

# Designing an Effective Teaching Demonstration

Kris Gorman, Ph.D.

CRLT Postdoctoral Research Associate

ksgorman@umich.edu

As you sit down, please take a minute to write a response to the questions on the handout in front of you.

# Agenda

- What is a teaching demonstration?
- How do I plan a teaching demonstration?
- Sample teaching demonstration
- How would I approach a teaching demonstration?

# What is a Teaching Demonstration?

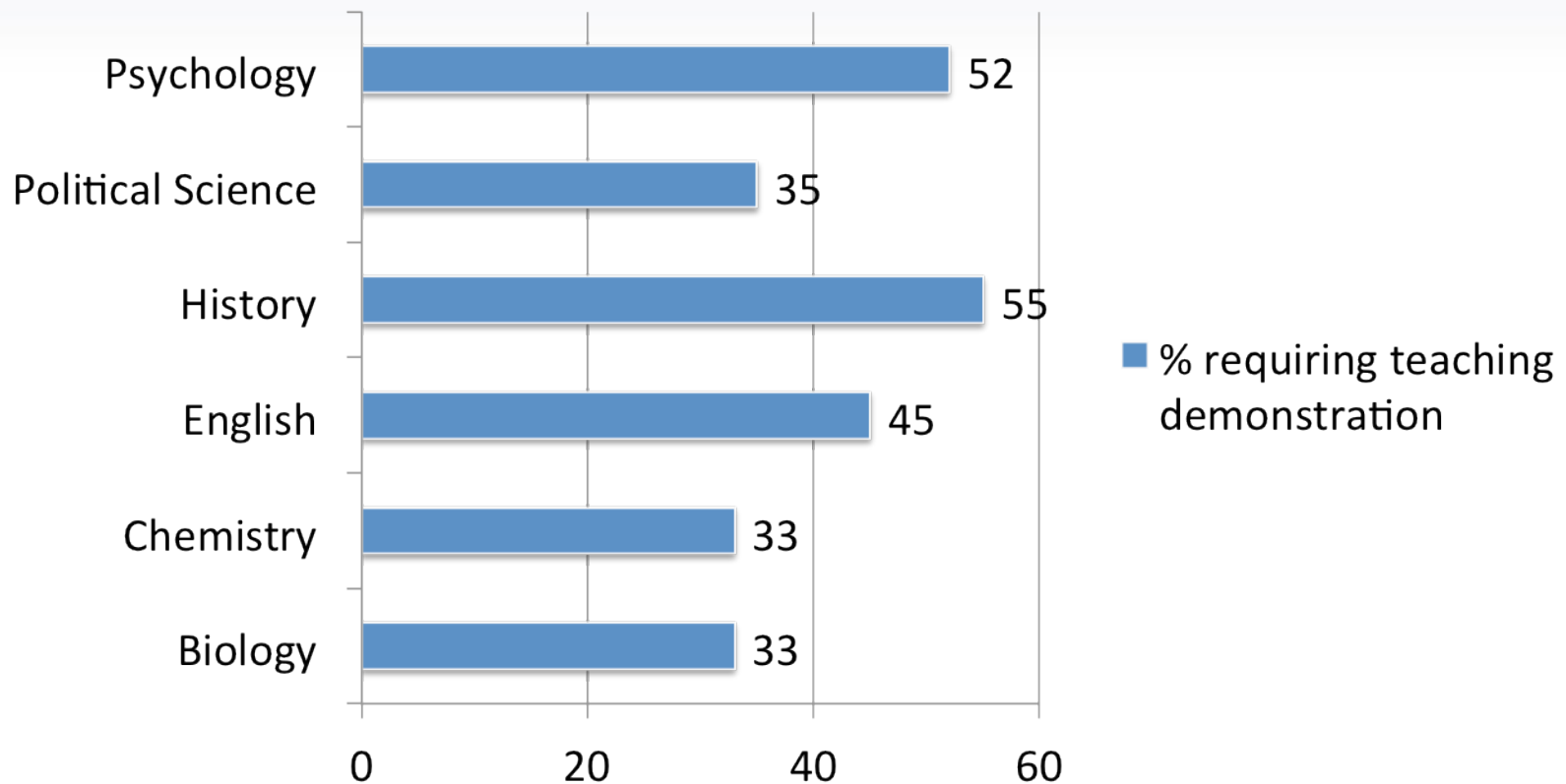
Good question!

