



# Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Program (GSTEP) for Scientific Teaching

## Syllabus Spring 2023

### 1. Semester: Spring 2023

### 2. Course Information: Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Program (GSTEP) for Scientific Teaching. (GRSC 5000Z)

GSTEP for Scientific Teaching is an online workshop especially designed for Graduate Students in the College of Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Mathematics) who wish to learn about researched and effective teaching practices for both instructors and students. This workshop will focus on topics related to scientific teaching and student learning. The format is online and allows the participants to work in flexible hours. However, the modules build on the previous ones, so it is important for the participants to keep on track and complete the activities on time.

The course will NOT require any face-to-face events or video recording. GSTEP for Scientific Teaching is offered as a zero-credit-option, meaning that students register (at no cost) and receive official documentation of completion on their transcripts after fulfilling the workshop's requirements. The participants are expected to complete several assignments and discussions every week. There are six modules in this workshop, several activities, and discussions. The diploma is granted to the students after completing a second semester of GSTEP-ST training.

### 3. Instructor and Mentor:

- Dr. Ruthanne 'Rudi' Thompson  
CLEAR Executive Director, Instructor of record, and Principal Investigator
- Claudia Gonzalez  
Instructor of record for GSTEP, GSTEP Student Investigator & Mentor

### 4. Office Phone/Contact Information:

- Dr. Ruthanne 'Rudi' Thompson ([Ruthanne.thompson@unt.edu](mailto:Ruthanne.thompson@unt.edu))  
Support and Services Building (SSB)
- Claudia Gonzalez ([claudia.gonzalez@unt.edu](mailto:claudia.gonzalez@unt.edu))  
Department of Biological Sciences. LIFE "A109"  
Office Number: (940) 565-3611

## **6. Office hours:**

Online office hours are available upon request. An online chat room in Canvas (BigBlueButton) will be used for online office hours with the Instructor and Mentor.

## **7. Ongoing research:**

We are interested in researching the impact of this workshop on our students' community, including effect of the workshop on the instructor's teaching skills, and the effect of the workshop on the undergraduate students' retention in sciences. Would you like to support this research, and help us advance our understanding on Scientific Teaching? You will receive more information about this in the enrollment survey.

## **8. Requirements to enroll in GSTEP for Scientific Teaching:**

- Be enrolled in at least one 16-week graduate-level course.
- Understand GSTEP does not count towards financial aid or full-time enrollment.
- Understand the grading scale for this course is pass/fail and will show on your transcript.
- Know the expectations and the table of content of the workshop and agree to participate in all the Modules.
- A certificate is only offered if the student completes the requirements of both semesters.
- **To enroll in Spring 2023, just follow the link and complete the application form**  
(Ctrl + click to follow link):  
[https://unt.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_eg1ArKtL0I3Tdzg](https://unt.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eg1ArKtL0I3Tdzg)

## **9. Course Objectives:** By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- Engage in ongoing development as an effective scientific teaching facilitator in higher education.
- Develop a plan for a course lesson using Backward Design, Blooms Taxonomy, and the Scientific Teaching Taxonomy of Observable Practices.
- Engage undergraduate students in a learner-centered experience

## **10. Required Materials:**

There are no required textbooks for this workshop. All the required readings and supplemental resources will be provided to you in Canvas.

## **11. Course Delivery:**

The workshop is 100% online. There are no face-to-face meeting, face-to-face seminars or video recordings. You will not be required to participate in interviews.

## **12. Time Allocation:**

Time required varies from person to person. There are 6 Modules. The duration of each module is described on page 7. More information will be provided in Canvas.

## **13. Online Student Support:**

- The UNT Helpdesk is a student technical support team dedicated to deal with issues or technical needs (e.g. Canvas) if you should encounter any issues online at ANY point during the duration of this course. Please be sure to CONTACT the Student Help Desk support team for any student technical support issues and questions:

- Phone: (940) 565-2324
- HelpDesk Email: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)
- HelpDesk Website: <https://www.unt.edu/helpdesk>

#### **14. Minimum Technical Skill Requirements:**

For this course, learners will need to be able to create and submit files in commonly used word processing programs, download and upload files, send and receive emails, and use the learning management system Canvas. Other technical skills required will be introduced and coached by GSTEP for Scientific Teaching Mentors and Instructors.

