

HON 380: Peer Mentoring

Jon Goss, Interim Director, Honors Program

TTH 1.30-2.45pm

“Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction”
(John C. Crosby)

Overview

This class involves learning how to mentor other students. It combines learning about the theory of mentoring in a seminar-style class once a week, with regular practice of mentoring in a real, “live” classroom once or twice a week. In the weekly seminars we will discuss pedagogical principles focusing on things like student growth, the role of mentors, differences among learning and teaching styles, intercultural competencies, interpersonal communication skills, problem solving, and managing group dynamics. In these meetings you will also practice some of the skills we discuss, and then you will apply these “live” when you are invited once a week into a first-year classroom where you will act as peer mentors. In this introductory class on research at Manoa, you will make occasional presentations, lead group discussions, provide role models, and act as a counselor to students taking an. Sometimes you may also be asked to lead fieldtrips during and outside class time.

One of the hallmarks of Honors classes is that they are discussion-based with high levels of interaction between faculty and students, and among students. This class also satisfies the Oral (O) Focus requirement for General Education and you will be provided training on presentation skills and facilitation of group discussions. You will be applying theory and knowledge on presentations and group discussions both in your own class and also in HON 101. In this way you will become doubly reflective and so more effective mentors and oral communicators.

Requirements

You should attend regularly and come to class prepared to be an active learner. You should do the assigned reading(s) before class as this will be the basis of our discussion. You will do lots of talking. Again, you will be assessed on your participation in the seminar *and* on your performance as a mentor in the classroom. There will be a mid-term and final exam on concepts drawn from the course readings. Throughout, you will keep a reflective journal on your experience and you will write a reflective paper that is due at the end of the semester.

1. Attendance

You must attend all meetings of our class HON 380 and at least one meeting of HON 101 per week (MW 2.30-3.45 p.m.). You are allowed only one “free” unexcused absence during the semester. Additional unexcused absences will be penalized at the rate of 2 grade points per absence (1% of your grade).

2. Participation

Much of our time will be spent working in small groups in discussing the readings. You will learn about theories of group dynamics and techniques to encourage group participation as you yourselves participate in your own group work. Your participation in class will be assessed partly by your classmates as well as by the instructor.

Anonymous peer assessments will be conducted twice during the semester. In other words, this class combines teacher and peer assessment. Giving feedback on others is a good way to learn the techniques of encouragement and criticism that you can apply to your own efforts. I will provide you with evaluation forms.

3. Practice

a. Presentations

You will give three presentations to the class in HON 101. The first presentation will be a short précis of a course reading, modeling this task and demonstrating to students in this class the techniques you have learned in HON 380. The second presentation will be a 20-minute or so group presentation to HON 101 either on “Strategies for academic success 1: Reading effectively” or “Strategies for academic success 2: Group work.” In this presentation you will be persuading students in HON 101 of the value of reading and group work, as well as informing them of various techniques that can enhance the experience. The third, which will be on a topic related to research or creative work at the University, will be given later in the semester. The aim of this presentation is to inform students of the scope of research at the institution and to excite them about doing their own research. You will research this topic yourselves, work together to present a “lecture” to HON 101, run a “Q&A” session, and then lead a group activity that reinforces the lecture.

You will be provided with instruction on giving presentations, which is a very important part of the Honors Program, and will be able to practice in our class beforehand. Our classrooms are equipped with computer projection and your instructor will model Powerpoint presentations for you. You will each give critical feedback to your peers on your practice sessions. Again, giving feedback on others is a good way to learn the techniques of encouragement and criticism that you can apply to your own efforts. I will provide you with evaluation forms.

b. Group leadership and facilitation

You will regularly be asked to lead or facilitate group discussions during class meetings, and sometimes even outside the classroom. You will learn about group dynamics and structure, and group management as well as examples of group exercises. We will practice these in our own class before applying them in HON 101. I will regularly assess your abilities in group leadership and facilitation, giving you feedback on your progress.

c. Peer review

Sometimes you will be asked to review drafts of assignments prepared by students in HON 101. Some of these reviews will be evaluated by the instructor before being returned to students. Guidelines for peer review will be provided on forms.

d. Counseling and or tutorial

You will be asked to keep regular “office hours” to meet with students in HON 101. The Honors Program will provide a space for this. Your evaluations by students in HON 101 will count for a small proportion of your course grade.

