

WOH 5932 Teaching Practicum
Spring 2026
Weds 3:00-6:00
Seminar Room & K-F 121 (aka “lab”)

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OH [for grads only]: Mon 11-12
also available by appointment

DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

The Teaching Practicum offers graduate students an opportunity for intensive exploration of the craft of teaching History to college students. The course has three primary goals. First, students will gain exposure to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL) and resources available via university centers for teaching and learning. We will use these to think deeply and critically about pedagogy and what it means to be a scholarly teacher. Second, students will develop their own teaching craft through weekly collaborative workshops and practice-teaching labs. These activities will help students develop a teaching portfolio, the most substantial component of which is a syllabus for a course they expect to teach in the future. Third, the class will offer an open and encouraging space for students serving as TAs, graders, and instructors to discuss ongoing classroom experiences during the semester.

WHAT WE WILL READ

Antoinette Burton, *A Primer for Teaching World History: Ten Design Principles*. Duke University Press, 2012. [available as an eBook at uflib.ufl.edu]

Ken Bain, *Super Courses: The Future of Teaching and Learning*. Princeton University Press, 2021. [available as an eBook at uflib.ufl.edu]

Carlo Rotella, *What Can I Get Out of This? Teaching and Learning in a Classroom Full of Skeptics*. University of California Press, 2025.

Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning [hereafter “PCTL”], [Teaching Resource Library](#)

+ selected articles and chapters

Note: UF’s Center for Teaching Excellence also provides an [Instructor Guide](#).

WHAT YOU WILL DO

1) Keep a design notebook [15%], either on paper or electronically, over the course of the semester. You will use it to reflect on your own learning and teaching in light of

course readings and discussions, prepare your teaching statement, lay the groundwork for the assignments, lesson, and course you design, record observations and takeaways from conversations with faculty, etc. I will collect these periodically.

2) Teaching observation/conversations [included in design notebook grade]: arrange to observe a faculty member (preferably one with whom you do not regularly interact) teaching a class and have a conversation with them about teaching after the observation. Arrange another conversation with a different faculty member about the course you are designing; ideally this will be with someone who has taught a similar or related course and will include a review of a draft syllabus.

3) Design and (briefly) present an active learning activity or assignment, with objectives stated [5%]

4) Develop and practice a 20-minute lesson [15%]: this can be a mini-lecture, a discussion, a hybrid (lecture + discussion), or an in-class activity.

5) Present (or practice) an element of your course using one of the “tools” (the event, genealogy, empire) or technologies (digital history resource, archive stories, testing) in *A Primer for Teaching World History*, Parts II and III [10%]

6) Compile a teaching portfolio [40%] that includes the following:

- a teaching statement
- a list of courses you can/ would like to teach
- a 1-page “Historical thinking” (or alternative) hand out
- a sample syllabus, detailed and annotated
- a set of teaching evaluations (if available) and/or a self-composed evaluation form, customized for the course you are designing

Note: the syllabus is worth 30% and the other elements 10%.

+ contribute to class discussions, engage in collaborative assignments, offer feedback to your peers, help develop the department’s new UF History Teaching Resources Canvas site, etc. [15%]

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

Week 1 Jan 14 Introductions & planning

Parker J. Palmer, “Good Talk About Good Teaching: Improving Teaching Through Conversation and Community,” *Change* 25, 6 (Nov/Dec 1993): 8-13.

Sam Wineburg, “Historical thinking and other unnatural acts,” Kappanmagazine.org 92, n 4 (Dec 2010/Dec 2011): 81-94 [originally published in *Phi Delta Kappan* 80, no. 7 (Mar 1999): 488-99].

For reflection:

> Does Palmer's characterization of teaching as a private matter hold true in 2026? Beyond this course, how do you plan to seek out conversation and community about teaching?

> What does "historical thinking" mean to you? What are some strategies you currently use and/or have observed for getting students to learn and develop the historian's habits of mind?

Workshop:

1) finalize class choice ballot

2) identify faculty to observe and develop discussion topics and questions based on course goals and topics

Week 2 Jan 21 The big picture; starting points

Robert Boice, "Quick Starters: Characteristics of New Faculty Who Succeed." *New Directions for Teaching and Learning* 48 (Winter 1991): 111-21.

