

Teaching Training Focus Group Results (Abridged)

1. During your studies at TST, have you done any of the following? (check all that apply)

Worked as a teaching assistant	17	74%
Co-taught a course with a professor	3	13%
Been the sole instructor of a class	4	17%
Facilitated class discussions	16	70%
Led tutorials	9	39%
Given a guest lecture in a course	14	61%
Given 6 or more hours of lectures	5	22%
Graded student assignments	18	78%
Met with students individually	16	70%
Provided feedback to students on course work	16	70%
Designed a course syllabus	8	35%
Designed a reading list	8	35%
Prepared study guides or other learning supports for students	4	17%
Prepared evaluations such as quizzes, tests, or exams	7	30%
Set student assignments	4	17%
Assigned final grades	8	35%

answered question 23

2. Before performing these roles and tasks, did you receive any training or instruction? If so, please elaborate.

- Aside from TATP, I received instruction throughout the semester with my supervising professor. I was also part of a workshop offered by a CTSI representative for students in Emmanuel's Teaching for Ministry program.
- Before my first TAship, I received no instruction. I found it a steep learning-curve to go from student to TA. I have since taken the AOTP certificate, which has given me a wide array of training. I also received training on the College's Smartboard technology and A/V set-up, which was extremely helpful.
- General guidelines from professors but nothing specific
- I have not yet received any TA training but I do not begin as a TA until January.
- Just from the institution I taught at -- e.g. from IT on how to use their system, from the dep't chair on some items that came up, etc.
- No
- No, I did not receive training outside of TATP.
- No, in fact quite the opposite, my prof. had no clue what do with me so we kind of made it up as we went along, and that was not good for anyone
- No. Although the professor offered whatever assistance I would find helpful.
- No, but I was an elementary school teacher with experience with young adults as well as adults.
- None from TST; I was raised by a teacher, so I marked a lot of papers in my life.
- Not precisely; I had already taught at the college level. I did review the TST/U of T TAship rubrics online.
- Not really

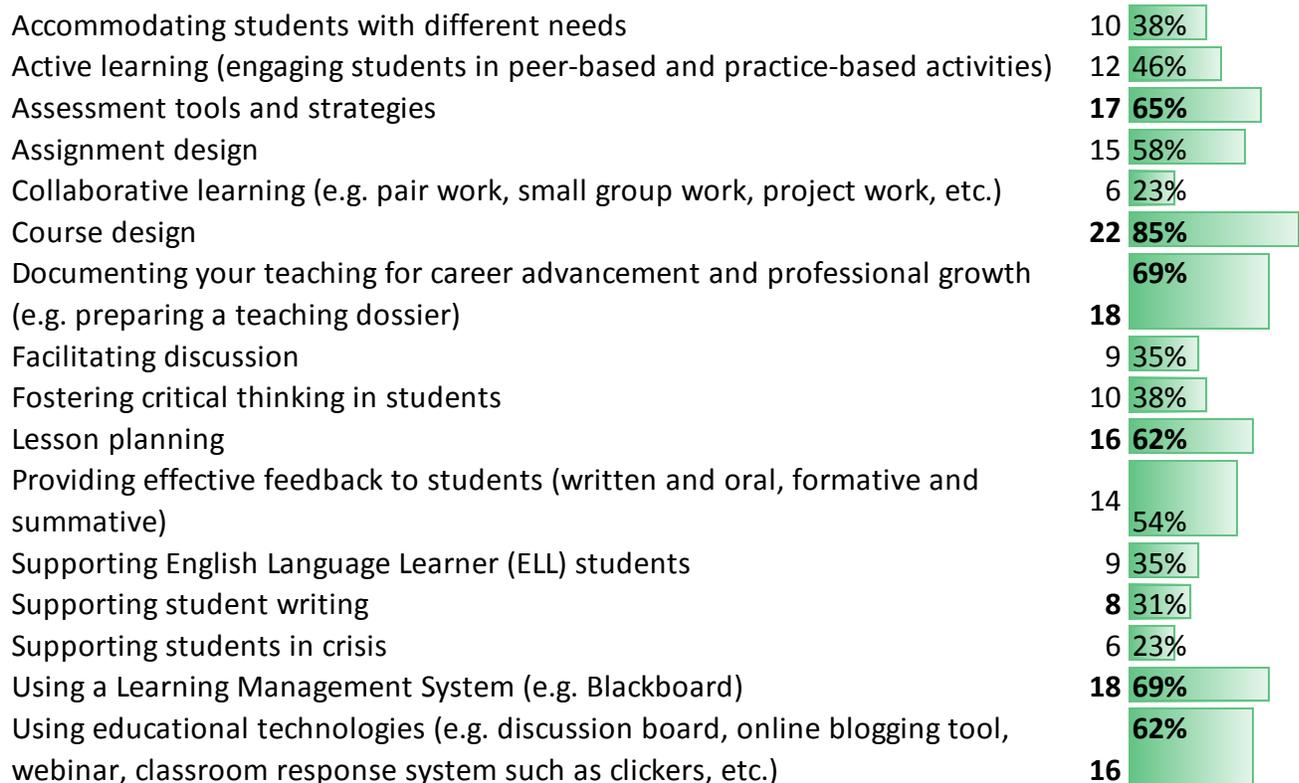
- Some at undergraduate level
- Talks with professor in charge
- Yes, I am enrolled in the AOTP program. But nothing beyond that.
- Yes, the Teaching for Ministry Program at Emmanuel College.
- Yes. The course instructor who I worked for discussed pedagogical matters with me and he asked me about my own ideas for teaching. This created a mutual agreement on how I would function as a Teaching Assistant. It was a creative discussion with open-ended possibilities and positive outcomes.