# Wide Variation in Opportunities to Demonstrate Your Teaching

- Questions about your teaching
- Meeting with students
- Inferring your teaching ability from your research talk or colloquium
- Teaching demonstration
  - Teaching a meeting of an existing class, with faculty observers
  - Teaching at a gathering of students and faculty observers
  - Teaching a group of faculty as if they were students

*...with variations on an assigned topic vs. an open topic*

# Will I be asked to do one?



# Minute Paper

From the search committee's perspective,  
why have a candidate do a teaching  
demonstration?

From your perspective as a candidate,  
why do a teaching demonstration?

# Planning a Teaching Demonstration

## Integrated Course Design:

1. What are the situational factors?
2. What do I want students to learn?
3. How will I know what students have learned?
4. What teaching and learning activities will I use?
5. How can I get feedback before I do it “for real”?

# What are the situational factors?

- Audience
  - How many students? What level are they? Who else might be present?
  - If not students, who are the “students” supposed to be?
- Content
  - Are there expectations about the content I’ll be presenting? My research area? Anything in my field? Something specific?
  - Will students have done a particular reading beforehand? (What will I do if they haven’t done it?)
  - (If teaching for a class) Can I see the syllabus? Contact the instructor?
- How much time do I have?
- Room Setup
  - What technology is available? Which should I use? (What’s my backup plan?)



# What do I want students to learn?

- What topic should I teach?
- What are 1-3 take-home points or skills that students should know after my class?
  - Highlight these at the beginning and end of your lesson

# How will I know what the students have learned?

- You can build in assessment during your demonstration to hiring committee.
  - Example: At the last five minutes of class, have students respond to:
    1. What is one thing that you learned today?
    2. What is one question you still have?
- Allow time for questions and/or discussion during the demonstration

# What teaching and learning activities will I use?

- Align these carefully with:
  - Situational factors & learning goals
  - Your own teaching philosophy
- Offer a few different learning activities, not just a lecture
  - e.g., writing exercise, explanation, activity, individual exercise, discussion
- Plan a lesson you think will be less than the allotted time so there is time for extra questions or discussion

# How can I get feedback before I do it “for real”?

- Use a lesson you have experience teaching
  - If you don’t have much experience, ask to give a guest lecture so you can prepare something and try it out
- Practice talks with people who can mimic undergrads’ level of knowledge/comfort with the material
  - Friends in other departments, undergraduates you know
- Request a CRLT consultation or observation

# Sample Teaching Demonstration

**CRLT**

Center for Research on  
Learning and Teaching

# What would you plan if asked to prepare a teaching demonstration?

30 minutes

Topic of your choice

Introductory level course in your field

25 students

# Wrap-up

- Teaching demonstrations come in many forms
- Ask lots of questions
- Align your demonstration with your teaching philosophy
- Practice, practice, practice

# Additional Resources

- The Professor is In  
*How to Give a Teaching Demonstration*  
<http://theprofessorisin.com/2012/01/10/how-to-give-a-teaching-demonstration-a-guest-post/>
- CRLT website/GSI Guidebook  
*Strategies for Effective Lesson Planning*  
[http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p2\\_5](http://www.crlt.umich.edu/gsis/p2_5)
- ACSAA Resources  
*A Guide to Preparing for Campus Visits*  
<http://www.acsaa.us/pdf/career/acsaacampusvisit.pdf>



## Sample Teaching Demonstration

### Background Information:

- This candidate seeks a position as an assistant professor in a department of history.
- This interview is for such a position at EMU, a master's university.
- The candidate has been asked to teach a 30-minute lesson in a 50-minute class on early U.S. history because it fit best with the interview schedule. (The candidate's main area of interest is 20<sup>th</sup>-century US history.) He finds out that the class is for first- and second-year students.
- The instructions were that he could teach anything he wants, as long as it fit the general topic of the class. Because the class was covering the American Revolution at the time of his visit, he decided to focus on a key historical document during that period. From looking at the syllabus, he also knows that the class will ask students to write a research paper using historical documents from the time.
- Because the candidate was not very skilled in the use of PowerPoint, he decided to go "low-tech," using only the blackboard and handouts.
- In his cover letter and during other parts of the interview, the candidate stressed that he values "active learning" and "getting students engaged with historical research."