#### **15. Netiquette:**

Professional etiquette is part of your preparation as an instructor. Here are some items to consider as you work in educational environments, especially online.

- Be kind, polite and respectful.
- Be a problem solver and contributor to improvement of situations. Communicating online is not always as easy because of time differences, technology challenges, and lack of context. Try to approach problems from a teacher’s perspective and then work on solutions by changing the environment.
- For more information on Netiquette visit this website:  
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

#### **16. Content:**

- **Activities and Assignments:** The activities are all online assignments to help you practice what you learned during each Module. Some of the activities build on the previous ones. You will be able to see the previous Modules as the workshop progresses. You can always go back and review the material from past Modules if you want or need to. The time spent on the activities varies from person to person, but the deadlines are every week, which makes it easier to work on the activities during your spare time and during the weekends.
- **Teaching Assistant of GSTEP Package:** We call this file “TAGPack”. It is an Excel Sheet Assistant for the analysis of the laboratory lesson you teach with and without Scientific Teaching.
- **Action Plan for Scientific Teaching:** It is a document with four basic questions about how you could implement the tools and strategies learned in future semesters.
- **Exit Assessment:** It is a quiz with one question. We basically ask you to describe in your own words, how you think each topic affects learning.
- **Self-evaluation:** This file is a rubric that describes the expectations of each module. You learn how to evaluate your own assignments. The Instructors and Mentors will also provide you feedback. We practice what we teach: “to be student centered, and not teacher centered.” This means you are in control of your own learning and we are there as facilitators not guardians of the knowledge.
- **Framework of a Teachable Unit:** The Framework of the Teachable Unit is a report of the lesson plan using Scientific Teaching practices and tips, tricks, and techniques taught in this workshop. It is a Word document that includes all the parts you have been working throughout the semester. The format is different because this one is the final report, not the analysis.

- **Discussions:** Each module has discussions. The discussions are a great opportunity for you and your peers to learn from each other's teaching experiences. The topics are related to each module: active learning, assessment and diversity. All the discussions are online and are NOT audio or video recorded.
- **GSTEP-ST LEVEL2:** Level 2 consists of a review (Modules 1-4) and a second practicum. The students update their lesson plan based on the observations, feedback, and data collected from their first practicum. We will update you at the end of this semester and the beginning of the next one. Do not hesitate to reach out in case you have questions. Please contact us.

### 17. Workshop Evaluation:

- Each module contains a self-evaluation that the participant submits along with the assignments (TAGPack activities, Thin-Pair-Share activities, discussion, action plans, exit assessments) – The participant is in control of his or her own learning. In these evaluations the participants monitor the expectations and criteria to pass each module so they can work toward the goals and monitor their own results. The instructor and mentor(s) of GSTEP for Scientific Teaching will validate the form and provide the final evaluation per module. The final score is assigned by the Instructors or Mentors and it should be “PASS” in order to proceed with the next Module.
- In case that the requirements are not met and the participants' score below the pass score, the graduate student will get a “on probation” grade. The participant can continue with the workshop but should contact the GSTEP for Scientific Teaching mentor(s) for new deadlines and support.

### 18. Workshop Policies & UNT Policy:

- **Late Assignment Policy:** Modules (including activities) and assessments have deadlines set for Tuesday nights at 11:59 pm CST. You are expected to submit the Module activities and assessment components by the deadline. We will consider extensions on a case-by-case basis. Please contact your assigned mentor if you are either unable to submit on time.
- **Attendance Policy:** The workshop is 100% online, and do not require face-to-face meetings.
- **Class Participation:** This is a discussion-based workshop. The workshop's is designed for you to discuss the material, ask questions and contribute to the group with your teaching experiences as you work on it.
- **Student Communication:** Participants are encouraged to develop communication networks with other class members via electronic communication vehicles such as Canvas, email, discussions, and/or other UNT tools.
- **Syllabus Change Policy:** The syllabus and workshop due dates are subject to revision by the instructors throughout the semester. Students will be notified promptly of any changes via weekly course announcements and email.
- **UNT Academic Integrity Policy:** Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University.

