THE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

What is it?

What goes in one?

How can I start making one?

teaching.uchicago.edu
Why do I need a Teaching Portfolio?

• To get an interview!

• To support and illustrate claims made in your cover letter

• To provide a narrative introduction to your teaching abilities

• To demonstrate the depth and breadth of your teaching (even with limited experience)
Philosophy of Teaching Statement

- **Main component** of teaching portfolio
- **Most requested** teaching document
- **Hard** to write (personal genre)
- **Multiple** drafts
Philosophy of Teaching Statement

• Good news: we can help!

• Better news: we will start today!
Philosophy of Teaching Statement

• What does it look like?

• What should it communicate?

• What kinds of goals does it articulate?
Nancy Chism, Developing a PTS

• Conceptualization of the learning process
  • How do students learn best?

• Conceptualization of teaching
  • What is the role of the teacher?

• Goals for students
  • Discipline specific goals
  • General skills based goals
  • Experiential goals/real world application

• Implementation of Philosophy
  • Typical activities in your classroom that link up to goals and concepts

• Personal Growth Plan
  • How has your perspective on teaching changed and/or what are your goals for the future?
As you look at the sample teaching statements distributed to your group, try to answer the following questions:

1. What evidence can you find that indicate the author is an effective classroom teacher?

2. What kinds of examples does the instructor use, and how they connect to the overall teaching philosophy?

3. How does the instructor highlight an attention to student learning?

4. How is the statement organized? What kind of tone does the instructor employ?
Debrief of PTS Group Activity

- Opening –motivation as a teacher/discipline oriented
- Conceptualization of learning process
- Conceptualization of teaching –role of instructor
- Goals for students
  - Discipline specific
  - General skills based
  - Real world/experiential
- Implementation
  - Examples of approach and claims that support that approach
- Personal growth/assessment
- Organization/coherence
  - All parts of the essay are connected
  - Narrative that tells a story and is readable
- Tone
  - Personal but also professional
  - Not finished learning everything about how to teach, but reflective and committed to improvement
Philosophy of Teaching Statement: General Guidelines

- “I do this” or “students think I’m good” vs “This is what I’ve learned about teaching and learning” or “I help students do this” –frame as an observation or reflection

- Instead of listing teaching strategies, integrate them into conceptual framework of essay

- When possible, avoid the words “try to” and “hope to”. Rather, tell the reader what you “do”.

- When possible, avoid referring to your work as “TAing”. TAing is teaching, and that’s what you should talk about. In the same vein, references to yourself as a graduate student are usually unnecessary. The reader knows your status. Talk about yourself as a teacher.

- Whenever possible, include the specific content of what you were teaching. For example, rather than writing, “when I was TAing in American History, I asked my students to take on roles ...” write, “when I teaching the Federalist Papers, my students took on the roles of Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay…”

- When describing what you do in class, include the impact on student learning.

- Use an example of a struggling student or struggling class. Talk about how you helped students overcome an intellectual or practical challenge.
Your Philosophy of Teaching Statement Should Show That:

• You’ve **thought** about teaching
  • How students learn
  • How are you engaged in this process

• You can **apply** what you’ve learned to a broad range of classroom environments and student populations
  • How do you address student needs?
  • What motivates you to design courses the way you do?

• You’ve taught **successfully**
  • How have you fulfilled your goals for teaching?
  • What specific classroom strategies have worked best and what evidence can you supply to demonstrate their success?

• You continue to **reflect** upon your teaching skills
  • What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses and what are you doing to overcome them?
  • What future goals (specific or general) do you have for your teaching?
THE TEACHING PORTFOLIO

What are its main components?
The Teaching Portfolio

**Teaching Documents**

- Philosophy of Teaching Statement
- Teaching Biography
- Syllabi
  - Courses taught (1-2)
  - Projected Courses (paragraph descriptions)
- Selective sample assignments, rubrics, lesson plans, graded student work

**Professional Development**

- Pedagogical Training
  - CCT seminars and workshops, pedagogy courses, other training
- Evaluations and Feedback
  - Student evaluations
  - Third party feedback (CCT, peers, faculty)

