

# MICROTEACHING MINI-COURSE

## Public Speaking Practice

### for First-Year Physics Graduate Students

### Fall 2014

Welcome! The goals of this short mini-course are to practice talking up in front of a small group, and discuss the challenges and joys of public speaking and teaching. We believe that oral presentation skills are important to your future. These skills do not come naturally, but can be practiced and learned.

**Course Web Page (with Schedule):** <http://goo.gl/BEaHro>  
(or search for **jason harlow teaching** and click on “Graduate Microteaching Mini-Course Fall 2014”)

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**Students:** All 1st Year Physics Graduate Students + some interested higher level graduate students

**Duration:** 4 meetings, 7 hours total, spread out over Sep. 3 - 26, 2014.

- Week 1: 3 hours during the morning of Wednesday Sep. 3, 2014 in MP125-A
- Week 2: First talk. Each group will meet for two hours during the week of Sep. 8 – 12
- Week 3: 1 hour meeting either on Sep. 15 or 17
- Week 4: Final talk. Each group will meet for one hour during the week of Sep. 22 – 16

The purpose of the week 2 and 4 sessions is to give you an opportunity to explore your own teaching style in a friendly, risk-free environment. A computer projector and screen will be available, as well as a chalk-board if you prefer. Each student will be provided with video recording of their presentation, in case you want to review your presentation at home.

At the first MicroTeaching session, you will have ten (10) minutes MAXIMUM to give your

presentation, which will be recorded. After a replay of the video, we, your audience, will give you written and verbal feedback that will focus on structure, use of audiovisuals, contact functions, verbal and non-verbal communication, etc. You, in turn, will become a member of the audience for the next presentation.

After all the first talks are done, we will meet as large group in MP125-C to discuss public speaking tips and general ideas for our final presentations.

The final talks are during week 4. As with the first week, you will have 10 minutes to give your talk, which hopefully is an improvement upon your first presentation. This will also be recorded on video for posterity and your later review, but it will not be watched during the session. You will be given informal feedback on your final presentation, and the Senior TA will also offer some more formal feedback.

### **Preparation and Suggestions:**

- Please review the suggestions from the TATP Training Session.
- Formal presentations should include:

**SET** say 'hello' : who you are : introduction, objectives, outline, setting the mood: “*what are you going to tell 'em?*”: point form good

**BODY** content and themes: cover the points introducing each one: signal important ones: “*tell 'em*”.

**CLOSURE** review and wrap-up: “*tell 'em what you told them*”: summarize: finish strongly, with a full stop

- Decide on the format of your presentation: lecture, tutorial or problem-solving session. Please try to elicit a small amount of audience participation.
- Finally, this is a unique opportunity for you to experiment with your teaching/presentation style. I urge you to push your limits a little beyond your normal comfort zone - experiment with some styles or techniques. This is about your learning, not about producing a "perfect" presentation. Have some fun!

### **Payment and relation to TA work:**

- This course is not for marks. Attendance will be taken, and an official record will be kept by the graduate chair of who participated as Pass/Fail only.
- An unofficial ranking of your public speaking abilities based on your final presentation will be sent to the undergraduate chair and Pierre Savaria to help guide them in selecting your future TA assignments.
- All 7 hours are considered “TA Training”, and you will be paid for this.

### **Suggested Topics (choose one, make it fun, discuss specific examples!) :**

- Newton's Third Law
- Conservation of Angular Momentum
- Zeroth Law of Thermodynamics
- Polarization of Light

### **First Talk (week 2):**

- Only the 4 students and the Senior TA will be present.

- Each 10-minute presentation will be timed and video-taped. Immediately after each presentation, the tape will be reviewed by everyone, with minimal commenting.
- After watching the video, 10 minutes will be used for discussion and constructive comments about the delivery. Each presenter will receive a USB drive with their presentation for their review.
- For each presenter, the 3 peers and the Senior TA will fill out a Feedback Form. The presenter will receive all 4 feedback forms to aid in preparing the second presentation. Results of this first presentation will NOT be shared with the course coordinator, undergrad chair or graduate chair.

**Final Talk (week 4):**

- The final talk will take place exactly 2 weeks after the first talk, with the same group members and Senior TA. Each student will give a 10 minute teaching-style presentation which incorporates ideas and suggestions received during the first session.
- Please bring your USB drive from the first session, and your second presentation will be recorded for your records and future review.
- Comments will last for 5 minutes after each talk.
- For each presenter, the 3 peers may fill out a Feedback Form and share it with the presenter. The Senior TA will fill out a Feedback Form which will be then be given to the course coordinator, Jason Harlow. The numerical results of the Feedback will be averaged and shared with the undergraduate chair as an informal assessment of your public speaking ability.

**Preparing your talks:**

- You are encouraged to use visual aids, such as powerpoint, or the chalk-board. A laptop with projector will be present in each room; you may bring a talk on a USB key, CDRom, or bring your own laptop.
- Time yourself! You must not go over the 10 minute limit – the Senior TA will be timing each presentation and cutting you off when your time is up.

**Speaking Tips:**

- Be well prepared; plan and rehearse the timing of what you will present.
- Have eye contact with the audience members.
- Speak clearly, and loud enough so everyone in the room can hear you.
- Make sure your visual aids are easily readable to all.
- Smiling, open hand-gestures, and voice inflections are okay – don't monotone!
- Relax and be yourself!