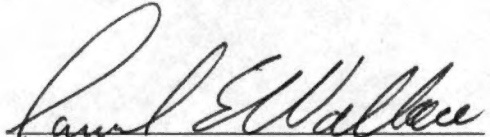
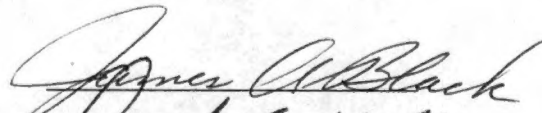
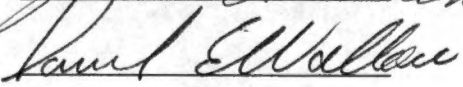
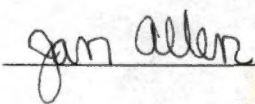


To the Graduate Council:

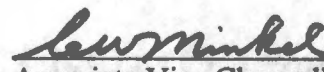
I am submitting herewith a thesis written by Aldea Renee Misenheimer entitled "Evaluating Teacher Training of Sociology Graduate Students at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville." I have examined the final copy of this thesis for form and content and recommend it to be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts, with a major in Sociology.


Samuel E. Wallace, Major Professor

We have read this thesis and
recommend its acceptance:

Accepted for the Council:


Associate Vice Chancellor and
Dean of The Graduate School

EVALUATING TEACHER TRAINING
OF SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE, KNOXVILLE

A Thesis
Presented for the
Master of Arts
Degree
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Aldea R. Misenheimer
May 1999

Copyright 1999 by Aldea R. Misenheimer

All rights reserved

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my husband

Wes A. Misenheimer

and

to my first mentor in graduate school

who passed away before I could say goodbye

Dr. Donald Ploch

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my major professor, Dr. Samuel E. Wallace, for the time and energy he has put into this project and thesis. Without his motivational speeches every month, this thesis would have taken twice as long to complete. I would like to thank the other committee members, Dr. James A. Black and Dr. Jan Allen. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Amy L. Chasteen at the University of Southern Mississippi and to Cary Springer at UTK's Statistical Consultation Center. I would like to personally thank the head of the Sociology department, Dr. Suzanne Kurth. I want to thank everyone who has held discussions with me about this project, especially those who helped pre-test the questionnaire, the syllabi checklist and the manual. A special thank-you to the four judges who evaluated the syllabi, you helped more than you know! Lastly, I would like to thank my husband and my family for their support and help in the preparation of this thesis.

ABSTRACT

Previous research on teacher training is rare in the United States, especially when the training refers to graduate students. This study's focus is the effectiveness of teacher training for graduate teaching associates, more specifically the Department of Sociology's graduate teaching associates at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Data for this study were collected from three sources: a questionnaire, GTA syllabi, and student evaluations of GTA instruction. The questionnaire revealed the amount of teacher training, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of the types of training programs for the graduate teaching associate. The evaluation of the associates' syllabi determined if any previous training was utilized in the construction of the syllabus. The student evaluations, better known as the Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP), assessed the use of teacher training in the classroom. The analysis suggests those graduate teaching associates who were trained through the Sociology Department's teacher training seminar (Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology) did utilize this training in the classroom thus achieving higher student evaluations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
1. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem	1
Significance of the Problem	1
Prior Research on Teacher Education/Training	2
Theoretical Orientation	4
Hypotheses	5
2. PROCEDURES	7
Sample	7
Exclusionary Factors	8
Final Sample	14
Data	14
Dependent Variable: Training	14
Description of the three UTK training programs	14
Questionnaire description	19
Independent Variables: CTEP and Syllabi Rating	31
Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP)	31
Syllabi	35
3. FINDINGS	45
Sample Characteristics	45
Analysis	47
4. DISCUSSION	51
Shortcomings and Problems	51
Contribution of Project to Sociology	52
Conclusion	52
LIST OF REFERENCES	54
APPENDIX	58
A. Questionnaire	59
B. Syllabus Rating Checklist and Manual	66
C. Human Subjects Board	78
VITA	80

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Those who conduct research on teaching believe in the long run their research will contribute to the public good through the improvement of education. It is as if we have all been raised on the same fairytale...The more difficult task is to show how this fairytale may someday become true by making changes in both teacher education as well as how we conduct research on teaching (Flanders, 1976, p.167).

Statement of the Problem

The departments at the University of Tennessee (UTK) are always looking to gain more students, since students require more faculty, which in turn requires more funding. Unfortunately, few departments at UTK have sufficient faculty to accommodate additional students and must utilize staff to teach. Graduate students are the primary source for such labor. Some departments train their graduate students before allowing them into the classroom, while other departments expect their graduate students to teach with no prior training at all. This is not only a University violation, but it creates unfortunate victims of poor teacher training - graduate as well as undergraduate students.

What impact does teacher training have on college instruction? How effective is teacher training? This research will answer some of the questions about the effectiveness of teacher training for the Department of Sociology graduate teaching associates at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Significance of the Problem

Instructors in the humanities...seldom provide special sections for those who wish to become teachers, pay only lip service to the institution's wide responsibility of teacher education, and are even less likely to use their own classroom as a place to model a variety of teaching techniques (Flanders, 1976, p.170).

In 1964, the Hale Report indicated only 0.1% of their sample of universities

employed formally trained instructors. The Russell Report in 1966 as well as the Department of Education and Science Report in 1975 declared only 33% of the lecturers in the public universities were qualified instructors defined as having some formal training in the art of teaching (Yorke, 1977). My own search of the literature failed to turn up a single study investigating the percentage of qualified instructors now teaching in American colleges and universities.

The consequences of untrained teachers is said to be detrimental to the entire community. According to the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, undergraduate students who have experienced a course taught by an untrained graduate student are unable to "think logically, write clearly, or speak coherently" (Toch, 1998, p. 33). These undergraduate students are tomorrow's workforce. These are the adults who will one day represent the University of Tennessee at a conference, better yet, in a classroom at another institution.