4. Journals

There are weekly journals: sometimes topics are specified; and other times you are free to write on any course-related topic you wish. Content of journals is not graded, but points will be assigned for completion of each journal. You must complete at least 10 of the sixteen assigned journals. You must write at least one page single-spaced or equivalent. Journals are due on the first class meeting following the week that they are assigned.

5. Reflection

You are asked to write a short paper (maximum of five pages) reflecting on what you have learned in class. Ideally it will integrate the principles you have learned from the readings with the practical knowledge you have gained in your mentoring experiences. In other words it should be about mentoring as *praxis*.

Grading

Grades will be assigned according to the quality of the assignments and the results of the exams. Extra credit is not provided. Grades are assigned as follows:

| | |
|----------------------------|-----------|
| Reflective paper | 30 |
| Practice | |
| Presentations | 30 |
| Group facilitation | 30 |
| Peer review | 10 |
| Counseling/tutorial | 10 |
| Mid-term | 20 |
| Final | 20 |
| Journals | 20 |
| <u>Class Participation</u> | <u>30</u> |
| Total | 200 |

Text

There are two course texts:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

There are also regular supplementary readings which will be available on-line in PDF format through Sinclair Library's electronic reserve. Please make sure to do the readings *before* class (except for Week One of course).

Contacting your instructor

Please do come to see me in my office hours or make an appointment to discuss course content, assignments, problems, or pretty much anything you like. You are required to come to my office for a consultation and for feedback on your oral communication and group leadership training at two specific times in the semester i.e. Week Five and Week Eleven. Failure to make and/or keep an appointment will be treated as an absence (see Attendance).

Here is my contact information:

Email: jgoss@hawaii.edu
Phone: 956-8391
Office: Sinclair 504B
Office hours: TBA

BTW, your instructor is a member of Toastmasters, where he is a Competent Toastmaster, and winner of a Distinguished Toastmasters award. He is an award winning speaker and would be happy to introduce any of you to Toastmasters when you can get additional help on your oral communication and leadership skills!

Note

Students and instructors in this class are bound by University of Hawai`i policies on conduct and academic rights and freedoms. Please make sure you are familiar with the rules and regulations of our campus community (see the "Academic Integrity" in University of Hawai'i at Mānoa Catalog 2006-2007, pp.569-570).

If you feel that you need reasonable accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please speak with me privately to discuss your needs, or contact the KOKUA Program (956-7511). I will be happy to work with you and/or the KOKUA program.

Course outline

Week One

Introduction and introductions

Overview of course and its requirements. Mutual introductions. Learning goals. The principles of student centered learning.

Reading:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2006) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch. 16, Active learning: cooperative, collaborative and peer learning, pp. 213-220).

Journal 1: What I want to get out of this course and how I intend to get it

Week Two

Some basic questions:

Who is a peer? What is peer learning? What are the benefits of peer learning? Also, how to summarize a reading.

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.1: Peer educators on the college campus, pp.1-21).

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2006) *Essential study skills: the complete guide to success @ university*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (Ch.3: How to research and read academically, pp.58-82).

Journal 2: The value of peer learning

Week Three

Presentations and lectures

This week we will learn and practice some techniques useful in giving lectures or presentations.

Reading:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2006) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch. 5, How to make lectures more effective, pp. 52-69).

Journal 3: Response to the reading

Week Four

Introduction to group work:

This week we will begin a discussion of group composition, group roles and group management. At the same time we will discuss our upcoming presentations to HON 101.

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.6: Understanding group process, pp.1-21).

Felder, R.M. and Brent, R. (2001) Issues relating to group composition. In Falchiov, N. (2001) *Learning together: peer tutoring in higher education*. New York Routledge, pp.201-204.

Presentations:

“Strategies for academic success 1: reading effectively”

“Strategies for academic success 2: group work”

Journal 4: Assessing my presentation skills

Week Five

Group work continued:

This week we discuss the importance of group size and structure and some examples of group activities, as we begin to help facilitate the group research projects in HON 101.