### The Clip:

This clip shows ten minutes of the 30-minute lesson. The hiring committee is seated in the back of the class. After being introduced to the class by the committee:

PART 1: The candidate gives instructions for a group activity. (attached)

*[Groupwork is cut, when the candidate circulates to answer questions. He then asks groups to write their thesis statement on the board.]*

PART 2: The candidate debriefs the activity.

After the class, the candidate leaves, and for the remaining minutes, the hiring committee discusses the class with students.

## Sample Teaching Demonstration

### Your Notes:

#### ***Situational Factors***

The lesson was appropriate for the situational factors of the teaching situation.

#### ***Goals and Objectives***

The candidate's instructional goals and objectives for this lesson were clear.

#### ***Feedback***

Feedback about student learning was effectively built into the lesson.

#### ***Teaching and Learning Activities***

Teaching and learning activities aligned with the candidate's teaching philosophy.

Teaching and learning activities were used effectively.

#### ***Other comments:***

## Sample Teaching Demonstration

By His Excellency the Right Honorable JOHN Earl of DUNMORE, His MAJESTY'S Lieutenant and Governor General of the Colony and Dominion of VIRGINIA, and Vice Admiral of the fame.

### A PROCLAMATION.

As I have ever entertained Hopes that an Accommodation might have taken Place between GREAT-BRITAIN and this colony, without being compelled by my Duty to this most disagreeable but now absolutely necessary Step, rendered so by a Body of armed Men unlawfully assembled, bring on His MAJESTY'S [Tenders], and the formation of an Army, and that Army now on their March to attack His MAJESTY'S troops and destroy the well disposed Subjects of this Colony. To defeat such unreasonable Purposes, and that all such Traitors, and their Abettors, may be brought to Justice, and that the Peace, and good Order of this Colony may be again restored, which the ordinary Course of the Civil Law is unable to effect; I have thought fit to issue this my Proclamation, hereby declaring, that until the aforesaid good Purposes can be obtained, I do in Virtue of the Power and Authority to ME given, by His MAJESTY, determine to execute Martial Law, and cause the same to be executed throughout this Colony: and to the end that Peace and good Order may the sooner be [effected], I do require every Person capable of bearing Arms, to [report] to His MAJESTY'S STANDARD, or be looked upon as Traitors to His MAJESTY'S Crown and Government, and thereby become liable to the Penalty the Law inflicts upon such Offences; such as forfeiture of Life, confiscation of Lands, &c. &c. And I do hereby further declare all indentured Servants, Negroes, or others, (appertaining to Rebels,) free that are able and willing to bear Arms, they joining His MAJESTY'S Troops as soon as may be, for the more speedily reducing this Colony to a proper Sense of their Duty, to His MAJESTY'S Loyal Subjects, to retain their [Quitrents], or any other Taxes due or that may become due, in their own Custody, till such Time as Peace may be again restored to this at present most unhappy Country, or demanded of them for their former salutary Purposes, by Officers properly authorized to receive the same.

GIVEN under my Hand on board the ship WILLIAM, off NORPOLE, the 7th Day of NOVEMBER, in the SIXTEENTH Year of His MAJESTY'S Reign.

DUNMORE.

(GOD save the KING.)

University of Virginia

## **Sample Teaching Demonstration**

- 1. What kind of document is the source, and what kind of historical evidence can it provide?**
- 2. How great is the distance between the author of the source and the event he or she describes? Is this source a firsthand account, written by a witness or a participant? Was it written at the time of the event or later?**
- 3. What are the possible biases of the source? Everyone document is biased, whether deliberately or unconsciously, by the point of view of the person who wrote it.**
- 4. For whom was the document created? Was the author writing for a specific audience? Did the person have an outcome they wanted their words to bring about?**
- 5. How might you use the document in a paper?**
- 6. You are writing a very short paper on the your topic using this one source. Write the thesis sentence of your paper.**

- 2) From your perspective as a candidate, what are the benefits of doing a teaching demonstration?