

Teaching College Geography Workshop

Goal

- To provide highly relevant practical advice for first time teachers.

Date

- August 22 – 23, 2011

Location

- Department of Geography, San Diego State University

People

- Facilitators
 - *Zia Salim (zsalim@mail.sdsu.edu) and Sarah Wandersee (wanderse@rohan.sdsu.edu)*
- Faculty Sponsor:
 - *Dr. John O'Leary (oleary@mail.sdsu.edu)*

Agenda

- Day 1
 - *10:00 – 10:45: Welcome, introductions*
 - *10:45 – 11:00: Break*
 - *11:00 – 12:00: Lightning Round 1*
 - *12:00 – 1:00: Lunch*
 - *1:00 – 2:30: Topics and Discussion*
 - *Wrap up*
- Day 2
 - *10:00 – 10:30: Syllabus / Lecture Plan*
 - *10:30 – 10:40: Dr. Aitken: Academic dishonesty, Balance in teaching*

- **10: 40 – 10:50: Emergency Procedures**
- **11 – 11:15: Lightning Round 2**
- **11:15 – 11:30: Topics & Discussion 2**
- **12 – 1: Lunch**
- **1 – 1:15: 1st Day Plan**
- **1: 15 – 1:45: Lecture Practice and Feedback**
- **1:45 – 2:15: Semester Plan Discussion**
- **2:15 – 2:30: Concluding Remarks, Questions/Feedback**

Lightning Round 1

- **Topics**
 - **Blackboard**
 - **Copying/Risograph**
 - **Reserving/Setting up Equipment**
 - **Forms**
 - **Printing**
 - **Labs**
 - **Webportal**
 - **Crashers**
- **Blackboard**
 - **Site: <http://blackboard.sdsu.edu/>**
 - **Description**
 - Blackboard is an easy-to-use online course delivery and management system. Using Blackboard's graphical point-and-click interface, instructors can incorporate learning materials from word processing, audio & video, spreadsheets, and presentation files without ever learning HTML.

I use it for: announcements, posting all kinds of material for students, gradebook, discussion board

- **Make course available (Control panel > Course options > Settings > Course availability)**
- **SDSU Blackboard support: <http://its.sdsu.edu/blackboard/instructor/index.html>**
- **2011 SDSU Blackboard workshop schedule: <http://its.doattend.com/>**
- **Be careful using digital dropbox!**
- **Displaying grades.**
- **Turnitin: <http://its.sdsu.edu/tech/plagiarism.html>**
- **Copying/Risograph**
 - **Mailroom copier**
 - Office assistants can do this FOR YOU!!!

Copier is a scanner also -- with new machine, you can use USB devices for saving scans and uploading files.

Copy quota?
 - **Risograph**
 - High volume work should not be done on the copier. If you are making more than 20 copies for a class, you MUST submit a Work Request for Risograph. (WORK REQUESTS ARE BEHIND FRONT RECEPTION COUNTER, by typewriter) IF YOU JAM THE COPIER, PLEASE DON'T LEAVE IT AS IS!! Try to fix it, or inform staff or one of our student assistants.

Tip:
Don't copy stuff at the last minute - aka just before your exam. Not a good idea.
- **Reserving/Setting up Equipment**
 - **Available equipment**
 - Projectors
 - Laptops
 - Video camera
 - **Reservations**
 - Set up regular reservations with Lilia at the beginning of the semester

- Check availability (3-ring binders in office)
- Write in special reservations
- Keep track of numbers and bring power/extension cords
- If you're bringing your own laptop and it is a Mac, make sure you have a converter
- ***Make sure you get familiar with the projector/laptop beforehand!***
- ***Troubleshooting***
 - Make sure you know how to put your laptop in projector mode. If input keeps cycling without recognizing the computer, adjust your graphics settings (Usually Right-click on Desktop)
- **Forms**
 - ***Student athlete:***
 - Tips from the academic advisers in SDSU Athletics:
Biggest thing is travel schedule, university policy is that these are excused absences, so they cannot count against them and they have to be accommodated. Then it is the student's responsibility to get to the instructor prior to the add/drop deadline and discuss needed accommodations.
Student's responsibility to remind the instructor when things are happening. Through the semester faculty will be contacted by academic advisers; students have waived FERPA, so faculty can discuss academic matters with advisers. Student athletes must be treated the same as anyone else and cannot be treated differently.
 - Student athlete contacts (see posted document)
 - ***Open University:***
 - Open University: for them to add the class, you have to sign their form. This has to be done by the registration deadline. If I remember correctly they don't need add codes. Students who do this include ALI students, SDSU students who are in different academic statuses, and students from other universities.
 - ***Disability:***
 - Make an announcement about disability issues on the first day of class and have something in your syllabus. They will tell you about any issues now, but nothing happens until an exam. Then you need to accommodate their learning disability. SDS, the testing center, is super helpful with proctoring exams, etc.

