

# THE TEACHING EXCHANGE

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## *Sheridan Center Teaching Certificate IV: The Teaching Consultant Program*

The Sheridan Center Teaching Certificate IV: the Teaching Consultant Program provides selected participants with professional training in the development and application of peer observation and feedback skills, and in the development of leadership and discussion facilitation skills. As a result, participants become part of a Teaching Consultant Community (TCC). The Teaching Certificate IV Program is focused on the principles for effective communication, the creation of an environment for inclusive learning, and the continued development of a reflective and reflexive teaching practice to promote improvement of teaching and collegial exchange about teaching and learning. Teaching Consultants are trained to apply these core principles to the Individual Teaching Consultation, the Presentation Consultation, and the Micro-Teaching Session, and to leading discussions for the Teaching Certificate I Program workshops. Skills developed in the Teaching Certificate IV Program will be applicable toward effective communication and facilitation in academic careers as well as in other professions. Participants will also develop an understanding of evidence-based teaching practices.

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- I. [Requirements for the Teaching Certificate IV Program](#)
- II. [Teaching Consultant Selection Process](#)

III. [Teaching Consultant Opportunities beyond the formal Certificate IV Program](#)

IV. [Head Teaching Consultants](#)

V. [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)

**I. REQUIREMENTS - Three (3) [to be completed within one (1) academic year]**

The Teaching Certificate IV Program trains participants to provide constructive feedback in the peer review of pedagogical strategies and presentation skills. Because a core emphasis of the Program is on the development of, and active participation in the Teaching Consultant Community (TCC), these three (3) requirements must be completed within a single academic year to ensure continuity and to foster collegiality and sharing of pedagogical experiences and perspectives. Additional information can be found in the [FAQ section](#) below (V).

A. [TC Community orientation and training session participation \(August/September\)](#)

B. [TC Community training meeting participation \(December & May\)](#)

C. [Perform of a minimum of five \(5\) ITCs \(by April\)](#)

**A. Orientation and Training session (2 hours) in August/September on the following kinds of activities:**

1. *The Individual Teaching Consultation (ITC):*

Conducting and providing feedback for the ITC, in which faculty, postdoctoral fellows and graduate teaching assistants are provided with the opportunity to review the learning experience of their students in the classroom. During an ITC, two (2) Teaching Consultants observe (and usually videotape) a class or presentation and provide feedback to the instructor based on their observations. Consultants are trained to evaluate how effectively an observee meets her/his pedagogical goals within the context of the specific class, as well as in relation to the course as a whole. Consultants are also trained to effectively articulate their observations and feedback in writing and through a face-to-face meeting, in which they discuss the ITC Final Report with the observee. Through the ITC process, Consultants have the opportunity to review pedagogical performance across the disciplines. As a result, they are exposed to a broad variety of pedagogical styles which, in turn, informs their own teaching practice.

## 2. *The Presentation Consultation (PC):*

Conducting and providing feedback for the PC, in which a faculty member, postdoctoral fellow, graduate or undergraduate student has the opportunity to practice an oral presentation before appearing in public. Presentation Consultations are conducted for the following types of presentations:

- conference talks and poster sessions
- departmental colloquia presentations
- dissertation defenses
- presentations of research outside a classroom setting
- job talks
- interviews

Consultants are trained to evaluate the observee's communication skills, rhetorical skills, responsiveness to the audience, presentation manner, as well as the organization and flow of the presentation. Feedback is provided to the observee immediately following the PC.

## 3. *The Micro-teaching Sessions (Discipline-Specific Feedback):*

Observing and providing feedback in departmental micro-teaching sessions, in which the person being observed (observee) gives a five-minute mock teaching lesson on a chosen subject and receives feedback on her/his teaching and communication style. Teaching consultants are trained to provide "non-expert" feedback to allow observees to see how others perceive their teaching style, to observe and evaluate a variety of teaching approaches, and to learn how to share their observations constructively with others.