Prior Research on Teacher Education/Training

Teaching development activities in Sociology can be traced as far back as the early 1920's at the University of Southern California where the first course in Teaching Sociology was offered. Only a handful of departments engaged in any training for teachers through the 1940's and 50's (Chaichian, et. al., 1986, p.168; Goldsmid, 1976, p. 230). In 1971, the Undergraduate Section of the American Sociological Association was formed. The newsletter contained important information linking classroom experiments, teaching strategies, and research. In 1974, some of the sociologists who were concerned with teaching formed the Projects on Teaching Undergraduate Sociology as part of the

American Sociological Association. In 1976, the journal Teaching Sociology was created by Sage Publications. By the 1980's, several volumes had been published including Goldsmid and Wilson's Passing on Sociology (Garland, 1983, p. 488; Wallace, 1997, p. 17).

Professional organizations both flowed from departmental activity as well as contributed to it. For example, in 1983, the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, organized a workshop utilizing several teachers recommended by the Undergraduate Section of the American Sociological Association. In 1985, that initial workshop had given rise to a seminar that designed one of several teacher training programs.

Unfortunately, not every University initiated the training of their graduate students. By the 1980's, only 50% of all graduate sociology departments offered some type of teacher training (Ewen & Emling, 1976; Garland, 1983, p. 487; Pescosolido & Milkie, 1995, pp. 343, 347). Pescosolido and Milkie (1995) provided results from a more recent study. They found only 19% of the departments offered a semester long course like the University of Tennessee, Knoxville's 510: Teaching Sociology (p. 343). Beyond that, slightly less than one third of the graduate departments surveyed offered training for an entire semester; 14% offered a 1-3 day training session within the department; 9% offered formal mentoring programs, and 26% relied on some type of pre-semester university operated training program (p. 345). In twenty years, there was only a slight increase in those departments that offer a full term semester course (p. 346). Pescosolido and Milkie (1995) observed that even these low numbers overestimate sociology department's concern

with teacher training because some programs are both elective and poorly enrolled, some remain in the developmental stages, and still other programs remain on the books although they have not been offered in recent years (p. 343).

Given this historical review of the place of teaching in Sociology generally, and teacher training in particular, we must conclude that the discipline only began to concern itself with the teaching of Sociology about twenty years ago. Furthermore, the progress made since then has been slow, uneven and definitely temporary.

Continued improvement of teacher education leading to greater teacher effectiveness will not be easy to accomplish, but if it is realized, it is most likely to be the result of a new continuous synthesis of research on teaching and instructional development in teacher education" (Flanders, 1976, p. 171).

Theoretical Orientation

Because of the recent interest in the improvement of teaching undergraduate Sociology, an analysis of the problem of teaching undergraduates has been the main focus of this research. However, the underlying assumption states that more training creates a better understanding of teaching and thus increases the quality of instruction and course creation. Jack Bynum (1982), a professor identified as an outstanding instructor, emphasizes that teaching and learning to teach are ongoing processes, just like research. He summed up his teaching philosophy in one sentence, "If I am to improve their learning, I must improve my teaching" (p. 51). However, Hall and Morgan (1986) argued that every graduate student who enters a teaching seminar must have the commitment to teach, otherwise the course will be useless (p. 292). This lack of commitment creates apathy, therefore any training received would not make any difference in changing the teaching behavior.

Hypotheses

In an effort to study the effectiveness of teacher training, the following hypotheses are in order.

Hypothesis #1: Teacher training is effective for teaching undergraduate Sociology.

By examining and comparing the student evaluations (Campus Teaching Evaluation Program - CTEP) and having the first syllabus created by the Instructor critiqued, those graduate teaching associates with training will have a higher rating from both the CTEP student evaluations and the syllabus critique.

Hypothesis #2: The more training a graduate teaching associate acquires the greater his or her improvement in teaching.

The average of all CTEP scores for that particular graduate teaching associate will be higher than the scores for those associates with low or no training. Those associates with more training will also have a higher scored syllabus.

Hypothesis #3: Training assists in creating better syllabi.

With increased training, the knowledge would be used to create a better syllabus. The ratings from the judges on the syllabus for one associate with more training will be higher than the syllabus of another associate with little or no training.

Hypothesis #4: Graduate teaching associates who have taken 510: Teaching Sociology will score higher on the syllabus rating and on the student evaluations (CTEP).

I believe this will occur because the seminar is more in-depth in teaching methodology and syllabus creation than the other two programs at the University of

Tennessee, Knoxville. The programs are the Campus wide GTA seminar and the Chancellor's GTA Mentoring Program.

The following hypotheses pertain to one of the components of this study, the Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP).

Hypothesis #5: Gender of the graduate teaching associate will not have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor.

Hypothesis #6: Age of the graduate teaching associate will have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor. The older the instructor, the higher the CTEP rating.

Hypothesis #7: The time of day the course was offered will have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor, however, I can not hypothesize if either morning or afternoon instructors will receive higher student evaluations.

CHAPTER 2

PROCEDURES

Sample

At the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, several assistantships are available for graduate students: Graduate Teaching Assistant, Graduate Teaching Associate, Graduate Assistant, and Graduate Research Assistant. An assistantship is defined by the Graduate School (1998) as a "financial award to a graduate student for part-time work in teaching, administration or research while pursuing study toward an advanced degree" (p. 31). Of the four assistantships available, only two (Graduate Teaching Assistant and Graduate Teaching Associate) pertain directly to teaching undergraduate students.

Graduate Teaching Assistants have less than eighteen graduate credit hours and are not allowed to teach their own course, help support faculty research, or perform clerical work, such as filing or typing or completing work orders. Assistants are given duties such as running discussion sections under a main faculty member, helping a faculty member prepare lectures, grading assignments and exams, and keeping a record of grades and attendance. This position is intended to help the graduate student "work to gain teaching skills and an increased understanding of the discipline" (Graduate School, 1998, p. 31). When graduate students are chosen to run discussions, each Assistant is assigned two sections. These sections are designed to help the undergraduate student connect with the topic being studied and obtain a relationship with the instructor conducive to communication. Each section is comprised mainly of freshmen and does not exceed a total of thirty students.

The Graduate Teaching Associates have more than eighteen graduate credit hours.

These graduate students may be chosen to teach their own introductory to senior level class but are not allowed to teach a graduate level course. The Associates' main responsibilities are teaching the subject and assigning grades (Graduate School, 1998, p. 31). Some Associates may run discussion sections instead of teaching their own course. This Graduate Teaching Associate category is comprised of Instructors allowed to teach their own Mini-term, Summer School Session and Evening School classes as well as the Spring and Fall term semesters. The average enrollment for these courses are fifty students, and the Associates may choose to add more students.