See also Claudia Stanny, "[Adopt characteristics of "Quick Starters" for a successful faculty career](#)" (2019).

David Pace, "The Amateur in the Operating Room: History and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning." *AHR* 109, 4 (Oct 2004): 1171-92.

Burton, *A Primer for Teaching World History*, "Introduction: Why Design?"

For reflection:

> Which characteristics of quick starters do you already possess or hope to develop? Which of Stanny's strategies might you implement? If these characteristics and strategies feel unhelpful to you, what alternatives are you pursuing?

> How do you approach the relationship between scholarship and teaching?

> What, according to Pace, are the priorities of "scholarly teachers"? Do you aspire to this idea and the practices it requires? If not, what alternative approach are you pursuing?

> Why, according to Burton, is it important to pay attention to design in teaching? What does this mean for you now (if you are currently teaching) and/or in the future?

To do:

- Look at current and recent job ads in your field on H-Net, *Perspectives*, etc. Start compiling a list of courses you might be asked to teach. Note the pedagogical elements of various job applications. You might also ask one of our recent hires (Strickland, Billups, and Barnard) what pedagogical materials they prepared for their job searches.
- Start reaching out to instructors to schedule classroom visits and conversations.
- Vote on topics for Weeks 12 and 13

Workshop: Analyze job ads and identify elements of teaching portfolios.

Week 3 Jan 28 Insights from cognitive theory | Active learning

Christina Petersen, et. al., "The Tyranny of Content: 'Content Coverage' as a Barrier to Evidence-Based Teaching Approaches and Ways to Overcome It." *CBE-Life Sciences Education* 19: ar17 (Summer 2020): 1-10.

PCTL, [Learning Styles as a Myth](#) and [Active Learning](#)

Bain, *Super Courses*, 1-48.

See also:

J. Patrick McCarthy and Liam Anderson, "Active Learning Techniques vs. Traditional Teaching Styles: Two Experiments from History and Political Science," *Innovative Higher Education* 24 (2000): 279-94.

Keith Barton, "[Research on Students' Historical Thinking and Learning](#)," *Perspectives* 42, 7 (Oct 2004).

For reflection:

- > List the various learning experiences you've had as a student. Which approaches have been the most and least effective and why?
- > What insights (and questions) do you take away from these authors' observations about how students learn?
- > In what ways have you witnessed or experienced the "tyranny of content", "the expert's curse", "productive failure", etc. in the teaching of history?
- > What is active learning?
- > Do you intend to adopt learner-centered teaching practices? If not, what do you like about and want to maintain from traditional approaches to teaching history?

To do: compose a preliminary, one-paragraph proposal for the course you will be designing this semester. Bring two hard copies to class.

Workshop: small group discussions of course proposals

Week 4 Feb 4 Teaching during challenging times

Rotella, *What Can I Get Out of This?*

See also: PCTL, [Teaching During Challenging Times](#)

For reflection (to help lay the groundwork for your teaching statement):

- > what gets you excited about teaching?
- > what is your teaching persona?
- > what kind of classroom environment do you like to create?
- > what are your goals as a teacher?

also, if you have had experience Taing or grading for a 1000- or 2000-level History course:

> what has worked (and what hasn't) for getting students, especially non-majors, engaged?

To do: prepare with group members to lead discussion of assigned chapter

Workshop/lab: exchange engagement strategies for AMH 2010/2020 and other gen ed courses

Week 5 Feb 11 Teaching, learning, and assessing historical thinking

Arlene Diaz, Joan Middendorf, David Pace, and Leah Shopkow, "The History Learning Project: A Department "Decodes" Its Students," *JAH* (March 2008): 1211-24.

AHA, [Tuning the History Discipline](#) with the History Discipline Core (2016)

[Forum: Assessment](#), *Perspectives* 53, 1 (Jan 2015).

Sam Wineburg, Mark Smith, and Joel Breakstone. "What is Learned in College History Classes?" *JAH* (Mar 2018): 983-93.

AHA, [Statement on Standards of Professional Conduct](#).

See also:

[Forum: The Tuning Project](#), *Perspectives* 51, 4 (Apr 2013).

