

University of Toronto

THE500

TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

COURSE SYLLABUS | FALL 2025

COURSE ANIMATOR

Prof Bill Ju (PBJ)

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OFFICE HOURS Thurs 10-11AM
in Stewart Building 410C

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DESCRIPTION

Our course, THE500H, is oriented to **classroom practice** rather than teaching theory. It is designed for senior PhD candidates and Post-Doctoral Fellows who wish to improve their teaching practice by becoming more knowledgeable about the ways in which students learn. Enrolment in THE500 is restricted to senior PhD students and PDFs who have already had classroom experience (e.g. as a teaching assistant or as a course instructor). As course participants, you will experience and take part in a variety of teaching situations, from small group activities to more formal lecture sessions. You will have the opportunity to reflect on your own teaching and learning experiences and on the course as it progresses. You will be asked to engage in the course collaboratively, online and in the classroom (if possible), sharing successes and problems with peers, guest speakers and your course instructor.

COURSE GOALS

By the end of the course, you should be able to

- Describe different ways in which students learn
 - Describe, select and use a variety of instructional strategies and methods
 - Choose the most effective strategies and methods for the teaching situation you face (e.g. large or small classes; upper year and lower year students)
 - Describe and use a variety of feedback techniques
- Identify the advantages and disadvantages of different assessment methods
Develop skills for designing a course, a syllabus and assessment tools

At the completion of the course, you will be able to add the following professional documents to your dossier:

- A Statement of Teaching Philosophy with references to your teaching styles, teaching practices, and techniques learned in the course
- An original Course Outline and Syllabus that clearly explains and justifies:
 - The goals and objectives of your course
 - How your course is delivered
 - The use of instructional techniques you have chosen
 - The methods of assessment used in your course

While this course does not discuss theories of pedagogies, I do offer a brief bibliography that you might find useful in your teaching practice. I have placed it in its own section on Quercus. Our guests may also ask you to do some reading in preparation for their session. Their suggested articles/links will be posted as soon as I receive them. After each class, I will also post all slides in PDF format on our Quercus site.

COURSE OUTLINE

Class hours: **Wednesdays 5:00pm - 7:00pm in FE240 ((371 Bloor Street West, Toronto, ON M5S 2R7)**

Sep 10	1 Introduction Teaching in higher education – future-proofing	Oct 29 - READING WEEK BREAK
Sep 17	2 AI in higher education AND Enhancing the Student Experience Integrating educational technology for engagement Guest speakers Susan McCahan and Jordan Holmes	Oct 15 6 Unconscious Bias in the Classroom Guest speaker Grase Kim
Sep 24	3 Introductory Pedagogical Practices Designing effective learning experiences Guest speakers Michal Kasprzak and Cristina D'Amico	Oct 22 7 Experiential Learning in Higher Education Guest speaker Heather Hermant
Oct 01	4 Peer Observation of Teaching & Statement of Teaching Philosophy Guest Speakers Michal Kasprzak and Cristina D'Amico	Nov 05 8 Universal Instructional Design Guest Speaker Samahra Zatzman and Mike Nicholson from Accessibility
Oct 08	5 Course Design <i>Guest Panel and Discussion</i>	Nov 12 9 Assessing Learning and Academic Integrity Guest Speaker Leslie Durward
		Nov 19 10 Recognizing and Supporting Student in Difficulty Guest speaker Chad Jankowski
		Nov 27 11 Large Classroom Teaching Guest Speaker Dr. Andreopolous
		Dec 04 12 Teaching Philosophy vs Teaching Practice Concluding discussions

YOUR ORIGINAL COURSE SYLLABUS

Session 9: Mandatory First Draft

Session 11: Mandatory Final Version

Create an original course syllabus, preferably for a second or third year undergraduate course in your discipline. The syllabus will not duplicate a course you are teaching or which you have taken. It should contain the expected course outcomes, assignments, and list of readings.

YOUR STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

Session 7: Optional First Draft

Session 10: Mandatory Final Version

Prepare a statement of teaching philosophy for inclusion in your dossier.

PARTICIPATION

Due throughout the course.