[teaching.uchicago.edu](http://teaching.uchicago.edu)
• **Questions:**

1. What kinds of materials does the instructor include?

2. How do the materials relate to one another?

3. What kind of reflection does each component provide?
Sample Syllabi

• **How many?**
  - Include a maximum of 2 taught or projected syllabi, one intro and one advanced
  - Other projected courses: paragraph descriptions: a few (again intro/advanced) to show breadth

• **How much detail?**
  - Enough to show you know how to design a course
  - Objectives, key questions, course format, texts, assignments, and relevant policies
• **What to include?**
  • A reasonable and well-described sample (annotate it!)
  • More recent ones are better, but show variety of roles if available

• **How to present them?**
  • Tally them! (no screen shots or long formats)
  • Include only what is necessary and present both data and comments

• **Where to find (most of) them?**
  • [https://classes.uchicago.edu](https://classes.uchicago.edu)
Third Party Feedback

- **Solicit now:**
  - Letters from students
  - Letters from colleagues or faculty that have observed your teaching
  - CCT individual teaching consultation or mid-course review
• Don’t include everything, only evidence that makes your case

• Use annotations to converse with the reader

• Consider putting your materials online
Welcome!

On October 28th, 2014, I defended my dissertation in the Department of Germanic Studies at the University of Chicago, and I graduated officially in December.

I am currently the first to hold a postdoctoral position in the newly created Humanities Teaching Scholar Program at the University of Chicago, which includes the teaching of several courses across the German Studies curriculum in 2015.

This page gives you some insight into my teaching methods, experience, and materials. Feel free to request additional documents.

If you would like to read a letter of reference that specifically addresses my teaching, please contact Catherine Bauman at cbauman@uchicago.edu.

Curious about Animal Studies? Read a brief interview about my work in this field here.
The Online Portfolio: Courses Taught

Stand-Alone Instructor: Self-Designed Literature Courses (2)

"Das Unheimliche: Monsters in Early German Film," third-year German curriculum, University of Chicago, Winter 2013.

"Kafka and Beyond: German Jewish Literature Then and Now," English-language literature course for adult learners, University of Chicago Graham School of Continuing Liberal and Professional Education, Autumn 2012.

Stand-Alone Instructor: Self-Designed Language and Culture Courses (3)

"Nie wieder Krieg! Coming to Terms with National Trauma in Germany and the US," second-year German curriculum, two sections, University of Chicago, Winter 2015.

"Alles Bio oder was? Transcultural Perspectives on Umweltschutz and Sustainability," second-year German curriculum, University of Chicago, Autumn 2014.

"Deutsche Märchen: German through Fairy Tales," second-year German curriculum, two sections, University of Chicago, Autumn 2011.

Stand-Alone Instructor: German Language Courses* (6)

"Intensive German for Beginners," sequence II, University of Chicago, Summer 2014.

"Intensive German for Beginners," sequence I and III, University of Chicago, Summer 2014.

"Elementary German for Beginners," sequence III, University of Chicago, Spring 2010.

"Elementary German for Beginners," sequence II, University of Chicago, Winter 2010.

"Elementary German for Beginners," sequence I, University of Chicago, Autumn 2009.

Teaching Assistant: Discussion Sections with Reading and Writing Focus (4)

"Intensive German for Beginners," sequence II, University of Chicago, Summer 2014.

"Kafka's Novels," undergraduate literature course in the "Languages across the Curriculum" series, University of Chicago, Winter 2012.

"Intensive German for Beginners," sequence II and III, University of Chicago, Summer 2012.

In the University of Chicago's quarter system, sequences I, II, and III correspond to the complete first year of German. There is a standard syllabus for the first-year sequence, but cultural and reading components are chosen by the instructors. All other courses are self-designed. See syllabi here.

