

**Psychology 850-001**  
Teaching Methods in Psychology  
Fall, 2012

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Hours: By appointment  
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**Meeting #**

**Topic**

1. Organizing a course; development of syllabus; grading. Sources of information; writing and delivering a lecture; pedagogical skills; key elements of effective teaching; technology in teaching. University policies: where you do and don't have leeway in teaching
2. The first week of classes; student qualifications and expectations
3. Effective use of audiovisual materials; developing materials and integrating into lecture
4. Beyond Lecture Notes: knowing your topic well; tangents and excursion; questions and discussion as teaching methods
5. Developing and grading tests - what do you want students to learn? Fact, reasoning, integration. Student writing - essay exams and papers
6. After an exam - handling questions, effective feedback Identifying/resolving student gaps in understanding
7. Critiques of teaching styles (class visits)
8. Student thinking - alternatives to straight lecture (includes Socratic technique, additional readings, etc)

Later – alternate weeks. Topics include: teaching as learning - evaluating your own weaknesses; planning a final exam and preparing students

**Class structure:** This class has a nontraditional meeting schedule. The first meeting will occur the summer prior to the semester in you are assigned to teach. Meeting 2 will occur the week before the start of the semester. These pre-semester meetings are to assist with syllabus development and preparation for the course. After that, meetings will occur once per week, leaning out to alternate weeks as appropriate after about the first half of the semester. The usual format for meetings beyond the first two will be the first half for a presentation by me, followed by open discussion of problems, difficulties, suggestions, advice, etc. The most important feature of this course is regular access to a faculty member experienced in teaching, for advice, direction, questions, problems, etc. There will also be an observation of your teaching, including comments and suggestions for improvement.

**Course goals.** This is a practicum course to support you in your first semester of teaching a lecture course. By the time the course ends, and your Fall assignment is completed, you should be able to manage well all aspects of teaching an undergraduate college course.

**Course requirements:** Each student must keep a log of the course he/she teaches, to be handed in periodically for evaluation. At the end of the semester, each student must self-evaluate his/her performance, noting strengths and weaknesses, and making suggestions for improvement. Students will also be graded by direct observation of their teaching (especially noting responses to problems), and for participation in the class.

Grades will be based upon:

Log	25%
Self-evaluation	25%
In-class observation	25%
Participation	25%

Honor code: Your performance on exams must be your own work, and your papers must be written by you, but you may use any means you like to learn the material. I encourage studying in groups. Taping lectures is permitted. No written material or electronic devices may be used during in-class exams. Take-home exams are open-book/open-notes, but collaboration on questions is not permitted.

Technology usage statement: Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly [and to keep your mailbox maintained so that messages will not be rejected for over quota].

Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Accommodations must be arranged in advance – we are not permitted to adjust your grade or make alternate test arrangements if you request accommodation after doing poorly on an exam.

Registration deadlines for this semester:

Last day to add: Sept 4 [students adding this late will have missed significant material, and I do not provide class notes]; I strongly advise against adding this late.

Last day to drop: Sept 28