Participate in all in-class activities, including short written pieces on various aspects of the course as requested by guest speakers. **To receive your final certificate, attendance is mandatory.** If you must be away, please let me know as soon as you can.

PEER REVIEW

As per schedule with Lexie

As a peer reviewer, you will provide a brief written report with supportive and constructive feedback for teaching sessions given by two of your colleagues. You will also have two colleagues review one of your microteaching sessions.

Further information will be forthcoming from Lexie Huang (the500@utoronto.ca) during the first week of classes. Lexie will be joining us as administrator later in the term.

REFLECTION

TBA - last 2 weeks of the course You will write a brief reflection on the comments made by your reviewers (approx. 300-500 words). Do not include the reviewer comments when you send your reflection; they are for you to use as you continue in your classroom practice.

You will also write a short reflective piece of approx. 300-500 words on the session(s) you found most helpful to you as a classroom practitioner.

HAVE QUESTIONS? Does Dr. Ju listen to Usher or Taylor Swift? He can be contacted either using butter or by email at wmyh.ju@utoronto.ca



PROFESSOR

Prof Bill Ju (PBJ)
wmyh.ju@utoronto.ca



ABOUT ME

I did my undergraduate at the University of Toronto and finished my M.Sc. (Physiology) and Ph.D. (Laboratory Medicine and Pathobiology) here as well, before doing a post-doc in neurobiology at Stanford. I did a clinical post-doc at the University of Toronto with Professor Beverley Orser in Anesthesiology. In the past my research focus has been on using molecular and genetic approaches to understanding synaptic plasticity and learning, as well as neurodegeneration. Currently I am interested in how students learn and how to help them in this process from a neuroscience based perspective. In my spare time I love basketball, writing science fiction, doing stand-up comedy (not well though), and raising awareness about equity and social justice issues in the sciences. I hope that you will have a great time in this course and want to help you any way I can. Welcome!!

CONTACTING ME

I will be available every week for office hours **Thursdays 10-11AM EDT** in my office following the latest public health and university guidelines or on Zoom by appointment. My office is in Stewart Building 410C. Other hours are available by appointment, and I will try my best to be flexible. You can also join the weekly chat (set up on announcements) or you can let me know via private chat that you want to meet virtually. We'll keep a summary of any office hours in case you missed it! If you'd like to message me via private chat, please email me directly at: wmyh.ju@utoronto.ca (preferred), rather than using the send mail function on Quercus. Use your mail.utoronto.ca email address when corresponding wherever possible, and identify the course (THE500). Check Quercus and your utormail box frequently for updates and new messages. For more complicated issues, please speak with me directly, during office hours or electronically by appointment. Please check to see that your question is not already answered in the syllabus. I try to respond to emails requiring a brief response within 24 hrs, except over the weekend.

COURSE ADMINISTRATOR

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ACCESSIBILITY:

THE500 welcomes students with diverse learning styles and needs in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978 8060; accessibility.utoronto.ca (Academic Handbook, 2.19)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the UofT. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your UofT degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document. Students are reminded that lectures are the intellectual property of the instructors, and the lecture recordings should be respected thus. Students are further reminded that the Academic Handbook states: "It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them" (section 4.5)" Any instance of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Academic Integrity. For further information visit <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/resources> and <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice>

TURNITIN

Turnitin is the new plagiarism detection tool our institution uses. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>). Please review the policies on academic integrity and more information will be provided once available.

USEFUL RESOURCES FOR SYLLABUS CREATION

Hi I'm Brenda, the creator of the layout of this visual syllabus! Here are some free resources to help you make yours if you want to get creative with it!



FIGMA

Figma's tools are easy to learn and is beloved by professionals. You can get all the perks of the Professional plan **for free** through the Education plan for students and educators! This is my personal favourite, look out for a guide (written by me!) in the near future about the do's and don'ts of visual syllabi creation.



POWERPOINT

Microsoft Office's PowerPoint can be used for more than presentations, and has the power to create some pretty sweet visual syllabi.

WEBAIM



This is a contrast checker for accessibility standards, and is an extremely useful tool if you are choosing custom colours. Make sure the contrast between your text and the background pass the AA standard at the minimum! <https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>