNOLOGY FOR TEACHING AT UCLA:

#### THE BASICS & MORE

Come and try out programs and strategies that enhance student-teacher communication in and beyond the classroom. This session will be held in a computer lab, so come to learn the basics of setting up and managing an online gradebook, discussion boards, and wikis. Technophobes welcome.

#### PREPARING INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS (ITAs) TO TEACH AT UCLA

This session is designed for those ITAs who cannot attend the longer, more detailed afternoon session.

## NOON SESSIONS

### MICROTEACHING

Microteaching is the presentation of a small section of a lesson. The goal of this workshop is to offer hands-on experience through teaching a five-minute microlesson. Choose from five general topics, or come prepared with your own five-minute presentation. Don't fret! This opportunity to teach in front of a small group will allay anxiety and pinpoint your teaching strengths and weaknesses through anonymous feedback.

### FACULTY & TA PANEL

Panelists are often recipients of the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award and are invited to share their teaching philosophies and experiences. The majority of this session is dedicated to answering questions from conference participants. Bring your questions, or just come to listen!

### LANGUAGE TA PANEL

Teaching a language for the first time can be daunting, whether you are concerned about how a non-native speaker will be received or how a native speaker can relate to the students' cultures. In this workshop a panel of experienced language TAs will be available to share their experiences and answer your questions.

## AFTERNOON WORKSHOPS

### TEACHING LANGUAGES AT UCLA

In the first part of this workshop, experience a "Shock Lesson," a demo lesson of first-day teaching in an unfamiliar language which shows how an experienced language TA would introduce a language without speaking English. Afterwards, join a group discussion with the Language Coordinators from your departments. The departments of French and Francophone Studies, Germanic Languages, Italian, Slavic Languages, Spanish and Portuguese, as well as Korean, Japanese, and Chinese will be represented. In the last part of the workshop, the Foreign Language IT Coordinator from the Center for Digital Humanities will discuss WIMBA, an online Oral Assessment Builder used regularly in language classrooms.

### LEADING DISCUSSIONS

Discussion sections are often the most rewarding part of a class. Yet, as moderators of these discussions, TAs are often terrified that they will be staring at blank faces for an hour. This workshop will focus on discussion sections in the social sciences and humanities, with special reference to making class material relevant to students and establishing a safe and comfortable environment in which productive discussions can occur. It will also examine how to craft effective discussion questions and how to keep discussions going beyond the classroom.

### PREPARING AND GRADING UNDERGRADUATE WRITING

As part of their duties TAs are often expected to grade some kind of student writing, such as an essay, a research paper, or an abstract. Unfortunately only a few disciplines, such as English and Comparative Literature, offer intensive training to prepare TAs for this task. The current budget crisis has resulted in the closing of the writing center at Covel Commons, and therefore, TAs will now bear nearly the entire burden of helping students improve their writing. This session focuses on resources that can help TAs to clarify writing assignments and prepare students to write. It can also enable TAs to devise effective comments on student work and covers how to deal with plagiarism. Workshop participants will practice grading papers and responding to student queries about grades.

### PREPARING INTERNATIONAL TEACHING ASSISTANTS (ITAs) TO TEACH AT UCLA

In this interactive, hands-on session, international students will gain an understanding of how best to work within the culture of American university classrooms. Attendees will learn about and practice useful techniques for establishing and maintaining lively classroom discussions, in addition to mastering four steps to handling students' questions. The session will also focus on details and preparation for UCLA English proficiency requirements including English as a Second Language (ESL) courses and the Test of Oral Proficiency (TOP).

### TEACHING AND GRADING PROBLEM-SOLVING IN MATH & THE SCIENCES

Mathematical problem-solving is a skill taught in many different subjects, including mathematics, statistics, economics, and applied sciences such as engineering. This workshop will offer suggestions for leading problem-solving lessons that help students learn to solve problems themselves rather than be given answers by a TA. Grading, often a critical and stressful aspect of being a TA, will also be addressed, including consistent grading by multiple TAs. Participants will practice grading problem sets in this workshop using different approaches to help remove subjectivity.