

Balancing the Academic Workload: a program for Graduate students while they are teaching discussions associated with large lecture classes.

Goal: A second goal of our HHMI teaching fellows program is to help graduate students develop strategies that allow them to continue making progress in their thesis research, while learning to be effective instructors.

Implementation: We work with the TAs to help them set realistic research goals before they begin teaching. Midway through the quarter we discuss their progress and help them readjust their goals if necessary. At the end of the quarter each student evaluates their research performance and identifies strategies that helped them achieve their goals. The ability to juggle these two very time intensive activities requires good time management, a skill that will benefit everyone, not only those who pursue academic careers. The 2006 TA were asked to list at least one tip that they had for future TAs that they felt would help them successfully balance teaching and research. We prepared a document of best practices based on comments provided by each of the 14 TA who participated in the HHMI teaching fellow program.

Modifications in the course based on student feedback were implemented this year including having a set form that all students fill out, and an initial session on time management strategies. The course is also optional this Fall and 13/18 TAs associated with Bio 93, Bio 97 and Bio 103 are currently enrolled.

Course Syllabus

Dev.Bio 208 Sem A,
Syllabus

Title: Seminar in Balancing the Academic Workload
Course Code 09098, Fall 2007
Course website: <https://eee.uci.edu/07f/09098/>

Instructor: Diane O'Dowd, dkodowd@uci.edu

Course Goals and Description:

The goal of this course is to offer graduate students who have commitments outside of their research program (such as teaching) an opportunity to learn to balance these commitments.

Prerequisites:

None.

Reading Lists and/or Texts:

Optional Text: Curzan and Damour, First Day to Final Grade: A Graduate Student's Guide to Teaching, University of Michigan Press, 2006.

TOPICAL COURSE OUTLINE

1. Developing realistic expectations

2. How long does preparation need to take?
3. Developing research teaching plan
4. How to stop when your activity is good enough
5. Keeping your PI appraised of your progress
6. Evaluating research progress
7. Identifying and evaluating balancing strategies

Class	Topic	Hours	Assignment
#1	Balancing the academic load, workshop	2	Fill out urgent vs important graph Start calendar of activities
#2	Evaluating goals tutorials	2	Turn in research goals outline
#3	Evaluating midterm progress tutorials	2	Turn in midterm progress
#4	Evaluating teaching progress tutorials	2	Respond to teaching progress report
#5	Evaluating accomplishments, tutorials	2	Turn in a) research accomplishments b) Useful balancing strategy

Grading and Course Requirements:

To pass each student must complete, by indicated deadlines, all section of the Research Report Form (see attachment) and respond in writing with action plan to a midterm evaluation of teaching progress. May be taken once only for credit

Research Report Form: Research Goals, Midterm progress, and Final Research Accomplishments

Dev Bio 208 A, Course Code 09098, Title: Balancing the Academic workload
HHMI-UCI Graduate Teaching Fellows, Fall 2007
Instructor: Diane O'Dowd

Instructions: To help you make progress toward accomplishing your research goals while also TAing this quarter, complete appropriate sections and email by due dates specified to Diane O'Dowd (dkodowd@uci.edu) and **cc your thesis advisor**. Final document should have ALL sections completed.

Graduate Student Name:

TA assignment:

Thesis Advisor:

9/30/07 Summary (150 words max). *Include what your lab is interested in, brief introduction to your specific project, and general research goals for the quarter.*

9/30/07 Research goals outline (1 page max). *Goals can include specific experiments, writing (for example completion of an abstract for meeting), learning new techniques, etc. Prioritize and include estimates of times for completion of each goal*

11/2/07 Research progress (1 page max). *Evaluate your progress to date and revise goals for second 5 weeks if necessary.*

12/14/07 Research accomplishments (1 page max). *Summarize your accomplishments and describe at least one suggestion for a strategy that you developed or implemented that you found helpful in making forward progress toward one or more of your research goals.*