- **Printing**
 - ***Printer Locations***
 - Black and white printer (department mailroom), color printer (Color Pig in CESAR).
 - ***Printer Quotas***
 - All funded graduate students have a quota of 400 pages / month on the mailroom, 10 pages / week on the color printer (Color Pig in CESAR). The quotes are reset monthly for the mailroom printer and weekly for the color printer.
 - ***Contacts***
 - Contact person on printing is Marcus Chiu.
- **Labs**
 - ***Preparation***
 - Do a run through of every lab, make sure all equipment and software are available. For software -- you want to check to make sure at least a day before the lab, because updates and server outages can mess up the run files
 - ***Facilitation***
 - Make sure to introduce main aspects of the lab AND put it in context of concepts in the class or goals
 - ***Equipment***
 - You are responsible for making sure it is all there and ready and knowing how to use it
 - Not knowing how to use it will reflect badly on you, particularly if it's your first day
 - ***Reporting problems***
 - Physical Geography Lab -- OLeary; Computer Labs: Printing -- Marcus, Software - - Marcus or Dave, Anything else in computer labs -- Dave
 - ***Scanner***
 - in CESAR and now mailroom
 - ***Student accounts, software, labs***

- Lab scheduling -- Make sure you go over it with Harry
Student accounts AND software -- Set up with Marcus!
- **WebPortal**
 - **Website:** https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/portal_static.faculty_menu
 - **Accessing lists**
 - WebRoster → Choose semester → choose section (if applicable) → roster will be displayed
 - Can download roster as Excel
 - **Making add codes**
 - Access class through WebRoster as above
 - Add Codes link (not available until 3 days before classes start)
 - **Submitting final grades:**
https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/portal_static.final_grade
 - **Dropping students**
 - When and why: up to you; Students can use form/drop as well up to drop deadline; Faculty has a special drop period (approx. 24 hours after the drop deadline) to use WebDrop (accessed through WebPortal) to remove students; Anything after is REALLY REALLY HARD....
 - What the designations mean:
https://sunspot.sdsu.edu/pls/webapp/portal_static.grade_explanation
- **Crashers**
 - **How to pick who to add?**
 - Up to you: first come, first serve, or random lottery, or Stuart's method of not making a decision on the first day and forcing them to come to all class meetings and adding those who do.
 - **How many to add?**
 - Again, up to you: the more you add, the more work you make for yourself. On the other hand, adding more crashers is good for the department. Do not exceed the room's capacity (written on room number by door) or you will have issues come exam day.

Topics and Discussion 1

- **Themes**
 - *Laptop Policy*
 - *Class Size*
 - *Assignments*
 - *Exams*
- **Laptop Policy**
 - See posted laptop application (Thanks, Denise!)
- **Class Size**
 - See posted handout (Thanks, Denise!)
- **Assignments**
 - What the Best College Teachers Do by Ken Bain (Thanks, Leah!)
- **Exams**
 - *Exams aren't everything*
 - other ways to assess, get participation, learn, etc.. for students: individual meetings - option; can require ppl to come to office hours each semester; good idea if there aren't too many students to check in and look at any issues → more work
 - *Making the Exam*
 - Need to consider their learning AND your time/resources
 - Most effective for learning to have faster feedback, while the questions are still fresh in their minds
 - --PROPORTIONAL TO TIME AND MATERIALS IN CLASS
 - Making it tricky doesn't help people learn. You want to show them what they're learning!
 - Mix up the types of questions: (Each with pros and cons) Questions can focus on certain skills but the difficulty level can vary by professor
 - Multiple choice, T/F, short answer, matching, essay, fill-in-the-blank
 - --Warm up questions at beginning
 - --Include a challenging question that is interesting for more advanced students but still approachable or not overweighted