For both Graduate Teaching Assistants and Associates, documents such as syllabi and student evaluations (CTEP) were available for public access. All Assistants had one to four discussion section syllabi and Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP) evaluations. Most Associates had discussion section syllabi and CTEP evaluations as well as several lower level introductory to senior level course syllabi and student evaluations (CTEP). Since the differences between the Assistant and the Associate are slight, consisting of only class differences, I had to search elsewhere for a limiting factor to narrow the time frame of the study.

The Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP) forms had a limitation that the Assistants and Associates did not have. The current form did not begin to be distributed and recorded until the Fall semester of 1995. This date was the limiting factor I was searching for and it marked the beginning point of the study.

Sample Exclusionary Factors

The validity of this project would have been improved with the inclusion of instructors from departments other than Sociology offering several levels of teacher

training. Initially I was to include three departments, the first department having a lack of teacher training due to a poor attitude towards training GTA's. The second department would have some teacher training available while the third department would encourage and offer training to their GTA's.

Because of the lack of funding and the time constraints, the project sample was narrowed to only the Department of Sociology. Since varying degrees of training have occurred among the graduate students in this department, the sample should still prove to be beneficial. Of course, the possibility of contagion is possible within this one department. Graduate students talk to each other, so theoretically graduate teaching associates with no level of training might have been "shown the ropes" by more senior graduate students. When reported on the questionnaire, the amount of training might be less, but the syllabus and/or student evaluations (CTEP) would indicate an instructor with more training. Therefore, I acknowledge this sample will contain information on structured teacher training (or lack there of) that can not be excluded.

In the paragraphs below, each factor eliminated from the data will be explained. This process of elimination is necessary in order to create a sample where the GTAs training can be measured without interference from other factors such as length, semester, and type of course offered.

Within the Department of Sociology, I have chosen to limit the sample to only Graduate Teaching Associates. I chose this because the opportunity to teach one's own course is only offered to the Associates. This helped to narrow the field because the Associate's syllabus will reflect the teaching methods, styles, and techniques utilized in the

classroom. An Assistant's syllabus would reflect the main faculty member's teaching methods and techniques, while not allowing the freedom to try different teaching styles - it is a pure discussion section. Therefore, Graduate Teaching Assistants were removed from the sample.

Because discussion sections are more likely to portray the main faculty member's teaching skills, all discussion section classes were removed from the sample. This left Evening School, Fall Semester, Mini-term, Spring Semester, and Summer School classes. A short description of these classes can be found in Table 1, "Description of Courses at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville."

Evening School classes differ considerably from the other term classes. Since the class meets after 5 PM, the student composition is different from day classes. The time of this class allows those adults who have jobs, families, or other responsibilities during the day to attend a college level course. This means the students are mainly non-traditional, being older adults and having more responsibility. This is different from the traditional freshmen, 18 years old, living on campus, with only themselves to be responsible for. The second way this class differs from other terms is the frequency of classes. Most of the evening courses are only offered once a week, and meet up to three hours a night. This type of class requires a different teaching style and technique than a daytime lecture lasting only fifty minutes. Whereas an evening class would have time to show a movie, lecture and hold a discussion, the time frame for a daytime class would only allow a short lecture and discussion. Because of these variations in class time, frequency, and student composition, I have removed the Evening School classes from the sample.

Table 1.

Descriptions of Semesters at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville

According to the *University of Tennessee Undergraduate Catalog / Knoxville 1997-1998*

Evening School	Offers courses in non-traditional formats. Designed for students who work during the day or are otherwise too busy to attend classes between 8 AM and 4 PM. These classes are offered for every semester, except the Mini-term. Depending on the timetable each class ranges from once to twice a week and from 1 ½ to 3 hours.
Fall Term Semester	This term marks the beginning of the academic year. Most departments offer the first half of a two-part class this semester. The semester runs from August to December. Each class is offered twice to three times a week and varies from 50 to 70 minutes.
Mini Term	This term was a condensed version of one Summer School Session. Only certain subjects were allowed to be taught during this extremely fast-paced term. This term only ran from the Monday after graduation to the day before the first session of Summer School. Each class offered ran Monday through Friday at three hours each day.
Spring Term Semester	This term is seen as the second half of the academic year. Those departments who offered a two part class will offer the second half of the course this semester. The semester runs from January to May. Each class is offered twice to three times a week and varies from 50 to 70 minutes.
Summer School Session	This session offers classes to students who wish to continue their academic career over the full year. There are over 1,000 classes offered, and are divided into three categories: First session, Second session or Full session. A first session class will run from June to early-July. A second session class will run from early-July to mid-August, while the full session class runs from June to August. Each class is three hours long, everyday.

The Mini-term attempts to condense one semester (fourteen weeks) of information into three weeks. Each class meets every weekday for three hours during the term. This creates a situation for a differing student composition. The majority of the students tend to be upperclassmen taking pre-requisite courses for graduation instead of the average collection of lower and upperclassmen. Because of the time restraint of three weeks, only certain courses are allowed to be taught during this term. As with the Evening School, this time restraint also requires different teaching methods, styles and techniques than the regular fifty minute daytime lecture. Therefore, I have removed the Mini-term classes from the sample to maintain similar student composition, time frame, and teaching style.

The Summer School Sessions are the last category of courses under a weekly time-restraint. These courses are only offered during the summer, so the student composition will vary as well. Several types of students attend the summer sessions. Those students who are dedicated to attending classes year round are usually comprised of upperclassmen fulfilling graduation requirements. Some students attend the summer session to remove a failing or incomplete grade. The mixture of students preferred for this sample tend to be the students who relax or work over the summer months. Since the classes are condensed from fourteen weeks to six weeks, these courses would also require a different teaching style than the regular fifty minute daytime lecture. Because of the variation in the student composition and teaching methods, the Summer School Session classes were removed from the sample.

