Course summary
This course is designed to provide learners with opportunities to practice skills for effective teaching. We will practice fostering inclusive course climates, active learning techniques, backward design, accessibility, instructional methods, and the evolving roles of technology in teaching and learning. Through teaching demonstrations students will have the opportunity to practice their teaching skills in low stakes safe spaces and receive feedback. Learners should finish this course with a greater self-efficacy in their ability to use evidence-based practices to improve their teaching.

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Schedule
January 27th – March 31
Time: Thursdays, 2 – 4pm
Location: Tosteson Medical Education Ctr. (TMEC) 104 Peabody Classroom

Course Objectives
By the end of this course, participants should be able to:

• Describe who their learners are and define learners needs.
• Practice strategies for cultivating course climates that are student-centered and inclusive.
• Plan, map, and assess educational experiences.
• Deliver educational experiences with a learner centered pedagogy in mind.
• Receive and provide constructive feedback from students and colleagues to improve their teaching.
• Understand the characteristics of different technologies and leverage technology with pedagogical intentionality.

Brief Syllabus Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1 (1/27)</td>
<td>Introductions, Course Climate, Identifying Learner Needs and Developing a Leaner Centered Pedagogy</td>
<td>VA/DG</td>
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Course Materials
The course web site is available at [https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/102345](https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/102345). Readings for the course are listed and can be downloaded from the Canvas site. **Please note that readings and assignments may be adjusted during the semester, so please check the Canvas site before each meeting.** When assignments are expected to be turned in (which will be clearly indicated on the website), this should happen via Canvas.

Course Format
This course is designed to teach practical, transferrable skills for effective teaching. While some primary material will be presented in class, as often as is possible we will use class time to practice teaching and provide constructive feedback on each other’s work. To facilitate this students must come to every class prepared to present and discuss their work.

There will be a short assignment due most weeks of the course. Each weekly assignment will include a pre-class assignment, to prepare you for the upcoming session, and a post-class assignment, to reinforce the recently covered concepts and techniques. Pre-class assignments are typically graded for completion, are absolutely essential for success in the class, and should be taken seriously and completed ahead of time. This will often include background reading and an activity based on that reading. Post-class assignments are typically a revision of work done in class and will be graded on content. Please don’t worry, the majority of students consistently turn in quality work. **Note that assignments are generally due the day before class.** This is to give us time to review them and incorporate your work into our lessons.

Grading
The course is graded on a pass/fail basis. In order to achieve a passing grade, it is expected that you will attend and participate fully in every class session. This includes completing all assigned readings, pre-assignments and post-assignments, and participating fully in classroom exercises and discussions.

If an absence is unavoidable, you must email both course instructors in advance of the class that you will miss. The instructors will determine an appropriate substitute assignment to be completed within 48 hours of the missed class.

| Week 3 (2/10) | Making Learning Visible (assessments); Ensuring Accessibility; Cultivating Diversity; Teaching, Learning and Technology | VA/DG |
| Week 4 (2/17) | Teaching Demonstration 1 | VA/DG |
| Week 5 (2/24) | The Facilitation of Learning: Instructional Techniques, Active Learning, Engaging Presentations, Cognitive Load, and Fostering Inclusive Spaces | VA/DG |
| Week 6 (3/03) | Teaching and Learning Online | DG |
| Week 7 (3/10) | Evaluating and Improving Teaching and Learning | DG |
| Week 8 (3/17) | - NO CLASS: SPRING BREAK- |  |
| Week 9 (3/24) | Teaching Demonstration 2 | VA/DG |
| Week 10 (3/31) | Course Wrap-up: Lessons Learned, Crafting a Teaching Statement, Teaching and Your Career, Next Steps… | VA/DG |
Auditing
If space is available, auditors are welcome to join the course. All auditors are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the course, including participating in in-class discussions and activities and completing course assignments. Interested auditors should contact the course instructors by email.

Teaching Demonstrations Overview for Syllabus Brief
One of the best ways to get better at anything is to practice, receive feedback, and then try again with an aim to improve. With this in mind, a primary focus of this course is to make space to practice our teaching skills in a low stakes environment where we can receive feedback from each other.

There will be two teaching demonstrations (demos) during this course. For the first demo we would like you to respond to some specific practices related to the design of a lesson. Considering instruction provided during the first three weeks, you’ll be asked to share a rationale for lesson plan design decisions made and the process you followed. For the second teaching demo, based on learning in weeks 5-7, we’d like you to focus on skills related to the delivery or facilitation of your instruction.

