

Economics 806 – Teaching Methods in Economics
Module 2 of the Teacher-Training Program in the Department of Economics

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Credits: variable (typically 1.0)

Econ 806 is intended for graduate students who are beginning their service as teaching fellows (TFs) in undergraduate courses at UNC. There will be four two-hour sessions during the semester. The sessions will be back-loaded to provide you with timely assistance as you prepare for teaching in the summer sessions. (If you are not teaching this summer, you are still welcome! You will practice the same skills that you will use when you eventually teach your own course.)

The primary objective of this course is to help graduate students transition into their role as teaching fellows. To that end, the participants will:

1. Learn the principles of course planning and the roles of the syllabus
2. Learn fundamental principles of effective lecturing and active learning exercises.
3. Be given the opportunity to practice these principles prior to going into the classroom.
4. Have a forum to prepare for the first class.

Students will receive a letter grade for this course. There will be a required assignment after each course session. All assignments will be directly tied to your teaching experiences. Credit for the course will not be given unless all assignments are completed. The texts and reading materials for the course will be made available through the Sakai web site.

Those enrolled are expected to attend every session of the course. Please contact Professor Conway if you must miss a session for any reason; he will identify an alternative learning activity and assignment to replace those of the missed session.

Megan McCoy will be the teaching assistant for this course. Both Megan and I will be available outside the class period to assist you as you prepare for your course.

Economics 806
Introduction

The purpose of the TTP is to help you develop a teaching style that is effective with your students and comfortable for you. As a student, you've noticed that studying styles and learning techniques vary across your classmates. Keep this in mind as you prepare your course. **There is no "right" way to teach, just as there is no "right" way to learn.** There are many effective teaching styles. The TTP provides you with the opportunity to learn about different effective teaching methods. TTP also provides you the opportunity to practice those methods so that you identify those most comfortable to you.

The TTP program is purely developmental. We do not evaluate your teaching for the Economics Department or for the University. The University requires that each graduate student's class be visited by a faculty member at least once a semester. This task is undertaken independently of TTP, and almost always by faculty members who did not participate in TTP.

I have pared down the content of Module Two to conserve your valuable time. You have many responsibilities in your second and third years, and this course should not draw you away from those. (In fact, the TTP may save you time: if you avoid problems in the classroom, you'll face fewer one-on-one reviews of the material in your office hours.)

We will meet for four 2-hour group sessions during the spring. The titles of the four sessions are on the following page. Background readings will be required for each session, and these will be distributed well in advance. You will be responsible for reading these and coming prepared. The group sessions will be quite valuable not only for the advice that I and other experienced instructors provide, but also for the opportunity to interact with your peers involved in preparing a course for the first time. There will be plenty of time during the sessions allotted to such group discussion.

I am pleased that Megan McCoy will join us as the teaching assistant for the course. She has a wealth of teaching experience as a grad student, and will bring her important perspective to our sessions. We will also enlist earlier cohorts of grad-student instructors to provide answers to any practical questions you will have about preparing to teach your first class.

I hope you enjoy and benefit from this module of TTP. If you have questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me.

Patrick Conway (Patrick_Conway@unc.edu)

Econ 806.001
Schedule: Spring 2022

- Session 1 **Planning Your Course, Preparing Your Syllabus.**
1 April, GA 211
- Session 2 **Student Evaluation: Writing and Grading Exams**
8 April, GA 211
- Session 3 **Discussion Plus: Active Learning Strategies
In the Classroom**
15 April, GA 211
- Session 4 **Last Minute Jitters – Preparing to Kick
off the Semester**
10 May (Tuesday), GA 211
OR 24 June (Friday), GA 211