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## Five-Year Pedagogical Plan

The following website offers a suggested five-year plan for acquiring teaching experience before you go on the job market. Your precise situation will vary, of course, but this can serve as a starting point in your planning.

Jobs in academia will vary in the degree to which pedagogy comes up in the application and interview. You may see jobs with almost no requirements for explicit pedagogical materials (though pedagogy may still arise in an interview) to requirements for a full teaching portfolio and beyond. Preparing the following elements over the course of your time at Harvard should allow you to adapt to a wide variety of application requirements with relative ease. In addition, many say the ability to demonstrate your pedagogical training and experience will likely be quite valuable for those who choose pursue non-academic careers after graduation.

By the end of your five years at Harvard, full readiness for the pedagogical aspects of the academic job market means having a teaching portfolio consisting of the following elements: student evaluations (Q scores) with your commentary, a recommendation letter from a faculty member who can speak to your teaching, recommendation letters from former student, a teaching statement (statement of teaching philosophy), material for a cover letter, prospective syllabi, sample student work with your written evaluations, and video clips of your teaching.

### G1 Year:

Enroll in the NEC 299 Seminar on Research Methods which will, in part, provide orientation toward the job market. This is a requirement for all G1s in NELC.

Before you enroll in classes, consider which classes you would like to teach as a teaching fellow. It may be a good idea to take courses from the professor who teaches the course of interest and develop a relationship with that professor.

If you did not attend Harvard sections as an undergraduate, consider asking a fellow NELC graduate student if you can sit in on a section of a course similar to one you might teach so that you understand the particular dynamics of a Harvard section. Even if you are required to attend sections in your own classes, the dynamic for sections with only undergraduates will likely differ in important ways.

### G2 Year:

At least by the early spring semester, you should ask particular professors if they have openings for teaching fellow positions. Since faculty do not know in advance how many teaching fellows they will have for a given course, they will often add your name to a list and ask you to follow up in the following semester. Since final TF assignments cannot be made until enrollments are finalized, it is recommended that you “get in line” for more than two sections.

Practices for how TFs are chosen vary by professor, but it is possible that preference will be given partially based on how early.

### G3 Year

Begin the semester by attending the Bok Center Fall Teaching Conference.

Enroll in the NEC 299 Pedagogy track.

Teach two sections each semester. You may be able to teach two sections in a single course or may need to teach one section each in two different courses. Although arrangements vary by professor, teaching a section typically also requires attending all lectures. Thus, for the purposes of time management, it will likely be to your advantage to seek out opportunities for multiple sections in a single course rather than one section each in two courses.

To finalize your TF positions, follow up on your previous requests by attending the first lecture of each course of interest and continuing to attend until you are no longer needed or you have found two sections. During shopping week, students typically decide which classes they will take by attending all classes of interest before making final decisions. Courses typically do not receive final enrollment numbers until sometime after the end of shopping week and, therefore, professors do not know the number of allotted TF appointments until then.

Be in touch with the department if you might have a difficult time finding two sections. You are guaranteed to receive two sections in years G3 and G4, but details should be worked out with the department.

Don't be afraid to expand your repertoire to classes outside your area of expertise. Many liberal arts colleges and teaching colleges will likely appreciate evidence of versatility in your teaching. You may also need to apply for positions that require you to teach courses outside your area. For example, if you are a scholar of the Hebrew Bible, you may be asked to teach courses in New Testament.

Develop your teaching practice with a eye to the job market (see "Developing your teaching practice.")

### G4 Year

For large courses, a head TF may be selected among the TFs for the course. Consider applying to become a head TF. Head TFs are often TFs who have previously served as TFs in a course.

Consider seeking out opportunities to teach a full course on your own at Harvard or elsewhere. Experience in lecturing rather than only teaching sections will likely prove valuable on the job market.

In the spring semester of your G4 year, assemble the material developed in “Developing your teaching practice” and tailor them to individual academic job applications.

#### G5 Year

In the summer and fall semester of the G5 year, finalize your job applications.

If you are also considering alt-ac jobs, take advantage of workshops on campus, often through the Office of Career Services, that can help you make that transition.

## **Developing your teaching practice**

In the NEC 299 Pedagogy track, you will go into more depth on pedagogy than what is presented here. However, a few main tasks can be identified here that will enable you to assemble a quality teaching portfolio.

At the beginning of each semester:

Contact the Bok Center to create a video of one section. You can then meet with the NELC departmental teaching fellow for a two-hour debriefing of your video. This serves two purposes: 1) This provides a collection of possible video clips to use for job applications. 2) It gives you a chance to receive direct feedback on your pedagogy.

Each semester you will receive student evaluations via Q scores, so you should familiarize yourself with the Q score system. Although you should aim for much more than good Q scores in your teaching, it would be unwise not to understand the system of evaluation, so you should acquire a copy of the Q score questions and keep them in mind. The primary teaching award for graduate students, the Bok Center Teaching Award, is assigned entirely on the basis of Q scores in a given semester.

Construct a section syllabus for your section. This is a distinct document from the course syllabus. This can serve as a starting point for the prospective syllabi you will construct in your teaching portfolio. However, since the “prospective syllabi” requested are syllabi for courses in which you will serve as the primary instructor, you will need to supplement this material.

For each section:

Before each section, make a lesson plan with a clearly stated objective regarding what the students should be able to do after the end of your lesson and a means for assessing how well the objective was achieved.

After each section, briefly reflect on how well your objectives were achieved and what changes might be helpful for future sections. Record any specific anecdotes that might be useful for describing your teaching in the future.

Gather and save your plans and reflections as material for your statement of teaching philosophy.

During each semester:

Ask students to assess your teaching halfway through the semester in a mid-term evaluation. Consider asking for more frequent feedback in the form of brief reflections solicited from students after each class. Good student quotes will likely prove helpful as evidence for your teaching abilities.

Consider enrolling in Bok Pedagogy Seminars. Enrollment in the requisite number of seminars entitles you to a Bok Teaching Certificate.

Begin to familiarize yourself with the texts and resources for advanced pedagogy and add additional teaching tools to your repertoire.

After each semester:

Study your Q scores to determine any areas for improvement. Consider asking the departmental TF to review them with you.

After grades have been received and there is no possibility of conflicts of interest, reach out to at least one student and ask for a letter of recommendation for your teaching, or ask to keep in touch when the time comes for you to apply for jobs

Save the course syllabi from the courses you teach to gather more ideas about how to construct your prospective syllabi.

## **Important Sources**

GSAS Handbook

Graduate Student Handbook

Bok Center Website