In an attempt to find at least two semesters with similar student composition and time frame, only two semesters remained, the Fall and Spring term semesters. To continue,

the process of eliminating factors that could interfere with studying a GTA's training skills, the process had to focus on the type of classes taught. Since Graduate Teaching Associates are given the chance of teaching any undergraduate course, I had to decide what courses to include. During the development of my decision, I noticed all of the undergraduate courses offered during these two semesters had approximately the same time frame to work with. I attempted to choose similar courses based on the student population to maintain a level of consistency. The upper level courses were comprised mainly of students from all college classes and ranks. The only two courses in Sociology that had similar backgrounds of students were the two introductory courses, Sociology 110: Social Problems and Social Change and Sociology 120: Introduction to Sociology. Therefore, all Sociology courses except the two introductory courses, were removed from the sample.

Because the classes were reduced to the two introductory courses, only a syllabus for each introductory course taught within the time frame was required for future evaluation. Of the syllabi collected, only the first syllabus produced by the graduate teaching associate was evaluated. The use of the first syllabus was to maintain the validity of this study by measuring the "quality of training." The "quality of training," if the training has occurred before the GTA began teaching, should be evident in the first syllabus produced by the Graduate Teaching Associate.

The student evaluations (CTEP) were available beginning Fall semester 1995, because the implementation of the program and the publication of Tennessee 101 occurred that year. Because of the time constraint and slow publication of the evaluations in

Tennessee 101, records of the Campus Teaching-Evaluation Program were retrieved from Fall 1995 to Fall 1997. Hence, any student evaluation before Fall 1995 and after Fall 1997 was not included in this study.

Final Sample

After all of the exclusions, the following were included in the sample: The Department of Sociology Graduate Student Associates who taught either Sociology 110 or Sociology 120 courses during the Fall or Spring Semester from 1995 to 1997 only, excluding Evening School and discussion sections. The corresponding CTEPs and the first syllabus produced by the Graduate Teaching Associate are also included in the study.

Data

Dependent Variable: Training

Description of the three UTK training programs

To teach teachers how to evaluate their own teaching so that they can decide for themselves which skills and strategies for them are most useful...suggests that learning how to study one's own teaching may well be the most important, single objective in teacher education (Flanders, 1976, p. 173).

In the literature, several items have emerged that should be included in teacher training programs to make them successful. From England, Rudduck (1985) claims that training should have a contract that includes observation by a supervisor, student feedback to the supervisor, creativity and change. Workshops and discussion-learning situations, comments and discussion on personal teaching styles, and a tutor/mentor relationship were important factors for McCabe (1979). Mansell (1975) states teacher training programs should include an apprenticeship model to open opportunities in the areas of

communication skills, theories on teaching and designing curriculum. Even when teacher training sessions occur in secondary education, these sessions can also be applied to higher education. A good teacher training session in secondary education occurs when the programs include observing experienced instructors, education concerning models of teaching, and freedom to practice the model within his or her own classroom (Flanders, 1976). The following sections describe three programs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, that focus on teacher training for Graduate Teaching Associates.

When teachers or college students have a chance to study their own teaching behavior thoughtfully and have access to opportunities for practice with appropriate subsequent analysis, the odds are very high that they will change or modify their patterns of teaching behavior (Flanders, 1976, p. 170).

Campus Wide GTA Seminar

This seminar is a university wide orientation for all potential graduate student assistants and associates. The seminar lasts for two days, and is open to students in every department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. The session consists of several guest lecturers in a mass hall, small group discussions on specific topics, and general written information on several topics. The topics encompassed time management, syllabus construction, audio and visual equipment utilization, computer equipment and classes, library utilization, other campus resources, and ethical behavior. The written materials for the seminar included the GTA Handbook published by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, handouts from speakers on their specific topic, and pamphlets with contact information for campus resources. The speakers encouraged the graduate students to find a "buddy" to direct questions to in the future. There is no follow up by the coordinators or

staff, and this seminar is not required, therefore participation is on a volunteer basis.

Chancellor's GTA Mentoring Program

The issue addressed [in the Mentoring Program] is one of the most important issues facing all comprehensive, research universities such as the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This is the challenge of preparing Graduate Teaching Assistants to be effective classroom teachers while they are getting their first exposure to university teaching as GTAs. This is an area of graduate student training that is woefully neglected in the comprehensive, research university... I consider this [program initiative] to be the most creative approach to developing the teaching ability of GTAs that I have ever seen (Huck & Allen, 1997, pp. 2-3).

-William T. Snyder
Chancellor, UTK

In the fall of 1993, two faculty members at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, created this program by simply talking to each other. In fall of 1994, the final proposed program was submitted to the Alcoa Foundation in Pittsburgh. The GTA Mentoring Program received not only a grant of \$120,000 but recognition from the Foundation as having potential benefits in other "research" universities. The GTA Mentoring program was implemented in 1996 and had full support from UTK's administration (Huck & Allen, 1997, pp. 1-2).

Today, the GTA Mentoring Program consists of twelve faculty "Mentors," twelve previous GTA members as "Fellows," 100 GTAs from thirty five departments, and individuals like CEOs and experts not affiliated with an educational institution (Huck & Allen, p. 8). The groups are divided into twelve teams with one faculty "Mentor," one seasoned GTA "Fellow," and eight to ten new GTA members (Huck & Allen, p. 1-2). A Program Coordinating Team consisting of three GTAs, one instructor, two faculty members, and one department head deliberate on issues, examine options and make decisions about the Mentoring Program (Huck & Allen, p. 25).

The faculty "Mentors" were chosen based on their campus wide reputation for being an outstanding teacher. For UTK, this meant the faculty member must have one of the following: National Alumni Association Outstanding Teacher Award, Chancellor's Outstanding Teaching Award, or designee of the Awards Committee of the Faculty Senate's Teaching Council (Huck & Allen, p. 8).

This program is open to every department at the University of Tennessee and includes beginning graduate teaching assistants and associates, but experienced GTAs as well. Every graduate student is encouraged to apply for acceptance into the program through an application process. The program lasts for one academic year and consists of monthly small group work and 'administrative' meetings, monthly seminars, and workshops. The Program is set up so if the graduate student has a question, there are over ten different people (s)he might turn to for an answer.

The topics encompassed by this program cover several items of information about teaching, including planning a course and its syllabus, test creation, and grading, in class activities, ethical behavior, and solving classroom and time management problems. Some topics focus away from the University classroom and deal with situations such as preparing to find an academic job after graduation, how to settle in a new department (office behavior), and how to get the equipment you need.