Class sizes varied from 5 to 21 and included students of all levels and ages: from high school, college, and graduate students to adults, and from complete novices to heritage speakers. See course evaluations here.
The Online Portfolio: Sample Syllabi

Joela M. Jacobs

Syllabi & Materials

Syllabi of Courses Taught

New Courses

Assignment and Grading Samples
Syllabi of Courses Taught

Third-Year German
Das Unheimliche: Monsters in Early German Film

English-Language Literature Course for Adults
Kafka and Beyond: German Jewish Literature Then and Now

Second-Year German
Alles Bio oder was? Transcultural Perspectives on Umweltgeschichte and Sustainability
Deutsche Märchen: German through Fairy Tales

Subpages (4): Literature Course for Adults in English  Second Year German  Second Year German  Third Year German
Joela M. Jacobs

Syllabi & Materials

New Courses

Syllabi available upon request.

Defining the Limits of Life: Ethical, Political, and Aesthetic Consequences invites an interdisciplinary undergraduate audience to engage with the implications of determining the demarcations of life, in order to explore problems of (bio)ethics, (bio)politics, and artistic representation in questions of life and death. With the help of texts from various disciplines, genres, and eras, ranging from anthropological case studies, philosophical essays, literature and visual arts to contemporary journalism and multimedia pieces, students will probe one of the most central terms of human existence (Aristotle, Descartes, Plato, Tark, Blake, Shakespeare, Foucault, Kafka, Jonas, Safran Foer, Lee, Lew, Arendt, etc.). In English.

German identity and the “Jewish Question” traces the development of German-Jewish identity questions in texts and films since the Jewish Enlightenment with undergraduate students. It engages with ideas of Diaspora and assimilation, the role of religion in secular society, cultural life and economic factors, political movements like Zionism, the experience of the Shoah, postwar Jewish life in Germany and German-Jewish identity today (Fichte, Marx, Wagner, Rethnau, Weininger, Herzt, Buber, Roth, Celan, Adorno, Becker, Seeligman, Kammer, Ganzfried, Gorel, etc.).

Humans and Other Animals: Theory and Methods of Animal Studies introduces an interdisciplinary group of students to the most central texts, theories, and methods of animal studies, which examines questions such as what it means to be a (human or non-human) animal and how humans and animals relate to each other. The readings will familiarize students with various ways of thinking about animals (Aristotle, Bible, Descartes, Montaigne, Bertrand, Linnaeus, Darwin), modern ethics (Sing, Nussbaum), philosophy (Descida, Nagel), history (Foucault, Daston), anthropology (Lévi-Strauss, Geertz), literature and poetry (Safran Foer, Coetzee, Kafka, Twain, Hughes, Rilke, Alwood). In English.

Hund, Katze, Maus: Animal Representation in German Literature is a second-year German language, literature, and culture course that introduces students to a range of different genres and literary periods through the lens of animal figures. The course is structured around specific species in order to investigate the ways in which the human imagination informs, for instance, representations of donkeys such as Grimm’s Breuer Stadtmusikantien and Balfour's donkey; how human-animal metamorphosis functions when one is either a bug, an ape, or a shark (Kafka and Brecht); and what depictions of butterflies by Goethe, Benjamin, Walser, and Sachs have in common. Particular emphasis is placed on practicing literary analysis of fairy tales, fables, poetry, and short prose forms.

Jewish Berlin, the Millennium Edition introduces undergraduates to the lively Jewish literature and culture in contemporary Germany, by familiarizing students with some of the most recent writing by authors such as Billet and Kanneh as well as reading contemporary German-Jewish newspapers (Jüdische Allgemeine, Jüdisches Zeitung, Jüdisches Berlin), watching German-Jewish stand-up comedy (Polak) and analyzing the depiction of Jewish life in recent films and documentaries (Die Judenarchitekten). This course could be adapted to a study-
The Online Portfolio: Assignment Samples

Joela M. Jacobs

Assignment Samples

Third-Year German
- Essay Grading Sample

Second-Year German (mid)
- Video Worksheet
- Course Blog

First-Year German (end)
- Editing Exercise

Subpages:
- Editing Exercise (end of first year, with corrections)
- Kursbuch
- Second-Year Arbeitshälfte

Grading Sample.pdf (596k)  Joela Jacobs, Sep 27, 2014, 9:05 AM
The Online Portfolio: Course Evaluations

Joela M. Jacobs

Course Evaluations

The evaluations have been tallied in order to reduce redundancy and focus on feedback that is directly related to instructional practices, course design, and student learning. Complete evaluations are available here (please search for 'Jacobs' and 'Zeller').