- --Do a run through to test the length of time (not too long, not too short)
--TCG book : formula for time : Multiple choice question 1 minute; Short answer 2-3, Short essay 10 min.
- **Preparing Students**
 - Study Guide: up to you, good idea. What topics and ideas you want people to know/focus on BUT don't give them the questions. Make it in line with the class and goals
Sample of questions (you can make a handout)
EXPLAIN STRUCTURE BEFOREHAND
Review sessions: some do some don't
- **Facilitating Exam**
 - --Color-coded, multiple versions to discourage cheating. Switching around a few answers does not take too long.
--Correcting them easy -- can integrate multiple versions into scantrons (Alternatively change the coloring and say there are multiple versions when there aren't...?)
OR don't tell them there are multiple versions when there are
---MAKE PEOPLE BUY SCANTRONS AND BLUE BOOKS AT BEGINNING OF SEMESTER & YOU HAND THEM OUT (can't bring them to the exam with anything written on them ahead of time)
-- Open/closed book; notes (what if people have notes on computers?)
--Take home exams
 - BE REFLEXIVE:
assessments for you!: mid- and end of semester class feedback (anonymous, no credit, looking for any problems with the course or suggestions for rest of semester); consider that if you overdo soliciting feedback, you may not generate confidence in your teaching/preparation

Lightning Round 2

- **Topics**
 - *Clickers*
 - *Scantrons*
 - *Smart Classrooms*
 - *Classroom Temperature*
 - *Course Reserves*

- Clickers
- Scantrons
- Smart Classrooms
- Classroom Temperature
- Course Reserves

Guest Discussion (Dr. Aitken)

- Academic dishonesty
 - <http://csrr.sdsu.edu/discipline2.html>
 - <http://csrr.sdsu.edu/complaint3.html>
 - <http://csrr.sdsu.edu/index.html>
 - *Get Dr. Aitken or your advisor involved right away (before meeting with your student about it)*
- Balance in teaching

Topics and Discussion 2

- Themes
 - *Emergency Procedures*
 - *Grading*
 - *Disruptive Students*
 - *Long vs. Short Classes*
 - *Participation Encouragement*
 - *Time Management*
 - *First Day*
- Emergency Procedures
 - Website: <http://bfa.sdsu.edu/emergency/>
 - *Emergency Alert System: https://phonebook.sdsu.edu/ealert/*
 - (sign up to receive text messages to cell in case of emergency)

- **Earthquake/Fire:** <http://www.dps.sdsu.edu/emergresponse.htm>
- **Emergency Posters:**
 - <http://bfa.sdsu.edu/emergency/pdf/EmerChk.pdf>
 - <http://bfa.sdsu.edu/emergency/pdf/EmergencyPosterMain.pdf>
- **Active Shooter/Violent Intruder Protocol: ALICE**
 - <http://www.dps.sdsu.edu/alice.htm>
- **Violence in your Classroom:**
 - (use class phone to call campus police)
Examples of emergencies:
 - Someone is unconscious, not breathing, having a heart attack, or severely injured.
 - Someone is breaking into your room, apartment, or home.
 - You witness someone breaking into a vehicle or stealing a vehicle.
 - There is a fire in a building.
 - There are people physically fighting.
- **To report an emergency:**
 - Dial 9-1-1 from any on-campus or campus property phone.
 - Dial 619-594-1991 from a cell phone.
 - Tell the dispatcher that this is an emergency.
 - Press the emergency button on any campus duress phone, then tell the dispatcher that this is an emergency .
- **Campus Police:** <http://www.dps.sdsu.edu/>
 - <http://www.dps.sdsu.edu/crimefaqs.htm>
- **Sexual Harassment: Office of Employee Relations & Compliance**
 - <http://oerc.sdsu.edu/sexharras.htm>
 - <http://oerc.sdsu.edu/sexharas-stu.html>
- **Grading:**