The goals of this program are as follows (Huck & Allen, pp. 3-6):

1. To improve undergraduate instruction.
2. To elevate the status of teaching.
 - faculty and administration give more weight to candidate's teaching competence.

-professors will become involved in research on their teaching strategies.

3. Provide team building opportunities for GTAs.
4. Allow award winning faculty to pass along insights to others.

Each member, Fellow, and Mentor are encouraged to observe each other in a classroom setting and to incorporate as much experience as necessary. Assessment, which involves critique and feedback, is the first and foremost important element, while evaluation, consisting of just critique, is still utilized in certain situations.

Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology

In 1983, the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, organized a workshop utilizing some teachers recommended by the undergraduate section of the American Sociological Association. By 1985, that initial workshop had given rise to a seminar specializing in teacher training. By the following year, a graduate seminar titled "Teaching Sociology" was offered as a full semester course every other semester. Starting in 1995, the course was offered every fall semester for new graduate teaching assistants and associates (Wallace, 1997, p.17).

This seminar is open to Sociology and other graduate students for three hours of academic credit. The seminar is work intensive and fast paced. The text is a compilation of articles and chapters on topics pertaining to teacher training. The topics encompassed by this seminar are teaching philosophy, teaching methods, course creation, syllabus construction, and most importantly - practice. An informal mentoring system occurs between the students and between the students and the professor, Dr. Samuel E. Wallace. Techniques utilized by this seminar include computer usage and videotaping performances

of teaching in a twenty five minute lecture followed by a twenty five minute discussion.

Questionnaire Description

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help address the possible beneficial aspects of the amount and type of teacher training. Through the questionnaire, data may be obtained on when the Graduate Teaching Associate attended the training programs. Using this data, the time the training occurred would be compared with student evaluations (CTEP). In the past, research has indicated that certain factors such as gender and age of the instructor may influence a student's evaluation of their instructor. These variables were included as questions. (Dukes & Victoria, 1989).

The questionnaire was comprised of several parts: I. Teaching Experience at the University of TN after Spring semester 1995; II. Teacher Training and Experience; and III. Background Information. The questionnaire is found in Appendix A.

Evolution of questionnaire

The questionnaire's design and testing phases required ten successive drafts of the document in order to create a reliable questionnaire. The first draft was based solely on certain chapters from Goldsmid and Wilson (1980) as well as sheer curiosity. I had noticed several subjects had taught more than one class in a semester, and I struggled on how to incorporate every course taught into the study. Dr. Wallace and I conversed on this topic and we decided to have blanks where the subject could fill in each course taught and which semester. The influence of training, the three major training sessions on campus available for Sociology graduate students (Campus Wide GTA Seminar, Chancellor's GTA

Mentoring Program, Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology) were listed with blanks before and after the name. The first blank was to check if the session was attended, while the second blank was to list which semester the session was taken. An open ended question followed inquiring as to which program was the most valuable and why. Other questions included were: Why did some seminars not benefit you and why; how much student contact did you have outside of class; how long do you prepare before each lecture; and what time of day was the class offered. The last section pertained to student information such as the percentage of freshmen, sophomore, etc..., and the actual grade distribution of the students instead of the perceived grade distribution available from the CTEP. Instead of pretesting, this draft underwent several weeks of editing.

The second draft differed considerably from the first. To assist the subject in remembering when and what course was taught, two 6 x 10 matrixes were created combining the time of day and the semesters ranging from Fall 1995 to Fall 1997. The first matrix was for Sociology 110, while the second matrix was for Sociology 120. This helped separate the two courses, not only for the subjects, but also for ease of coding. As a bonus, these matrixes served as a cross-reference with the syllabus and the CTEP to help insure that data for all of the semesters were collected. Since previous studies have shown possible influences of ethnicity, race, native language and age on student evaluations, I decided to include them as well. Blanks were created for ethnicity/race and native language, but I was still struggling with the age variable. So it was left out of the second draft. As I began to read more research, I realized training could have occurred during the completion of other degrees at institutions before UTK. Therefore, after condensing the

three training sessions into a matrix, a fourth column was added creating the category "Other Programs." Questions pertaining to the length, location and description of these other training programs were included in case these programs provided better training than the existing three training programs at UTK. To separate the qualities of each teacher training program, blanks were designated for the name of the program, and a divided space below gave the GTA an area to list advantages on one side and disadvantages on the other. The last item added to this draft dealt with previous degrees- attained by the GTA, at what institute, and what year was the degree attained. This was included out of sheer curiosity, to see if it would correlate with any other variable. An informal pretest occurred on this draft through informal interviews with graduate students not included in this study.

The third draft dealt with the age variable and the multiple courses. Since most courses taught within this department were within six years of being accepted into the program, the age of the instructor for each course was not necessary. Instead, the question remained asking at what age was the subject when (s)he entered the program. The second issue this draft addressed was the multiple classes taught within a semester. By this time, the elimination of the mini-term and summer classes had occurred because of the restricted time frame and the varying student composition as indicated earlier under the 'sample exclusionary factors.' Based on the same principle, I decided discussion sections and evening classes were eliminated from the project as well. This created one course taught by a single GTA in one semester for every subject. Each course had a very similar composition of students (both are introductory 100 level, available only during the day) and all covered the same material - social problems and introductory Sociology. This could

create similar student evaluations and syllabi so the subjects may be validly compared to each other. The third draft was pretested informally like the second draft through informal interviews with graduate students.

The original fourth draft entered into a pilot test with several Sociology graduate students not previously included in the study. The ethnicity/racial question evolved into a listing of possible ethnic and racial backgrounds, but encountered the question of possible bi-racial or multiethnic subjects. To counteract that possibility, another category was added to the bottom of the list that read: "biracial/multiethnic (please specify)_____." As with the second draft, another discovery surfaced-the subjects might actually have had teaching experience within the University but outside of the Sociology department, or even at another institution. So as with the category of "Other Programs," another column was added to the training matrix to include "Non UTK Teaching Experience," as well as an area to list what course and where was the course was taught. As for rating the training programs attended by the subjects, a Lickert Scale rating system ranging from Excellent to Very Poor was included above the area listing the advantages and disadvantages. This was an attempt to see if the program impacted the subject. Utilizing three non-participating graduate students in the pilot pre-test revealed I had no idea what the GTAs viewed as a 'perfect' training program.