Third-Year German and College Literature Courses

Das Unheimliche: Monsters in Early German Film

Kafka and Beyond: German-Jewish Literature Then and Now

Second-Year German

Deutsche Märchen: German through Fairy Tales (2 courses)

First-Year German

Elementary German for Beginners and Intensive German for Beginners (6 courses)

Teaching Assistantships

Discussion Sections for Reading and Writing Training (3 courses)
## The Online Portfolio: Evaluations Tally

Two courses (total enrollment: 31; responses: 27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The instructor...</th>
<th>from 1 to 5 (best)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>is organized</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is able to convey the subtleties of the language</td>
<td>4.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>encourages class conversation in this language</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is available outside of class and willing to help</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gives helpful and timely feedback on assignments and exams</td>
<td>4.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Describe the format of the class. Was it productive?

This was extremely effective. Professor Zeller was very smart with the limited time she had, and was able to teach us as much as possible in a given class period.

I thought the format was useful and not too stressful. I felt relaxed, and I think that helped me focus on learning.

Discussion: the format was productive, it facilitated questions.

I thought it was pretty productive. Having us summarize the readings in single sentences really helped with writing and understanding of the text.

Sections of readings were broken down and review[ed] intensely each class. Handouts and questions accompanied the analyses. Very helpful.

Group work and independent in-class exercises that were discussed in an in-depth manner. Very good pace for new students of the language.

The assignments grew in difficulty at an appropriate pace with our learning.

She was very encouraging, helpful, and understanding during the oral exams. If we had difficulty or were nervous, she would ask us questions to encourage us to continue speaking.

### Overall, would you say you had a good instructor?

Yes: 100%  No: 0%
The Online Portfolio: Teaching Videos

Teaching Videos

Watch short clips from my current and recent classes.

Alles Bio oder was? Transcultural Perspectives on Umweltschutz and Sustainability is a bridge course taken mid-way through the second year of German (101-202-203 in a quarter system) on ‘deutsch-amerikanische Themen.’ My course design begins with several weeks of comparative learning about current German attitudes and practices surrounding environmentalism, while the second half explores views on nature, energy, resources, re-using, and recycling throughout German history.

The clip shows the introduction of the term ‘Wiederverwertung’ in November 2014 at the beginning of a discussion of the ‘Aktion Reinhard,’ i.e. the system for stealing and re-distributing the possessions of victims in Nazi concentration camps. One of the nine student has just presented a Kurzreferat and leads the class into a discussion of the homework reading with a recap question. We recently reviewed comparatives and wo-compounds.

Intensive German for Beginners covers the entire first-year German material in six weeks during the summer and the following two clips were recorded in week five of this course in July 2014.

Grammar review: word order in dependent clauses.

Dependent Clause Word Order
Now it’s Your Turn!

- Worksheet to get you started on your PTS
- Spend 5 minutes free writing
- Then share with your group – make sure everyone has a chance to share
- We will come around to answer questions/see how you’re doing
Next Steps

• **Philosophy of Teaching Statement Summer Bootcamp**
  • Work with peers in small groups throughout the summer
  • Sign up sheet being passed around

• **Workshop on Teaching Portfolios**, 8.27.15 or quarterly

• **Philosophy of Teaching Statement appointments**
  • after completing Workshop on TP
  • Sign up on website

• **Other resources**
  • Google search engine through podnetwork.org for sample statements
  • Search departmental and professional organization websites for info about discipline –what should undergrads in your field know how to do?

[teaching.uchicago.edu](http://teaching.uchicago.edu)
Questions?

Visit: http://teaching.uchicago.edu/

Email Chandani: patelc@uchicago.edu