- **Design**
 - Grading takes time - budget time for it. It is more work than you expect it to be but in the end it is not super-complicated. It's possible that you can find ways to streamline aspects of grading (limit the length of an essay assignment, the amount of space they have for a short essay question, use a rubric, etc.)
 - Grading starts with design. Make rubrics for yourself and give to them.
<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/>
 - Partial credit: yes or no? Either way is fine, you pick but be consistent
- **General principles:**
 - Be fair, consistent.
Tools to help consistency: I call this a consistency sheet (I am ridiculously paranoid about people comparing grades).
 - Keep students informed: not telling them where they stand throughout the course of the semester is not a good idea.
Blackboard is a great tool for this (with some caveats).
- **Minimize student complaints:**
 - Clearly state policies in your syllabus and go over them in class.
 - Late work policy? Missed assignment policy? Missed exam policy? You have the flexibility to set these however you like, but do so ahead of time and stick with it. Do NOT change your policy in the middle of the semester.
- **Angry / underperforming students:**
 - When you meet with the student in your office, have all the relevant materials at hand: the test questions, answer key or criteria, and examples of good answers.
 - Be calm: Listen to the student's concerns and respond in a calm manner. Don't allow yourself to become antagonized, and don't antagonize the student.
 - Explain: Describe the key elements of a good answer, and point out how the student's response was incomplete or incorrect. Help the student understand your reasons for assigning the grade that you did. When you're giving a 3.5 and the student wants to know why its not a 3, you can say things like this: this is a subjective question, it had the right information but was presented incorrectly (not clearly communicating),

- Be firm: Take time to consider the student's request or to reread the exam/essay if you need to, but resist pressures to change a grade because of a student's personal needs (to get into graduate school or graduate with a certain GPA). You should be able to see when you're wrong, but not always cave to them.
 - It might also be helpful to ask the student to prepare (in writing) the complaint or justification for a grade change.
- ***Grading tactics:***
 - Keep accurate records. And backups.
 - Let them know what kind of grader you are: return something to them before the add / drop deadline.
 - Numbers vs. letters on assignments: numbers are better.
 - An option to consider: Rewriting papers when they do poorly. There is a time / reward tradeoff that you need to think about before giving them this option.
 - In my first semester teaching, the first time students got back assignments, I was scared that students would challenge their grades, so I did "soft grading" on the first couple: wrote grade in pencil and made notes on the side. This is especially useful if it is an essay question.
 - Grade an exam question by question, instead of student by student. This helps you be more consistent, and reduces the chance of grading based on students' personality.
 - Be reflexive: check on your grade distribution.
- **Disruptive Students**
 - ***First Day of Class***
 - -- Head them off at the pass: From day 1 -- Consistency in the classroom, responsive to student needs, respectful to them but approachable, make it clear that you want it to be a good learning environment: respectful, participating, engaged, ON TIME
 - Ground rules? -- COME UP WITH THEM TOGETHER? Include communication— COLLEGE student sends me an email with no salutation, no name, no section number and....in text-talk! "U" should not replace "you" in an email to your instructor! Ugh. I had students use text talk on the essay portion of an exam. Unbelievable!

- include your expectations on punctuality -- Tardy students disrupt the class. Make it clear that you expect them to be on time. Set the example. Start on time consistently. Decide how you will deal with students coming in late. Will you allow it at all? Will you dock points? Will you assign them tasks?
- Don't be too casual -- We're all pretty friendly people, so I think we have the most problems with that and not the other extreme. You are the teacher and in a position of authority, you are not there to be friends with students but to do what is best for them and their learning; set clear boundaries (for yourself)

Professionalism -- your dress, your behavior, and in the expectations of theirs (communication, etc..) demeanor

If they are disruptive, it takes away from other students' experience in the class.