You can choose your own topic or topics for the demos. These could be topics related to your respective fields of study or a more in-depth study of a topic that we’ve touched on in the course. You’ll have a group of collaborators, but we’d like you to create and present your own lesson. More specific guidance for each of the demos will be provided in the course.

Learning Community Expectations and Resources

A note about the return to in-person learning
Though most academic activities will return in-person this semester, we recognize that things have not returned to ‘normal’. The COVID-19 pandemic and social unrest of the previous year have impacted our lives in many ways and have revealed ongoing challenges and persistent, systemic inequities. The resources and policies described below represent one facet of HMS’ goal to provide all students with an academic environment that is welcoming and accessible. If you are facing academic, social, or emotional challenges we encourage you to use these resources, which are here for your direct benefit.

Physical Distancing
The HMS policy for in-person courses is that vaccinated individuals need not maintain any physical distancing, but that masks are required for indoor activities. Students who are not comfortable with this arrangement are asked to approach the course director or a member of the instructional staff before the first class meeting to discuss alternate arrangements. Reasons not to be comfortable may include not being vaccinated, having a medical issue that makes one more vulnerable, or being in close contact with an immunocompromised individual.

Academic Integrity
All work in this course is governed by the academic integrity policies of GSAS (https://gsas.harvard.edu/codes-conduct/academic-integrity) and HMS (https://mastersstudenthandbook.hms.harvard.edu/409-academic-dishonesty-and-plagiarism). It is the students’ responsibility to be aware of these policies and to ensure that their work adheres to them both in detail and in spirit. Unless otherwise specified by the instructor, the assumption is that all work submitted must reflect the student’s own effort and understanding. Students are expected to clearly distinguish their own ideas and knowledge from information derived from other sources, including from conversations with other people. When working with others you must do so in the spirit of
**collaboration,** not via a unidirectional transfer of information. Note that, unless it is part of the assignment, sharing or sending completed assignments to others will nearly always violate this collaborative standard. If you have a question about how best to complete an assignment in light of these policies, ask the instructor for clarification.

**Community Standards**
HMS is committed to supporting inclusive learning environments that value and affirm the diverse ideas and unique life experiences of all people. An equitable, inclusive classroom is a shared responsibility of both instructors and students, and both are encouraged to consider how their own experiences and biases may influence the learning environment. This requires an open mind and respect for differences of all kinds.

Students are encouraged to contact the course director if they are experiencing bias or feel that their learning experience – including a course’s content, manner of instruction, or learning environment -- is not inclusive. Curriculum Fellows, program administrators and directors, the DMS Office of Diversity, the GSAS Office of Diversity and Minority Affairs, the Title IX Office, and the Ombuds Office are also available to discuss your experiences and provide support. Additionally, students can utilize Harvard’s Anonymous Reporting Hotline ([https://reportinghotline.harvard.edu/](https://reportinghotline.harvard.edu/)) to report issues related to bias.

**Reasonable Accommodations**
As an institution that values diversity and inclusion, our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. Harvard University complies with federal legislation for individuals with disabilities and offers reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities and temporary impairments. To make a request for reasonable accommodations in a course, students must first connect with their local disability office. The primary point of contact for GSAS students is the Accessible Education Office ([www.aeo.fas.harvard.edu](http://www.aeo.fas.harvard.edu)). The HMS Director of Disability Services, Timothy Rogers ([timothy_rogers@hms.harvard.edu](mailto:timothy_rogers@hms.harvard.edu)) is another potential source of accommodation information for PhD students and is the primary contact for MD and master’s students.

Accommodations are determined through an interactive process and are not retroactive. Therefore, students should contact their local disability office to initiate the accommodation process as soon as possible, preferably at least two weeks before accommodations are needed in a course or immediately following an injury or illness. Students are strongly encouraged to discuss their needs with their instructors; however, instructors cannot independently institute individual accommodations without prior approval from the disability office. Student privacy surrounding disability status is recognized under FERPA. Information about accommodations is shared on a need-to-know basis, and with only those individuals involved in instituting the accommodation.

