

Academic Job Search: Teaching Demonstrations

WHAT IS A TEACHING DEMONSTRATION?

When interviewing for faculty positions, particularly at teaching-focused schools, you may be asked to demonstrate your teaching skills. There are two primary types of teaching demonstrations.

- **Classroom Lecture:** Sometimes faculty will ask you to guest-lecture in one of their actual classes. Listen very carefully to the instructions and ask clarifying questions.
 - Ask for a copy of the course syllabus so you know what text is being used, what material has already been covered, and what material comes after your presentation.
 - Ask about the course title, class size, grade level, room details, and length of time you are expected to teach.
 - Are you supposed to teach the specific topic indicated in the syllabus for the day of your visit or can you choose a different topic related to the course?
 - Are you expected to lecture, lead a discussion, or both?
- **Visiting Presenter:** You may be asked to prepare a class and present it to a random group of students, staff, and faculty. Make sure you ask:
 - Who is invited to attend?
 - What level of knowledge will audience members have about your topic?
 - Will you be videotaped?
 - How long should your presentation be?
 - Can you select any topic?
 - What technology will be available?

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- Be clear about expectations.
- Be prepared for anything.
- Use techniques and technology with which you are familiar.
- Include both didactic and interactive components.
- Try to demonstrate a variety of teaching methods.
- Use visual aids such as handouts or slides.
- Prepare a few discussion questions.
- Reserve necessary equipment.
- Realize that both your knowledge and presentation skills are being assessed.
- Manage your time well and end on time.
- Answer students' questions with respect.
- Practice your teaching demonstration multiple times.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- <http://chronicle.com/jobs/2002/07/2002071601c.htm>
- <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/history/grad/phdjobtalk/>