3. Based on your teaching experience at TST, what kinds of teaching training would help you prepare for the roles and tasks identified above?

- "Teaching" is a broad and eclectic activity, which often evolves and changes based on the discipline and subject being taught. To be honest I really cannot imagine how one type of training could be of benefit to all doctoral students. Even within TST, the subjects and disciplines taught vary greatly. Each department or College might want to develop their own strategies for training.
- Any sort of teaching training and experience would be valuable. I feel that TST is sorely lacking in this area. From my discussions with other grad students at various conferences, it appears the norm is for PhD candidates to be serving as TAs and even teaching whole courses. I feel my CV as a TST candidate is woefully underdeveloped and not very competitive due to the lack of teaching opportunities and training available to me. I have had to look elsewhere to get this experience--ecclesiastical opportunities, guest lecturing for other U of T departments.
- Basic course-designing help, as well as basic pedagogy training
- Classes that offer tips for better teaching methods and career or professional development, and those that provide opportunities to hear about experiences from other TAs and instructors would be helpful. Having the chance to receive one on one feedback on teaching methods from someone other than your supervising professor, with whom you have multiple levels of relationship (e.g., as in class student, doctoral mentee, TA, etc.) could also be beneficial. I have found having regular meetings with other TAs and a faculty member specifically designated for reflection on teaching experience and development as educators to be key to my own growth in the past years.
- Discussion/instruction re: things to think about when constructing a course syllabus; things to keep in mind when considering evaluation tools.
- I did not teach at TST but at another institution. Mentoring my profs would be most helpful in this regard. I live at a distance, so programs are less helpful for me.
- I felt that talking with my professor was enough for what I was required to do. I suppose some formal seminars would have been helpful, but not necessary.
- I have had zero opportunities to teach so far at TST, which is itself a major problem.
- It does help if one has gone through the system and worked with TAs and Professors in the past. Some people might benefit from a course designed to prepare them for TA work, but I have not felt that it was necessary in my case.
- It would have been useful to also have taught a solo lecture.
- Lots. And it should be obligatory.
- More in-depth guides to marking papers and giving feedback.
- Not sure as I will not be trained until January.

- Not sure.
- On how to lead tutorial and/or class discussion - on how to use blackboard/portal and any other media - on how to deal with difficult questions and/or situations during the class/tutorial
- Technology support. Learning to set up a course using portal and to mark assignments on line. Assistance with planning/making a syllabus.
- The AOTP through TATP was beneficial, offering good feedback and some helpful interaction with other students in the larger University.
- The kind of training that would be most helpful for me is how to prepare lectures. I realize we're supposed to meet a variety of learning styles in our lecture period, so I'd like to know what are good strategies for implementing differentiated learning in the classroom.
- Training in how to grade papers fairly and quickly, as well as training on using Blackboard effectively. Also of use would be training in how to set up audio visual equipment for the class instructor.
- Training in the use of Blackboard; in classroom management; in course & syllabus design; accessibility training.
- What I would really like is a requirement for prof and TA to sit down and plan things together, right now at least at my college it seems that we are thrown in with a prof and there may or may not be any collaboration before or during the class
- Workshops in facilitating class discussions, grading, preparing lectures, working with students who have a disability, etc.
- Workshops, syllabus design, facilitation skills

4. From the following list of teaching-related topics, which are you most interested in learning more about?



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5. Have you made use of the workshops offered by the University of Toronto Teaching Assistants' Training Program (TATP)?

[Only 8 students reported using the TATP, but the question will be asked in a larger survey of the entire graduate population over Christmas.]

6. If you've made use of the TATP, which workshops did you find most helpful, and why?

- All of the workshops I attended as part of TA day were helpful. These included classroom methods, such as using in class writing, and professional strategies, such as dossier preparation. The Blackboard sessions were also very helpful.
- Blackboard
- Dossier prep, marking for all disciplines, all the blackboard ones.
- Effective Lesson Planning, leading class discussions. They helped me think strategically about what I need to do as a Teaching Assistant and how I need to prepare to be effective.
- I found most useful the following: Lesson Plan Clinic; Syllabus Design; Designing and Developing Your (First) Academic Course; and Preparing Your Teaching Dossier. Each of these helped me by providing concrete, practical advice about essential tasks in academia; how to plan a lecture, how to design a syllabus and a course, how to put together a dossier.
- Most of the workshops I signed up for were cancelled for lack of enrollment but I found their workshop on adult learning styles very helpful and imagine any training would be helpful to me at this point as I have had almost none.
- Workshops on the Teaching Dossier and technologies.

7. If you've made use of the TATP, which workshops did you find least helpful, and why?

- "Should I have a Double-Standard?" was not very helpful. To be honest, I remember very little of it, apart from the fact that it was a discussion of how to grade ESL students.
- Classroom distractions
- Outside the classroom learning