- ***Thinking about the causes:***

- Think about why they are disruptive: are they bored? distracted? underchallenged? overchallenged?
--Are you keeping authority, keeping moving on lectures, explaining things well, going too slowly/too fast, shooting down ideas? BUT: it could be a problem with them, and you want to understand why and make it clear that there is acceptable and unacceptable behavior
- This is all a learning experience -- you won't know the right answer you'll gain more knowledge as you go along

- ***Approaching the situation:***

- If issue comes up address the issue right away:
--If you need a place to meet with student (without a lot of other grad students around), I am more than willing to give my office up for a bit or kick ppl out of your office → give students a private space
ALWAYS HAVE DOOR OPEN
--ask them a question to show that you want everyone to be participating productively in the class (people might behave if you draw attention to it)
--if they're on phones or laptops, are you allowing them in the classroom? Make that decision before the start of the semester. If you allow them, there will be distractions. You can change the policy if needed.
--If it becomes necessary, call them out on it -- ask them to pay attention
--Do not be afraid to ask them to leave if it comes to that (obviously don't want to take it that far, but you are the teacher and you are responsible for maintaining control of the discussion)

- --If they're participating too much -- try calling on other people or suggesting to hear from other students first OR frame the exercise, or call for feedback in a way that controls student input broadly (so pair people off and have each pair say something...). This doesn't mean discouraging them from participating, since it's great when you have the learning environment to have people talking and volunteering ideas.

Some more examples of disruptive behaviors: cell phones going off in class, side conversations, off topic questions, always late / leaves early)

incentives to come on time -- interesting news? Why Geography Matters? Fun activity? OR say the most important info then and warn them you will.

incentives to stay the whole time -- points?

- **Long vs. Short Classes**

- **Quick tips:**

- Typical lengths: 2 hour and 40 minutes, 1 hour and 15 minutes, 50 minute.

- **Long classes:**

- you can show movies, do group work, etc. You'll need to give them a break, typically 10 minutes for every hour. Letting them go early is not kosher. In general: change things up every 20 min.

- **Short classes:**

- it's harder to do this: not able to show movies, time goes by quickly.

- **From discussions prior to the workshop:**

- Leah: "Don't feel like you need to lecture the whole time or cover everything - less may be more in lectures. I think students learn better through discussion, group work, etc. and limited lectures." Ryan G.: "75 consecutive minutes of lecturing can be tough for a new teacher and his or her students."

- **Participation Encouragement**

- **Planning:**

- Participation encouragement begins in the planning stage. From the beginning of class, let them know that you encourage participation. Include calling on people who don't participate, and asking people to participate too much to give others a chance. On the first day, show them what your expectation is. Are you going to grade it? How? Learning modes: ELSIE learning styles inventory.

- ***Executing:***

- Ways to do it: lectures, discussion, small group work. Think, pair, share is one way. Jigsaw (mentioned by Stuart) is another. Prepare: have “discussion questions” planted in your lecture plan. Maybe “follow up questions” too. Ask engagement questions vs. knowledge questions.
- (e.g. true questions that we don’t know the answer to, questions about students’ personal experiences, questions with multiple “right” answers, or that reveal critical thinking or concept comprehension).

- ***Listening and responding:***

- Give them time to think. Silence is not a problem. There will always be one student (or a small group) who answer all the time. Do not rely on this person, because then the class will rely on them also and not answer. Encourage responses: Repeat to clarify, summarize points made by students, redirect student responses at other students. Don’t be one of those teachers who only want one answer – “guess what answer I’m thinking of.”
- Here are some tips on how to present info in interesting ways:
 - Relate things to their daily lives: In a human geography course, I’ve done the geography of your closet / or the geography of Nordstroms. Kate has a human migration thingie. In a physical class, I’ve had a local photo essay.
 - Bring in different sources: This is a bit more work, but you can mix up the things you do to bring stuff into the classroom. Google Earth is my go to for urban geography Youtube has a zillion clips that can illustrate all kinds of fun things. Practitioners: instead of telling them about urban planning in US and Canada, bring in a planner from SANDAG. Or someone from the local wetlands. Guest speakers: people around you are interested in different things, if it works see if you can drag others in.
- - Have them learn different ways: take home assignments (like the ecological footprint quiz) can drive home a point more effectively than a lecture.