The fifth draft was created with a few more questions in mind. There was no section in this questionnaire that included expectations of training. Therefore, an additional section was added asking two questions, Q#1: What should teacher training include in order for the program to be valuable for you? Q#2: What should training seminars include

for it to be of value to you? At the time of the creation, these two questions seemed to have separate meanings. The first question pertained to the long process of continual teacher training, while the second question was specific to programs and seminars within teacher training. This copy was sent to a consultant of this project who was familiar with the training programs at UTK. Another draft was given to an available professor within the Sociology department for review. Both the consultant and the professor made comments on this draft which included organization suggestions and general editing.

The sixth draft was created by the comments from the two professors, and was reviewed by one graduate student who of course was not a GTA in the study. The entire Background information section was moved to the very end of the questionnaire based on these comments. The individual sections for the listing of degrees attained by the GTA, where and when the degree was attained was condensed into a small matrix and moved under Background Information section. The list of ethnic/racial backgrounds was abandoned after debate on how to keep the list politically correct, as to not offend anyone. The original blank returned for the subject to fill out, and this section was moved under Background Information. The native language and the age of the GTA when (s)he entered the program were moved to the Background section as well. Above the Sociology 110 course matrix, the instructions were reworded to be more specific and mentioned the courses that were not to be considered in this project (evening, summer, mini-term and discussion). This detail was added to help the GTA remember the classes taught during the specific semester, as well as to prevent the GTA from listing more than one class per semester. An attempt was made to better explain the difference between the "Other

Programs” and “Outside UTK Experience” categories since confusion had occurred in the interpretation of these questions. For the evaluations and rating of each training session attended, the list of weaknesses and strengths became an open ended question to allow for more variety. As for the last two questions of expectations of training, I noted the two were very similar and hard for the professors to differentiate. Therefore, another attempt was made to make that section of the questionnaire more clear: “What type of teacher training would be most valuable for you” and “What should teacher training include for the experience to be of value to you?” As mentioned before, this draft was pre-tested by one non participating graduate student.

The seventh draft was looked over only by Dr. Wallace and myself. We adapted the cover letter, as well as the instructions above the matrixes through general editing. Grammar, spelling and sentence structure were examined throughout the questionnaire. During this time, the two training expectation questions near the end of the questionnaire were combined into one to prevent confusion: “Given your experience and participation, if any, in teacher training, what would you now recommend as the ideal teacher training program? Please include details such as specific content of the ideal program.” This draft was not pre-tested, but merely edited.

Within the eighth draft, the area for listing other programs and previous teaching experiences was simplified to prevent confusion. The training expectations question was reworded again to avoid misinterpretations: “Given your experiences and participation, if any, in teacher training, what do you recommend for an ideal training program? Please include details and specific content of an ideal program.” This draft was pre-tested by

several sociology graduate students who had helped edit and pre-test previous drafts of this questionnaire. This pre-test proved the validity of the questions through the lack of confusion and misinterpretation. Dr. Wallace and I also reviewed the questionnaire for grammar and punctuation.

Since I felt confident with the validity of the questionnaire, the ninth draft was distributed at the end of the Spring semester 1998 into the mailboxes of the existing GTA's and mailed to the homes of the other previous GTA's who had graduated. Because of the low return rate, the same draft was redistributed June 1, 1998, by mailing to every subject's home address.

The tenth draft was created in reaction to the low response rate. Several problems occurred from the ninth draft, i.e. the excuses given for not responding, and are discussed in more detail under the potential problems section after the justification of questions.

Justification of questions

Under the first section of the questionnaire, *Teaching Experience at University of Tennessee after Spring semester 1995*, the type and time of the course was the main focus. This section served several purposes. First, it allowed the chance to cross-reference course type (either 110 or 120) and the semester taught with the CTEP evaluations and my personal database. Second, this section provided information on the time the class was taught for possible correlations with poor CTEPs. Below is one example of Section I from the questionnaire.

A. When did you teach Sociology 110: Social Problems and Social Change?

	<i>Fall 1995</i>	<i>Spring 1996</i>	<i>Fall 1996</i>	<i>Spring 1997</i>	<i>Fall 1997</i>
8 to 9 AM					
9 to 10 AM					
10 to 11 AM					
11 to noon					
noon to 1					
1 to 2 PM					
2 to 3 PM					
3 to 4 PM					
4 to 5 PM					

Section II, Teacher Training and Experience, asks how much teacher training the subject has received, what type of program attended, where the training occurred, when the training was received, the length of each program, and how each program affected the subject?

	Campus Wide	Sociology 510:	GTA Mentoring	Non UTK	Other
	GTA Seminar	Teaching Soc.	Program	Teaching Exp.	Programs
Before Fall 1995					
Fall 1995					
Spring 1996					
Fall 1996					
Spring 1997					
Fall 1997					

This part helped identify when the GTA attended any teacher training programs. Because there are three existing programs at the University of Tennessee (Campus Wide GTA Seminar, Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology seminar, and the Chancellor's GTA

Mentoring Program), I was expecting to see a high attendance rate for those three programs, hence the separate columns. To help factor in possible previous training, the non-UTK teaching experience and other training programs categories were included. Since this chart was set up to identify which semester the GTA took the training session, it is easier to correlate positive or increased student evaluations (CTEP) with the time, type and amount of training the GTA received.

Located beneath the training programs chart are questions to discover how many classes outside of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville were taught by the GTA, and asking information on the other training programs attended. Below is the section from the questionnaire.

-
1. If you have indicated "Non UTK Teaching Experience" above, please list the total number of courses taught: _____
 2. If you have encountered teacher training programs, or courses that included any form of teacher training, and you have indicated "Other Programs" under Table A, then please provide the requested details below:

Name of Program	Length of Program	State located	Description of Program

In the table of other teacher training programs attended, the 'state located' question was asked for one particular reason. In case I needed to, I would have the training program's name and state, I could return to the literature and search for articles written on this specific training program. This would allow another route for acquiring information in addition to the research already performed, and possible attain specific information on the teacher training program. I did not ask for a detailed synopsis of the program from the

subject since a) the program could have taken place too far back to remember specifics, b) the subject is only going to take so much time to fill out the questionnaire and c) the informal description allows for more anonymity than asking at which college or university did the program occur.