David Pace, "Thoughts on history, tuning and the scholarship of teaching and learning in the United States." *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 16,4 (2017).

For reflection/ to do:

> What "bottlenecks" did Diaz et. al. identify and how did they explain and address them? What bottlenecks have you encountered as either a learner or a teacher of history?

> What were the goals of the Tuning Project? What do you think of the idea of defining a core and its current iteration?

> What approaches best promote students' learning of historical thinking?

To do: Identify the top three or four disciplinary ways of thinking/ habits of mind you will emphasize in your teaching. Start compiling a list of key terms, concepts, arguments, theories, methods, etc. that are specific to the course you are developing.

Workshop: design historical thinking handouts (see Rotella, 58-9) for students in lower-division survey courses.

Week 6 Feb 18 Planning with objectives and outcomes in mind

PCTL, [Writing Learning Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes](#)

University of Michigan, [Strategies for Effective Lesson Planning](#)

Bloom's Taxonomy: [PCTL](#) and Univ of Michigan [graphic version](#)

For reflection: Finalize your historical thinking handout. Continue compiling the list of key terms, concepts, arguments, theories, methods, etc. specific to your course.

To do: based on one of the items on your handout and/or list, develop an active-learning activity and/or assignment, with objectives stated, for your proposed course. Provide copies for everyone.

Lab: present active-learning activity/assignments

Note: let me know in advance if you are designing a (short) in-class activity and would like to try it out in workshop.

Week 7 Feb 25 Uncoverage and backward design

PCTL, [Teaching and Learning Frameworks](#)

Lendol Calder, "Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey," *JAH* 92, 4 (March 2006): 1358-70.

Joel Sipress and David Voelker, "The End of the History Survey Course: The Rise and Fall of the Coverage Model," *JAH* 97, 4 (2011): 1050-66. [focus on first and last sections]

Bain, *Super Courses*, Ch 14 "A Personal Journey Toward a Super Course"

For reflection:

- > What are the main principles of backward design (or another teaching and learning framework that speaks to you)? If these frameworks aren't helpful, how are you approaching course design?
- > How can "uncoverage" and "backward design" lead to more effective general education survey courses? How would you use or adapt one of the strategies discussed by Calder or Sipress and Voelker to teach History in lower-division survey courses?
- > According to Bain, what are the benefits (and drawbacks) of using films, role-playing games, reading and writing parties, and projects to teach history?

Lab: practice lessons

Week 8 Mar 4 History course design

Burton, *A Primer for Teaching World History*, 1-72

Lab: practice lessons

Week 9 Mar 11 History course design, con't.

Burton, *A Primer for Teaching World History*, 73-129

Lab: practice lessons

Week 10 Mar 18 Spring break

Week 11 Mar 25 [class to end at 4:30]

To do (if you are not presenting): compile a list of items for potential inclusion in the UF History Teaching Resources Canvas page; ask fellow graduate students for suggestions and, if they have taught before, contributions.

Lab: present or practice *Primer* tool or technology

Week 12 Apr 1 [class choice]

reading and/or visitor tba

To do (if you are not presenting): compile a list of items for potential inclusion in the UF History Teaching Resources Canvas page; ask fellow graduate students for suggestions and, if they have taught before, contributions.

Lab: present or practice *Primer* tool or technology

Week 13 Apr 8 [class choice]

reading and/or visitor tba

Lab: present or practice *Primer* tool or technology

To do (if you are not presenting): compile a list of items for potential inclusion in the UF History Teaching Resources Canvas page; ask fellow graduate students for suggestions and, if they have taught before, contributions.

14 Apr 15 Why (and how) I do this! Teaching statements

resources and sample teaching statements forthcoming

Workshop: teaching statements

15 Apr 22 Wrap up

Class choice options [for discussion and/or practice in Weeks 12 and 13]

We will be discussing the relationship between teaching and research, teaching inclusively, and teaching with AI throughout the semester. But, if the majority so chooses, we can schedule devoted discussions for these topics. Other potential topics for devoted discussion include:

- the first day/week;
- leading discussions;
- the practice of grading/ responding to academic integrity violations;
- handling classroom challenges;
- helping distressed students;
- teaching writing;
- teaching with digital history;
- teaching with attention the more-than-human world;
- community-engaged teaching.