- **Time Management**

- ***Organization***

- -Do it
- Consider your time/projects when making decisions about your class -- ease of assignment and time in grading/preparation

- ***Prioritizing***

- Juggling projects (Classes, Teaching, Research, and Living)
 - This is the first time you may have to balance all these things to such an extent
 - Giving time to each project -- breaking each one into achievable pieces
 - Reasonable deadlines --- > give yourself 3 times as much as you think
 - When you're working on a project, ONLY work on that specific objective (DON'T multitask)
 - Return grades/assignments promptly
 - Reduce distractions
- NOTHING WILL BE AS PERFECT AS YOU WANT IT TO BE

- ***SET BOUNDARIES***

- SAY NO
 - don't answer everything right away, respond promptly BUT remember your priorities. Students don't control your life. If you respond to them at 2 am, they will expect you to be available then.

- ***Avoiding Burnout:***

- -GET SLEEP AND FOOD AND EXERCISE -- if you aren't getting those, you won't get things done and will not deal well with students or yourself
- DON'T set yourself up for burnout

- **First Day**

- ***Set the tone***

- Be on time.
- [write name and course name on board]
 - Be professional, dress, language, presentation of course.
- Be clear about expectations
- Good time to set boundaries: for example communication and contact, what they should call you, class conduct
- Have enough copies of handouts, syllabi, etc.
- Smile.
- OPTIONAL:
- Use index card for quick feedback on 1st day (main concerns, etc...)
 - Let them go early.

- **Introductions**
 - Introduce yourself
INTRODUCE COURSE!!!
[introduce fellow students, depending on class size; alternatives: nothing, or get-to-know-you sheet]

- **Syllabus**
 - READ syllabus
 - Ask for and answer syllabus questions.
Clarify policies: Plagiarism, etc.

- **Crashers**
 - Deal with crashers/forms (Open University, etc.)

- **Class materials**
 - Bring book -- say where materials are and what they need
Introduction to class on blackboard

Syllabus/Lecture/Semester Plan

- **Requirements:**
 - **CHECKLIST:**
 - http://www.sdsu.edu/curriculumguide/curriculum_files/93-106_Syllabi_SLO.pdf

- **Things to remember:**
 - Syllabus as contract. This is what I do, this is what you do.
 - Syllabus as a multipurpose document: it is also an introduction to you and the course, and a teaching / learning resource.

- **Tips:**

- Give yourself flexibility (put in a day or even a week of Catch up / To be determined).
Be specific
Be friendly (my syllabus has “an interest in cities” as one of the required materials. at the end of the policies: “I plan on having fun in this class and I hope you do to”)
Disclaimer: schedule subject to change.
For due dates: work backwards. When do you want a final paper to come in? then two weeks later you want the rough draft to come in, etc.
If you’re new to writing a syllabus, have an experienced colleague review it.
Students need reminders when things are due, even if they are in the syllabus.
Post it on BB.
- Deadlines
There are two separate deadlines for adding and dropping classes each term. Beginning spring 2011, the last day to drop classes is the 10th day of the semester at 11:59 p.m., and the last day to add is the 12th day of the semester at 11:59 p.m.
- The specific schedule adjustment deadlines for fall 2011 are:

[Drop classes](#) by September 12 at 11:59 p.m.

[Add classes](#) by September 14 at 11:59 p.m.

Change grading basis by September 14 at 11:59 p.m..

Withdraw from the university by September 14 at 11:59 p.m.
- Faculty have the *option to* drop you from their course for non-attendance or lack of required prerequisites. The fall 2011 faculty drop deadline is September 8. You must check your schedule prior to the drop deadline to make sure faculty have performed this action.
Source: http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/registrar/schedule_adjustment.html

- ***Examples and Discussion***

Further Resources

- **EACH OTHER!!!!**
- **Other students who have taught**
- **Advisors**
- **Dr. Aitken (Department Chair)**
- **Dr. O'Leary (Teaching College Geography Instructor)**
- **Geography Faculty Development Alliance (GFDA) website**
- **Solem, Michael N., Kenneth E. Foote, and Janice J. Monk. 2009. *Aspiring Academics: A Resource Book for Graduate Students and Early Career Faculty*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.**
- **Solem, Michael N., and Kenneth E. Foote. 2009. *Teaching College Geography: A Practical Guide for Graduate Students and Early Career Faculty*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall.**