Reading:

Jaques, D. (2000) *Learning in groups: a handbook for improving group work*. London: Kogan Page, pp.107-131.

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2006) *Essential study skills: the complete guide to success @ university*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage (Ch.8: How to succeed in group work, pp.164-174).

Journal 5: My observations on group discussions in HON 101

Week Six

Study skills

Helping others (and yourself) to develop a system of study including time management, note-taking, reading and preparing for exams.

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.3: Strategies for academic success, pp.187-210).

Weinstein, C.E. (2005) Teaching students how to become more strategic and self-regulated learners. In McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 300-317.

Burns, T. and Sinfield, S. (2003) *Essential study skills*. Thousand Oaks: Sage (Ch.3, “How to research and read academically,” pp.58-82).

Journal 6: How are my study skills?

Week Seven

Understanding students:

An introduction to theories of student motivation. What are contemporary college students like? What do they want? How should we try to teach them and reach them?

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.2: Student maturation and the impact of peers, pp.23-48).

Hofer, B.K. (2005) Motivation in the college classroom. In McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch.12, pp.140-150).

Journal 7: What motivates me to learn

Week Eight

Understanding students: learning styles and teaching styles

A consideration of the different kinds of learning style and how we best adapt to a mix of them in the classroom.

Reading:

Leamson, R. (1999) *Thinking about teaching and learning*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Books (Ch.1, "Today's first-year student," pp.33-49).

Felder, R.M. and Brent, R. (2005) Understanding student differences. *Journal of Engineering Education* 94, 1: 57-72.

http://www.ncsu.edu/felder-public/Papers/Understanding_Differences.pdf

See also:

Solomon, B.A. and Felder, R.M. (n.d.) Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire.

<http://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html>

Journal 8: What kind of learner am I?

Week Nine

Problem students and student problems:

Some problems and strategies you can use to deal with them

Reading:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch.14: "Dealing with student problems and problem students, pp.172-190).

Journal 9: A problem that I am having and how I want to solve it

Week Ten

Facilitating discussion

Leading and directing discussion, and being a good listener.

Reading:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch.5: "Facilitating discussion: posing problems, listening, questioning, pp.35-56).

Brookfield, S.D. and Preskill, S. (2005) *Discussion as a way of teaching: tools and techniques for democratic classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.5 Keeping discussion going through questioning, listening and responding, pp.83-100 and Ch.6.Keeping discussion going through creative grouping, pp.101-123).

Presentation:

Research or creative work at the University

Journal 10: How have my presentation skills improved?

Week Eleven

Creating the helping interaction

How to develop and improve upon interpersonal communication skills in the classroom setting.

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.4: Interpersonal communication skills, pp.81-104).

Journal 11: Free write.

Week Twelve

Peer revision: critiquing writing

How to assign and evaluate student writing.

Reading:

Elbow, P. and Sorcinelli, M.D. (2005) How to enhance learning by using high-stakes and low-stakes writing. In McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, pp.192-212.

Peer assessment: critiquing writing

Journal 12: Free write

Week Thirteen

Leadership

How to lead groups effectively. Understanding and practicing peer leadership.

Reading:

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.6: Leading groups effectively, pp.157-186).

Journal 13: Free write

Week Fourteen

Gender and culture in the classroom

Boys will be boys, girls will be girls, and culture makes a difference.

Reading:

Brookfield, S.D. and Preskill, S. (2005) *Discussion as a way of teaching: tools and techniques for democratic classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.8 Discussions across gender differences, pp. 148-167)

Ender, S.C. and Newton, F.B. (2000) *Students Helping Students: A Guide for Peer Educators on College Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass (Ch.3: Intercultural competence, pp.49-80).

Suinn, R.M. (2005) Teaching culturally diverse students. In McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, pp.151-171.

Journal 14: Gender and/or culture in our classroom(s)

Week Fifteen

The ethics of teaching and teaching of ethics

Reading:

McKeachie, W.J. and Svinicki, M. (2005) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin (Ch.10, "What to do about cheating" and Ch.15, "The ethics of teaching and the teaching of ethics," pp. 325-341).

Journal 15: Free write

Week Sixteen

Reflections

What we have learned in our class

Journal 16: What I have learned in this class.

Reflective paper.