**Academic and other Support Services**
We value your well-being and recognize that as a graduate student you are asked to balance a variety of responsibilities and potential stressors: in class, in lab, and in life. If you are struggling with experiences either in- or outside of class, there are resources available to help. Danielle Farrell, the GSAS Director of Student Services (617-495-5005) is available to assist students navigating academic or personal difficulties and connect them to university resources. HILS PhD students have access to free academic tutoring, arranged through the DMS office. A variety of academic support services are also available to GSAS students through the Academic Resource Center ([https://academicresourcecenter.harvard.edu](https://academicresourcecenter.harvard.edu)) and the Center for Writing and Communicating Ideas ([https://gsas.harvard.edu/center-writing-and-communicating-ideas](https://gsas.harvard.edu/center-writing-and-communicating-ideas)).
All students have access to Counseling and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) available in Longwood, Cambridge or remotely via webcam or phone. The use of CAMHS is included in the student health fee, regardless of insurance, at no additional cost. More information is available at https://camhs.huhs.harvard.edu or by calling the main office at 617-495-2042. Urgent care can be reached 24/7 at 617-495-5711.

Learning Outcomes (week by week)

Week 1: Introductions, Course Climate, and Learner Centered Pedagogy

- Collectively define and commit to our learning community norms and expectations.
- Introduce yourself through a spontaneous teaching exercise, current work/research (thesis/rotation/professional) targeted to an early undergraduate audience.
- See an example of a pre-class survey to better understand learner needs and prior knowledge.
- Discuss the differences between a learner centered pedagogy and an instructor centric environment.
- Discuss teaching beyond delivering a lecture.
- Draw from good and bad past classroom experiences, to begin to define a nascent teaching philosophy.
- Discuss the different contexts science education occurs and imagine the characteristics of a context that aligns with your career goals.

Week 2: The Structure of Learning: Backward Design, Learning Objectives, and Curriculum Mapping

- Practice the process of backward design to develop a lesson plan for the first teaching demonstration.
- Become familiar with Bloom’s taxonomy and the SMART mnemonic for writing learning objectives.
- Describe the relationships between institutional goals, expectations of accrediting bodies, and your instruction.

Week 3: Making Learning Visible (assessments); Ensuring Accessibility; Cultivating Diversity; Teaching, Learning and Technology

- Identify accessibility standards related to teaching and creating materials.
- Become familiar with the guidelines of Universal Design for Learning (UDL).
- Articulate the importance of diversifying voices and resources in the curriculum.
- Describe characteristics of formative and summative assessment
• Explain the value of feedback in identifying one’s learning edge, and demonstrate how to design educational experiences that allow time for providing and applying feedback.

• Discuss the types of technology used during in-person teaching and learning

• Discuss functions present in most learning management systems and how they can be leveraged for active learning

• Discuss the practice of flipped and blended learning

• Creating Autonomy: Discuss how students become self-directed learners, and the role technology in enabling individualized learning and assessment.

Week 4: Teaching Demo 1

• Practice integrating and applying the concepts learned thus far through the presentation of a lesson.

• Self-reflect and provide feedback on your peers’ application of the concepts learned thus far.

Week 5: The Facilitation of Learning: Instructional Techniques, Active Learning, Engaging Presentations, Cognitive Load, and Fostering Inclusive Spaces

• Identify a variety of instructional methods and discuss the contexts in which they may be the best fit.

• Discuss factors that motivate people to learn.

• Describe how active learning can increase motivation and improve learning.

• Identify and practice strategies for fostering inclusive learning spaces.

• Name characteristics of engaging presentations.

• Discuss ways of managing cognitive load

• Discuss practices that make learning spaces more inclusive, and contrast them with moments in which you’ve felt a learning environment was not inclusive.

Week 6: Teaching and Learning Online

• Distinguish between types of online learning (e.g., synchronous, asynchronous, institutional for credit, MOOCs, micro-modules, etc.)

• Discuss differences between designing for online and in-person learning

• Describe methods for building community in online learning

• Recognize common tools used for online learning and how to find support for using these tools.

• Become familiar with common rubrics used for evaluating the quality in online courses (e.g., the Quality Matters Rubric).

Week 7: Evaluating and Improving Teaching and Learning
• Articulate strategies for committing to continuous improvement
• Evaluating the effectiveness of teaching learning experiences
• Identify peer learning communities relevant to your work

Week 8: Spring Recess

Week 9: Teaching Demo 2

• Apply the skills used in Weeks 5-7 to a second teaching demo.

Week 10: Crafting a Teaching Statement, Lessons Learned, Next Steps…

• Gain awareness of the job market for teaching-intensive positions and the requirements for application
• Articulate a teaching philosophy or teaching statement that may be of value in an application for a teaching position.