Designing an Effective Teaching Demonstration

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Agenda

• Identify the place of a teaching demonstration in an academic hiring process
• Provide research and suggestions regarding strategies/approaches
• Q&A with faculty
• Time to reflect
What is a teaching demonstration, and how does it fit into a hiring process?
How Teaching is Assessed

- Interview questions about your teaching
- Teaching portfolio
  - Student evaluations from your teaching
  - Teaching philosophy statement
- Inferring teaching ability from research talk
- Teaching demonstrations!
What Is a Teaching Demonstration?

A lesson prepared and delivered by the job candidate in order for search committee to evaluate and assess teaching ability.

Topics and formats vary by institution and field. Common modes include:

- Existing class, with faculty observers
- Group of students and faculty observers
- Group of faculty role-playing students
Will I be asked to do one?

- Chemistry: 33%
- Biology: 33%
- Political Science: 35%
- Math*: 37%
- English: 45%
- Psychology: 52%
- History: 55%

From Meizlish & Kaplan, 2008
*From Bruff, 2007
Requirements for job candidates (bio)

A research talk and a teaching demonstration

Just a teaching demonstration

Community college
Primarily undergraduate institution
Master's degree granting
PhD granting

From Smith et al., 2013
Top five elements of an effective teaching demo

① Content information is accurate
② Presentation will be understandable
③ Material organized effectively
④ Pitches at correct level for audience
⑤ Introduced in a way that connects to the audience (e.g., communicates relevance of topic, asks questions)

Elements of an outstanding demo: enthusiasm, passion for a topic, relaxed & confident manner, use of active learning

Smith et al., 2013
How Do I Plan One?
What do I want students to learn?

What teaching activities will I use?

How will I get feedback on learning?

WHAT ARE THE SITUATIONAL FACTORS?

From Fink, 2005
How can I get feedback before I do it “for real”? 

• Ask the search committee questions 

• Ask to give a guest lesson in a U-M course 

• Practice with people who can mimic the ‘audience’
  – Friends in other departments, undergraduates 

• Request a CRLT consultation or observation in your class
Faculty Insights

• Catherine Fobes, Sociology and Women’s Studies, Alma College
• Mary-Catherine Harrison, English, University of Detroit Mercy

Q&A
Wrap-Up & Focused Reflection: What would you plan if asked to prepare a teaching demonstration?

- Topic of your choice
- Introductory-level course in your field
- 25 students
- 30-minute class period
Additional Resources

• Papers discussing teaching demonstrations and active learning and classroom assessment techniques handouts available at: http://crlt.umich.edu/programs/onedayPFF

• The Professor is In How to Give a Teaching Demonstration http://theprofessorisin.com/2012/01/10/how-to-give-a-teaching-demonstration-a-guest-post/

• CRLT website/GSI Guidebook Strategies for Effective Lesson Planning http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p2_5

• ACSAA Resources A Guide to Preparing for Campus Visits http://www.acsaa.us/pdf/career/acsaacampusvisit.pdf