

# MICROTEACHING MINI-COURSE

## Public Speaking Practice

### for First-Year Physics Graduate Students

### Fall 2010

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://to.ly/6MEU>  
(or google Jason Harlow teaching and click on “Graduate Microteaching Mini-Course Fall 2010”)

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

**Duration:** 3 meetings, 5 hours total, spread out over Sep. 9 - 24, 2010.

- 1st meeting is an hour: 9:00 – 10:00, Thursday Sep. 9, 2010 in MP125-A
- Each group will then meet for two hours twice (4 hours total), in MP713, once during the week of Sep.13 - 17, and then again exactly 1 week later.

The purpose of these sessions is to give you an opportunity to explore your own teaching style in a friendly, risk-free environment. A video camera with DVD recorder, a black- or white- board, an overhead projector, and a computer link-up will be available. Each student will be provided with a DVD 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 videotaped. After a replay of the tape, 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.

At the second session, held one week later, I suggest that you give the same talk or a simple extension of it, modified by the feedback and your own predilections. Again, the talk will be videotaped and reviewed.

**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 (on a scale of 1-5) will be sent to the undergraduate chair and Pierre Savaria to help guide them in selecting your future TA assignments.
- All 5 hours are considered “TA Training” and you will be paid for this.

**During the Two Hour Sessions**

- There will be 4 students and 1 Senior TA.
- Each student will deliver a 10 minute "teaching-style" presentation on a topic of their choice. Four suggested topics are listed below. The level of delivery should be understandable to a typical first-year undergraduate.
- After each presentation, the presentation will be reviewed for 20 minutes, and comments may be made for the benefit of the speaker.
- 4 speakers with 30 minutes each = about 2 hours

**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 Session**

- Only the 4 students and the Senior TA will be present.
- Each 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, the remaining 10 minutes will be used for discussion and constructive comments about the delivery.
- 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.

**Second Session**

- The Second Session will take place exactly 1 week later, with the same group members and Senior TA. Each student will either repeat the original 10 minute talk with improvements, or give something totally different.
- Guest observers will be welcome in the second session.
- Comments, questions, discussion, and comparison with the first presentation will last 20 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 talk:**

- 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 at 10 minutes.

**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!