

**English 495A, Spring 2012**  
**Supervised Teacher Preparation**  
**Wednesday 10-11.50, Public Affairs 1337**

**Chris Mott**, TA Coordinator (mott@humnet.ucla.edu; OH: W 12-2)  
**Jackie Ardam**, TA Consultant (jardam@ucla.edu; OH: W 12:30-2:30)  
**TAC Office:** Humanities A82

**Course Objectives:**

The 495 series provides instruction in the general curriculum and classroom practices of teaching at UCLA. More generally, 495A serves you as a workshop for teaching, for experimenting with personae, teaching styles, activities, and so on. 495A affords you the opportunity to learn and to practice strategies for stimulating class discussion, to learn and practice methods of assessing student intellectual performance, your own pedagogical performance, and the effectiveness of your educational techniques. 495B, next fall, will help you learn how to design and teach your own course from text selection to essay prompt composition, and from syllabus construction to course management. We emphasize practice throughout the 495 series: practice in the sense of practical methods of teaching literature and writing, and practice in the sense of exercises for improvement. Practice without feedback, though, can lead to reinforcement of bad habits, so we aim to provide plenty of constructive comments.

We start with 495A in the spring term in order to provide you with time (and controlled experience) to plan how you want to incorporate various strategies into your teaching during fall quarter. Through our weekly seminar meetings, you will gain a better understanding of the particular needs of UCLA undergraduates and the disparate demands of the wide variety of courses taught by TAs in our department. Finally, you will develop and explore your own teaching priorities and goals in preparation for meeting the English Department's expectations of its TAs, which include:

- preparing and presenting material to the class; answering questions, including clarification of lecture points
- leading class discussion so that students practice literary analysis
- creating quizzes, short assignments, and group exercises that introduce analytical and expressive skills students can elaborate in longer assignments (process)
- consulting with students to help them develop essay ideas
- grading papers and exams fairly and providing helpful feedback to students

## Course Requirements:

1. Attendance in 495A is mandatory, and we expect regular and thoughtful participation from everyone. Please remember that we all depend on each other, as the class will be run as a workshop.
2. Everyone will lead one 15-minute mini-discussion of a literary text during the quarter, a selection from the lesson plan described in item five below. (See below for assignment sheet and schedule.)
3. To gain a sense of how sections work at UCLA, everyone will visit a discussion section taught by a section leader (see below for list of available TAs and classes) and turn in a one-page observation response, **due on or before May 2**. To understand how section works in relation to lecture, please also plan to visit the lecture preceding the section you observe. (See Section Observation Worksheet in the course reader for more details.)
4. Everyone will draft a section policy sheet for the appropriate fall quarter class (see sample sheets in course reader), **due date pending fall assignment**.
5. Everyone will visit the TAC office (A82) the week before her/his mini-discussion to review teaching resources and to consult with Chris or Jackie about his/her lesson.
6. Everyone will turn in a lesson plan for the fifteen-minute mini-discussion, **due the day before teaching their mini-discussion**. (See Lesson Plan Assignment Sheet in course reader for details.)
7. Everyone will provide feedback to our teachers, **due the day after the mini-discussion**.

## Course Schedule:

### Week 1, April 4

Sample first-day activity, introduction(s): onomastic exercise  
Deriving section objectives from the UCLA UG curriculum  
What is a TA? What is a Discussion Section? UG expectations of TAs

### Week 2, April 11

Mini-discussions  
Student Writing I: standards & rubrics, timing, general principles, plagiarism/academic dishonesty (DoS flyer in Teaching WAL section of reader; TurnItIn)

### Week 3, April 18

Mini-discussions  
Student Writing II: feedback—marginalia, summary comments, oral feedback; assessment for learning, part of exercises & activities

Week 4, April 25

Grading and Assessment Exercise

Week 5, May 2

Mini-discussions

Office Hours: Scenarios (Course Reader)

Week 6, May 9

Mini-discussions

Teaching Politically/Emotionally charged issues

Week 7, May 16

Mini-discussions

Students in Distress: Sexual Harassment/psych services; OSD; disappearing students

Managing students inside & outside the classroom: Ordinary & Extraordinary Circumstances, see “Suggestions for Teaching” (Course Reader)

Week 8, May 23

Mini-discussions

Teachers in distress: Red Folder

Week 9, May 30

Mini-discussions

Week 10, June 6

Mini-discussions

Student Evaluations

Diversifying your teaching portfolio—teaching itinerary

Teaching files and your career—dossier and curriculum vitae

**Mini-Discussion Assignment and Schedule:**

Leading discussion is one of the most basic elements of teaching literature and composition, as well as one of the most difficult aspects to master. It forces you to hand part of the class over to your students, which can be nerve-wracking, and requires significant preparation so that you can follow each direction they take. The rewards, however, are worth every effort.

In preparation for fall quarter, each of you will lead one 15-minute discussion on one of the readings listed in the schedule below. The rest of the class will role-play as undergraduates, which means that you can't expect us (i.e., our temporary characters) to follow you when you drop names such as Heidegger or Harold Bloom; therefore, you will have to think about audience in this assignment.

You will also have to think about focus; there is obviously something artificial about leading a discussion for only 15 minutes, given that you'll usually have 50 minutes in a

discussion section, 75 minutes in English 3, and two hours in English 2 or 4. So you will have to choose one aspect of the text to focus your attention on during your discussion time.

Please also have a specific and explicit learning goal, not one like “helping them to appreciate literature,” but one such as “understanding how meter affects meaning in ‘The Tyger’” or “tracing the allegorical meanings of the birth-mark.” Please also have sketched out a specific strategy to meet that goal: e.g., have students beat the meter on their desks, or divide the class into small groups and assign each a specific task. This is a good habit to get into not only to focus your preparation for discussion but also to enable observers (and yourself) to evaluate the lesson.

Finally, you may—but are not required to—assign “homework” to prepare your class (i.e., your fellow 495Aers) for your discussion. While you may not assign any *extra* reading, you could, for example, ask us to read the assigned story with specific questions in mind, or have us choose a favorite line from the poem and write a paragraph to justify our choice, or ask us to mark three places in the text that help us understand the main character. To assign this type of homework, you should let us know in class the week before, or email the class, or post to the course website.

## Schedule

<b>April 11</b>	Student 1: “Ode to a Nightingale” Student 2: “The Author to Her Book”
<b>April 18</b>	Student 3: “Dulce et Decorum Est” Student 4: “The Lottery”
<b>May 2</b>	Student 5: “A Conversation with My Father” Student 6: “The Flea” Student 7: “The Fish”
<b>May 9</b>	Student 8: “The Tyger” Student 9: “Certain slant of light” Student 10: “A Rose for Emily”
<b>May 16</b>	Student 11: “Langston Hughes”* Student 12: “Story of an Hour”
<b>May 23</b>	Student 13: “Noiseless Patient Spider”* Student 14: “Yellow Wallpaper”
<b>May 30</b>	Student 15: “My Last Duchess”* Student 16: “Birth-mark” Student 17: “Woman Hollering Creek”*
<b>June 6</b>	Student 18: “Interpreter of Maladies” Student 19: “Everyday Use”*