

Teaching Mentorship Program for Ph.D. Student-Teachers

Approved March 28th 2013

Rationale: A long-standing commitment to our Ph.D. students has been offering them the option to teach one or more courses after they have passed their comprehensive exams. This allows them to gain teaching experience which is often required when applying for tenure-track jobs; it allows the department to diversify its course offering or offer standard courses when regular faculty are on leave; and it helps to financially support the students. Although we now notify incoming Ph.D. students that the offer to teach a course is “subject to budget” it is our hope that we can continue this practice in the future.

Our current Ph.D. cohort has asked for more support in making the transition from researcher to teacher. We do have a practice of mentorship with new tenure-track faculty, and it may be that the Ph.D. students need mentoring as much or more. Other universities provide a variety of mechanisms to support Ph.D. students transitioning into the role of teachers, and we would like to be at the forefront of best practices in this area.

Proposed Mentoring Program

All Ph.D. students will be advised by the Graduate Director of opportunities to improve their teaching readiness and capacity including: 1) courses and workshops offered by the Learning and Teaching Centre, including the Curriculum Design Institute; 2) with permission, attending regular lectures by department faculty to observe different teaching styles. Where helpful, the Graduate Director will facilitate student participation in these opportunities.

There are two opportunities for Ph.D. students to participate in the mentorship program.

1. Ph.D. students who have been assigned one or more courses may apply to the chair for a teaching mentor.

- a. With the assistance of the student’s supervisor and the graduate director, the chair will identify appropriate faculty and seek a volunteer to take on the mentor role. Consideration will be given to areas of expertise and availability during the semester before and during the new student-teacher’s course. Normally this will occur four to eight months prior to the start of the course.
- b. The role of the student-teacher is: i) to make contact with the mentor well in advance of the beginning of the course and propose a timeline for the mentorship; ii) to prepare a draft syllabus; iii) to meet with the mentor to review the syllabus and explore options for course structure and assignments; iv) to provide the mentor with the final syllabus and assignments; v) to schedule a post-course meeting with the mentor to review the course.

- c. The role of the mentor is: i) to share curriculum materials, syllabi, etc... with the student-teacher; ii) to meet with the student-teacher well prior to the start of the course to review the syllabus and explore options for course structure and assignments; iii) to be available during the course to answer teaching related questions that arise; iv) if possible attend one or two of the student-teacher's classes as a peer observer and give feedback; v) if requested, co-mark a few assignments with the student-teacher to share ideas and standards; v) to have a post-course meeting with the student-teacher to review the course.
2. **Ph.d Candidates who have completed comprehensive exams may apply for a teaching mentor even if they have no teaching assigned.** With the assistance of the student's supervisor and the graduate director, the chair will identify appropriate faculty and seek a volunteer to take on the mentor role. In such cases the student would sit in on some of the mentor's lectures (and with permission, other faculty members' lectures as well), and meet with the mentor several times to discuss approaches to teaching, course design and other teaching-related matters. While the student will give one or more guest lectures in the mentor's classes with the goal of getting feedback they will have no major responsibility for the management of the course.

Student-teachers will be able to state on their cv that they have completed the UVic History Department Teacher Mentorship program.

Mentorship work will be considered part of the scholarship of teaching and mentors will be able to indicate their mentorship duties in their Teaching Dossier as part of their annual review. Mentoring will be a factor considered in nominations for awards for teaching excellence.