## 4. *Discussion Facilitation:*

This session develops effective discussion group facilitation skills. Teaching consultants learn the underlying core features of group dynamics, and strategies for employing inclusive and engaging discussion facilitation practices. Because teaching consultants have the opportunity to serve as Discussion Leaders for the five workshops of the Sheridan Teaching Seminar Teaching Certificate I Program, this component of the program provides key training for facilitating these discussions. The skills learned in this training session are also applicable for teaching seminars and leading discussions in courses.

Those who choose to become Discussion Leaders must commit to leading all five (5) workshops of the Teaching Certificate I program. Because they will be working with the same group of Certificate I participants throughout the year, leading a discussion group is comparable to teaching a section and the consultants are instrumental in building a collaborative and interactive community of participants.

### **B. Two TC Community Training Session Meetings (December & May):**

1. *December*: a mid-year training session meeting on guidelines for designing, observing, and providing feedback for effective presentations.
2. *May*: a final training session and program review meeting on implementation strategies and assessing effectiveness of new teaching innovations.

### **C. Completion of a Minimum of 5 ITCs (by April)**

All Teaching Consultants must perform a minimum of five (5) ITCs.

## **II. TEACHING CONSULTANT SELECTION PROCESS:**

Teaching Consultant Certificate IV Program participants are selected from graduate students across the Brown teaching community. All consultants must have completed as a minimal requirement, the Sheridan Teaching Seminar Certificate I program. In addition, some candidates may have completed the Sheridan Teaching Certificate II and/or III programs. Candidates will have a demonstrated commitment to teaching and constructive pedagogical exchange.

## **III. TEACHING CONSULTANT OPPORTUNITIES BEYOND THE TEACHING CERTIFICATE IV PROGRAM**

Teaching Consultants who have completed Teaching Certificate IV may choose to continue serving as Teaching Consultants of the Sheridan Center and will be promoted to **Senior Teaching Consultant**. In this capacity, they will have the opportunity to continue their professional development and further enhance their *curriculum vitae*. Senior Teaching Consultants are expected to attend the Teaching Consultant Community meetings (December and May) and complete a minimum of five (5) ITCs for the academic year.

Teaching Consultants who did not complete all of the requirements for Certificate IV may continue to serve as regular Teaching Consultants. In this capacity they can

conduct ITCs, PCs, and micro-teaching sessions (provided they have attended the fall training session). They may also serve as Discussion Leaders for the Sheridan Teaching Seminar Teaching Certificate I program, if they have participated in the fall training session on Discussion Skills.

#### **IV. HEAD TEACHING CONSULTANTS**

Two (2) Senior Teaching Consultants will be selected to serve as Head Teaching Consultants of the Sheridan Center: one (1) from the Humanities and Social Sciences (Hum/SS Head TC) and one (1) from the Life and Physical Sciences (Sci Head TC). The Head Teaching Consultants will work with the Director of the Teaching Certificate IV Program to co-facilitate the training sessions, mentor their peers, and facilitate communication and feedback between the Sheridan Center and the Teaching Consultant network. Head Teaching Consultants are expected to be available to serve a two (2) year term.

#### **V. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs):**

**1. *What if I am currently a Teaching Consultant and received my training prior to the 2009-10 academic year? Do I still need to fulfill all of the requirements all over again to receive Teaching Certificate IV?***

Yes, you will still need to attend all of the required training sessions and complete five (5) ITCs. If you were a Teaching Consultant the previous academic year, attended *all three* training sessions for that year, and completed five (5) ITCs, you will receive Teaching Certificate IV.

**2. *Can I receive Teaching Certificate IV if I make up one of the missed meetings the following year?***

No. One of the key principles of Certificate IV is the development of a sense of collegial community through ongoing peer interaction and exchange.

**3. *What if I can't make one of the meeting dates?***

You will be provided with the opportunity to select one of 2 possible dates that are determined based on everyone's availability. It is your responsibility to respond to the call for availability from the Sheridan Center. If you miss both of these dates, no further make-up sessions will be provided.