

## Assignments used in pedagogy courses at IUB

Compiled by Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL)

### By the numbers:

From the 31 syllabi studied across various disciplines at Indiana University (2004-2011), most courses had 3-4 total assignments. Of those, the following assignments were the most commonly assigned:

- Microteaching (14, 45%)
- Research project (13, 42%)
- Course development (10, 32%)
- Classroom observations (8, 26%)
- Teaching journal (6, 19%)
- Oral presentations (5, 16%)
- Book or article review (5, 16%)
- Teaching statement (5, 16%)

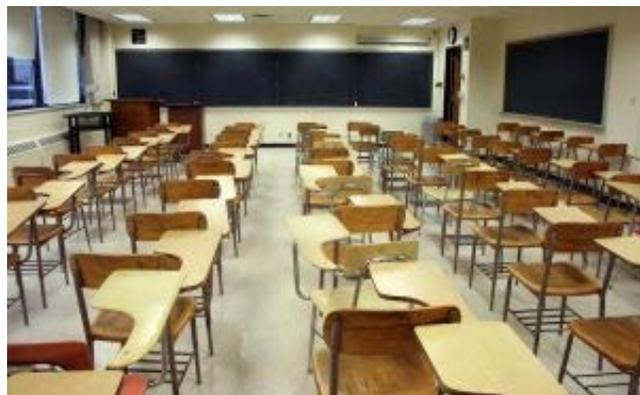
Other assignments that have been used include: the creation of an annotated bibliography, analysis of teaching method, case study presentations, essays or other paper assignments, just-in-time teaching warm-ups, lesson reviews, lesson plans, movie days, and teaching portfolios.

Below are general guidelines for the most popular assignments found in the various syllabi.

**Microteaching.** Present a topic of your choice to the entire class. This topic should either be one you will eventually present to your students or address the teaching methods/approaches discussed in this course. The presentation should be no longer than 20 minutes in length. We will create the criteria for evaluating the presentations together as a class project. Following each microteaching we will have a discussion in which your peers will identify both the positive aspects of your presentation as well as some aspects to work on.

**Research Project [one example].** Explore any aspect of college pedagogy that interests you. This is an opportunity to tailor this course to your own interests. There is flexibility for this project to be performed in teams or individually. We can collaborate to select topics for this project, and I can advise on possible topics. You will compose a research review, propose a study, or possibly conduct a small study about teaching and learning and conduct a class presentation about your findings. Other “research projects” might include analysis of a teaching method, literature reviews, presenting an in-service teacher training series, and grant writing.

**Course development.** Design a draft “dream syllabus” of an undergraduate course you would like to teach either here at IU or later in your career. This syllabus should include descriptions of the course goals, required and recommended readings, course schedule, and course policies and assignments that speak to your course goals. This syllabus will be evaluated for its coherence, appropriateness, and how interesting a course it seems to be. “Course development” might also include the creation of learning objectives, a syllabus skeleton, or a complete course portfolio.



**Classroom observations.** Conduct a teaching observation for another Associate Instructor enrolled in this class. Arrange in advance to sit in on the class, and fill out a teaching evaluation for each observation. After each evaluation provide oral (and, if possible, written) comments to the associate instructor being observed. If no other AIs are available to be observed you might observe AIs in other disciplines or observe full-time faculty.

**Teaching Journal.** Keep a teaching journal, in which you reflect critically upon your experiences as a teacher as well as recording your ideas and observations about teaching. These observations might come from your classes this or previous semesters, from departmental speakers, from something you come across on the web, from a discussion with a colleague or mentor, and so forth. The journals will be collected three times throughout the semester. They will not be graded for content, but rather for completion. For full credit you should write at least one substantive entry per week.

**Oral Presentation.** Choose a topic (either individually or as a duo/trio) from the schedule and meet with me to discuss how to present the topic in class. The presentation can be relatively informal and should take 20-30 minutes of class time. At least one week before presenting (preferably even earlier), you should confer with me about the particulars of the presentation. Among the topics to consider are: (1) What should be covered in the introductory course? (2) Critical reasoning/Bloom taxonomy (3) International students/international AIs (4) Gender and/or race issues in the classroom (5) Media, technology, and/or art in the classroom (6) Values/balance and the “academic bills of rights” (7) Instructional strategies.

**Book (or article) Review.** Select either (1) one recently-published book on pedagogy, (2) a disciplinary textbook, or (3) an empirical journal article aimed at assessing a specific teaching method or program, and write a 1000-word review. In each case, the resource might deal with teaching strategies or lesson planning, it may define and critique the state of liberal education, or it may consist of an extended attack or defense on higher education. There are many other possibilities as well. The goal is to draft a critical review that may be revised and submitted for publication.

**Teaching Statement.** Compose a “statement of teaching philosophy”, drawing on course readings and from your own teaching experiences. It should be understood as an initial draft of a document that you will update and revise throughout your career, and should be approximately 1-2 pages in length. The following questions may help you focus your thoughts as you craft your statement: What worked in your teaching this semester? How do you think students benefited from your course? What didn't seem to work so well? What will you do differently next time? What kinds of thinking, reading, and writing do students need to develop in a first-year English course? How do you make this happen (example of a unit, assignment, activity, etc.) How do you view your role as a teacher? In what ways have your views of students, writing, and teaching changed over the last three months?