Of course, just taking training programs does not make you into an automatic excellent instructor. Therefore, the next segment of the questionnaire, under Section II, provided a chance to see how each training program was rated by the GTA as well as a listing of the strengths and weaknesses of those programs.

E (excellent), VG (very good), G (good), F (fair), P (poor), VP (very poor)

1) Name of Program _____

Semester/Year Taken _____

Rate (please circle): **E** **VG** **G** **F** **P** **VP**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of this program/course?

This segment also served several purposes. First it allowed the subject to remember each training program (s)he attended and how it benefitted him or her. Second, it created an informal evaluation of those programs providing positive and negative aspects. The information collected here could be passed on to the three University programs already instituted to help them improve or maintain certain aspects of the training. Third, it provided some information on the subject's feelings and/or attitude of the program. Through the rating system, we could attempt to relate the impact of the program on the subject with the improvement or decrease in his or her's student evaluations (CTEP).

The last segment of Section II, *Expectations of Teacher Training*, is an open-ended question. The answer provided by the subject could be beneficial in several ways. First,

by providing the information which would be beneficial to him or her, we could compare these expectations with the rating and strengths and weaknesses of the programs attended. Second, this information could be valuable to the three University training programs as well as any other programs trying to attain information on what training is needed or desired by graduate teaching associates.

The last section of the questionnaire, *Background Information*, asks information necessary to determine if the student evaluations are being influenced by factors other than teacher training. As mentioned before, these factors included the gender and the age of the instructor, and the ethnic and/or racial background of the instructor. In the first questionnaire distributed (the ninth draft), the ethnicity/race was included as one of the questions. After the informal interviews, this question was removed since I discovered the remaining subjects feared possible identification. In the tenth draft of the questionnaire, even though this question was omitted, I could still record the subject's ethnicity - all of the subjects in the study were Caucasian except for one. The gender and the age of the instructor remained on the final (tenth draft) questionnaire. This helped to correlate gender and age to the student's evaluations (CTEP). The last question under Section III pertained to what type of degree(s) the GTA has attained, when and where the degree was received.

C. Please list below type of degree earned (*Associates, Bachelors...*), year degree was received, and the state in which the degree was obtained.

Type of Degree	Date Received	State

This question was created for those Graduate Teaching Associates who attended other universities. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville has such a strong 'Big Orange' pride in their athletic system, especially football and basketball, could an instructor with a degree from another state and not sharing the Big Orange enthusiasm receive a lower student evaluation? Also, would an instructor who recently received a Masters degree have better evaluations or syllabi compared to the instructor who received a Masters degree several years before?

Potential Problems

After some informal interviews in an attempt to discover why the low response rate occurred on the ninth draft, I found some GTAs felt there was a possibility of identification within the Background Information section. I eliminated the ethnicity/nationality/racial and the native language questions in response to the GTAs' comments. Under the listing for degrees earned, I adapted the Institution column into the state where the degree was received, not the specific college or university. This tenth draft was distributed to every subject who did not respond to the first two mailings. As with the first distribution of the ninth draft of the questionnaire, the tenth draft was placed into the current GTAs' mailboxes and mailed to the graduated GTAs. The final return rate for all distributed drafts of the questionnaire was exactly fifty two percent. To clarify for the reader, only the ninth and tenth drafts were sent.

One of the problems that emerged with this questionnaire was the lack of participation. Although fifty two percent is an excellent return for any study, I had a very small sample size to begin with, therefore, the small return rate was disappointing. In an

attempt to increase the return rate, through the informal interviews, I had discovered one of the main factors hampering the subjects' return of the questionnaire was their possible identification.

Independent Variables: CTEP and Syllabi Rating

Self, department head, and student evaluations as well as classroom visits, are among the most widely used techniques in evaluating an Instructor's teaching. In some liberal arts colleges, the student evaluations carry more weight than any other simple criterion in personnel decisions (Learning Research Center, 1984, p. 4). Benson and Lewis (1994) argue that both the Boyer Report from *Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of the Professorate* (1990), and the American Sociological Association report from *Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major* (1991) contributed considerably to demystifying the myths surrounding student evaluations and to demonstrate the importance of student evaluations in evaluating teacher competence. As cited by Seldin (1984), McKeachie studied and concluded that the majority of the studies performed on student evaluations had "high levels of stability and consistency, thus supporting the fact that student ratings maintain a high degree of reliability" (Learning Research Center, p. 5).

Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP)

Description and History of CTEP

The Campus Teaching Evaluation Program evaluations have been distributed since Fall semester 1995 at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville campus. The Program consists of eight forms that are tailored to specific types of classes and sizes. The eight

forms are: A) Small Lecture/Discussion B) Large Lecture C) Seminar/Discussion D) Problem-Solving E) Skill Acquisition F) Discussion Sections G) Text-Homework Problems and H) Lab Sections (SGA UTK, 1996, p. viii). The eight forms were developed over a twenty year period at the University of Washington, Seattle. Once the University of Tennessee, Knoxville Faculty Senate adopted the forms after a comprehensive study, every course taught at UTK has been evaluated by the students.

Each form is divided into four sections. The questions are answered on a six point Likert scale consisting of excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, and very poor (SGA UTK, p. ix). Students who participate in the evaluations remain anonymous. Section I contains the general evaluation questions about the course such as: course as a whole; course content; instructor's contribution; and the instructor's effectiveness in teaching (SGA UTK, p. ix).

Section II provides diagnostic feedback to the instructors from the students with questions such as: course organization; clarity of instructor's voice; explanations by instructor, ability to present alternative explanations, use of examples and illustrations; quality of questions/problems raised; student confidence in instructor's knowledge; instructor's enthusiasm; encouragement of students to express themselves; answers to student questions; and availability of extra help when needed (SGA UTK, p. ix).

Section III asks questions such as: use of class time; instructor's interest in whether students learned; amount you learned; relevance and usefulness of course content; reasonableness of assigned work; and clarity of student responsibility and requirements (SGA UTK, p. ix).