- **Emergency Notifications and Procedures:** UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard for contingency plans for covering course materials.
- **Retention of Student Records:** Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.
- **Acceptable Student Behavior:** Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct](http://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct).
- **Policy on Disability Accommodations:** GSTEP-ST, in cooperation with the Office of Disability Accommodation, complies with Section 504 of the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please read the official statement below:

A written request from the ODA office must be presented to the Instructor. We are not allowed to provide any accommodations unless the student is registered with the ODA office.

Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

### **19. Student Academic Support Services:**

As students of the university, you have many resources available to you. If you have questions about academic support services, please consult the following UNT resources:

- Academic resources: where to buy textbooks and supplies, access academic catalogs and programs, register for classes, and more <https://www.unt.edu/academics>
- Code of Student Conduct: provides Code of Student Conduct along with other useful links <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>
- Office of Disability Access exists to prevent discrimination based on disability and to help students reach a higher level of independence <https://disability.unt.edu/>
- Counseling and Testing Services provides counseling services to the UNT community, as well as testing services; such as admissions testing, computer-based testing, career testing, and other tests <https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>
- UNT Libraries <https://library.unt.edu/>
- UNT Learning Center provides a variety of services, including tutoring, to enhance the student academic experience <https://learningcenter.unt.edu/home>
- UNT Writing Center offers free writing tutoring to all UNT students, undergraduate and graduate <http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>
- Succeed at UNT: information regarding how to be a successful student at UNT <https://success.unt.edu/>

This syllabus is tentative and subject to change.

**Updated:** January 15, 2023.

# Graduate Student Teaching Excellence Program (GSTEP) for Scientific Teaching

## Syllabus Spring 2022

### Module 1: Scientific Teaching 2/6-2/19

Welcome and Learning Goals

Overview

Deadlines

Reading Materials

**Introduce yourself**

#### **DISCUSSIONS AND MINI-LECTURES**

Discussions

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Lab syllabus

TAGPack#Module1

Action Plan for Scientific Teaching

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

Exit Assessment for Scientific Teaching

M1Self-Evaluation

Next Steps

### Module 3: Assessment (3/6-3/19)

Overview

Deadlines

Reading Materials

#### **DISCUSSIONS AND MINI-LECTURES**

Discussions

Practicum's teaching observation rubric

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Think-Pair-Share #1

File Submission – Think-Pair-Share #1 file

Think-Pair-Share #2

File Submission – Think-Pair-Share #2 file

TAGPack#Module3

Action Plan for Scientific Teaching

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

Exit Assessment for Assessments

M3 Self-Evaluation

Next Steps

### Module 2: Active Learning (2/20-3/5)

Overview

Deadlines

Reading Materials

#### **DISCUSSIONS AND MINI-LECTURES**

Discussions

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Think-Pair-Share #1

File Submission - Think-Pair-Share #1 file

Think-Pair-Share #1

File Submission - Think-Pair-Share #2 file

TAGPack#Module2

Action Plan for Active Learning

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

Exit Assessment for Active Learning

M2 Self-Evaluation

Next Steps

### Module 4: Diversity (3/20-4/2)

Overview

Deadlines

Reading Materials

#### **DISCUSSIONS AND MINI-LECTURES**

Discussions

#### **ASSIGNMENTS**

Think-Pair-Share #1

Submission – Think-Pair-Share #1 file

Think-Pair-Share #2

Submission – Think-Pair-Share #2 file

TAGPack#Module4

Scientific Teaching Evaluation Forms (X3)

Action Plan for Diversity

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

Exit Assessment for Diversity

M4 Self-Evaluation

Next Steps

### Module 5: Framework of a Teachable Unit. Practicum I (4/3-4/16)

### Practicum II (Fall 2023)

#### **ASSESSMENTS**

Lesson Plan

TAGPack#Module5 and complementary material (i.e.: attachments, rubrics, quizzes, etc.)

Self-Evaluation

Practicum and Self-Reflection

#### GSTEP-ST First Semester

M1: Scientific Teaching

M2: Active Learning

M3: Assessment

M4: Diversity

M5: Practicum I

#### GSTEP-ST Second Semester

Module 1- Module 4 (review)

Modifications based on 1st Practicum.

M5: Practicum II

Students receive a Pass/Fail grade in the first semester. Students who participate in the second semester receive a certificate of participation as well.