Section IV provides some general information about the students: Did they want to take this course when registering; how does course fit in their academic career (major, minor, distribution requirement, elective); class rank; and the grade expected.

Sections I, III, and IV are published for public access through two forms of media-book form and electronically accessible through the Internet at <http://www.it.utk.edu/~tenn101>). The published evaluations are named Tennessee 101 and are sponsored by the Student Government Association (Center for Academic Excellence, 1998, p. 5; SGA UTK, p. v). The Office of Academic Affairs - Program and Evaluation Services (AA-PES) coordinates the distribution of the evaluation forms. Either the department or the instructor chooses the appropriate forms. A student within the class administers, collects and delivers the questionnaire forms to the respective departments. The department collects and delivers the forms to the Office of Academic Affairs (AA-PES) which in turn is responsible for delivering the evaluations to the State Testing and Evaluation Center (SGA UTK, p. xi). The supplementary qualitative comments are given to the instructor after his or her grades are submitted. The statistical summaries of the standardized forms are not available until the following semester.

Utilizing student evaluation rating

Form A (Small Lecture/Discussion) was utilized for this study because the Sociology 110 and 120 courses taught by the Graduate Teaching Associates after Spring Term 1995 all had a capacity of less than seventy-five students. The Sociology department decided Form A was best suited for the structure of these classes. In this study, I have utilized the available CTEPs for the Sociology Graduate Associates who taught their own

course between Fall Term 1995 and Fall Term 1997. I chose the Fall Term semester 1995 since the current CTEP in use began that semester as mentioned before. This should create continuity between the subjects by using the same evaluative tool. To maintain this comparability, only Graduate Teaching Associates who taught his or her own course were included. For the semesters included in the study, only the Fall and Spring Term semesters were used. As mentioned before at the beginning of this chapter (under Sample), this is to maintain similarity among the time frame, format, and the student composition of the courses. This was why Mini-Term, Summer School semester and Evening School classes were omitted from the study since those classes would contain a different student composition. Because the composition of the student body is different in night classes and the infrequency of meeting times also differs, the inclusion of the Evening School classes would create inconsistency in comparing the course taught with the syllabus and/or the CTEP.

In the article "Grades, Class Size and Faculty Status Predict Teaching Evaluations," Hamilton (1980) reports that factors such as class size, instructor status and grade inflation can influence student evaluations. To take the class size into account, the CTEP evaluation forms differ by class size, while reporting how many students are enrolled and how many participated in the evaluation. This helps provide a background for the evaluation.

The instructor status could still be a factor in these evaluations, there are no visible control questions on the evaluation forms. However, since all of the subjects in the study are Graduate Teaching Associates, the instructor status should not have any impact on the results.

It is important to bear in mind, however, that most research indicates that student evaluations of instructors are good indicators of teacher effectiveness and proficiency (Hamilton, 1980; Dukes & Victoria, 1989). Although the literature is extensive on the reliability and validity of student evaluations of instructors (as in the high interrater consistency and rater stability), there is controversy in sociology over the utilization of student evaluations as the only measure of instructor effectiveness (Donald, 1985; Dukes & Victoria, 1989; Zeller, 1985). Therefore, I have utilized two other components in the study of the effectiveness of teacher training (syllabi and questionnaire).

Potential Problems with the CTEP

Beyond questions concerning the forms, another possible negative influence might occur from double-keying. The only forms of media available for the CTEP were print and electronic. There was no existing database, hence no computer tape from which to transfer the data. Therefore, the possibility of human error is possible as the data from the Internet was recorded and then entered into the database. The CTEPs that were retrieved from print had less of a chance for error because the data was only typed and/or recorded once, unlike the electronic form, which was recorded twice.

Syllabi

Description of Syllabus

The course syllabus is the result of the teacher's course planning. As such, the syllabus is the end of a process that starts with the instructor's choice of course goals. Once these goals are chosen and stated in measurable form, the teacher can select those means of teaching best suited to helping students attain the goals and objectives (Goldsmid & Wilson, 1980, p. 177).

"The course syllabus...[is] central in the teaching-learning process. The syllabus is the course plan: it embodies the teacher's decisions about the content, structure, and process of the course" (Goldsmid & Wilson, 1980, p.171). Most undergraduates see the syllabus as a contract between the instructor and the student. It is this document that helps the student decide if this is the course (s)he will attend this semester. After all, the course descriptions in the University catalogs are simplified and do not explain the interacting parts of the course.

Goldsmid and Wilson (p.173) argue that the syllabus serves several functions. The first function the syllabus serves is as an overview of the course the student is interested in taking. This document explains details such as content of the course, requirements before entering and after entering the course and the schedule of classes, exams, and topics. The second function of the syllabus serves as a guide for the student on how to approach the specific assignments within the course. Advice such as test-taking skills, helpful alternate explanations or bibliography, and hints on homework may all be included in the document. The third function the syllabus serves as a sourcebook for the discipline. Anyone who might be interested in that particular field of study could refer to the syllabus for an overview of related topics, and possibly even a bibliography. Therefore, the last function of a syllabus shows this document is not only for students, but also for others interested in the topic: instructors, chairpersons, administrators, etc. Since the syllabus is organized in a particular way, it also serves as an organizational tool for the instructor.

Now that we know why the syllabus is important to teaching a course, what exactly is included in the document to fulfill the three functions mentioned above? According to

Goldsmid and Wilson (p. 171), a typical syllabus includes: course title and registration number, instructor's name, list of the required textbooks and readings, course requirements such as exams and assignments, and the list of topics to be covered over the semester. In a study by Ballantine (1977, pp. 5-6) almost one-half of the syllabi in the study contained the following information:

- Explanation of office hours (when and where to reach the instructor)
- Description of the course (the same or more elaborated than the University catalog)
- The focus of the course (why the topics on the syllabus were chosen)
- The format of the course (why certain topics precede others, why paper is due at that particular time)
- The methods of instruction utilized by the instructor and students (such as lecture, discussion, group work, individual projects, labs, movies, research papers, etc...)
- List and description of course objectives
- List of readings to coordinate achievement of objectives by student
- Sample exam and quiz questions, study guides
- Advice for students on studying skills, how to pay attention to a lecture, how to participate in a seminar, and note-taking skills.
- Description of University and/or Instructor's policies on attendance, make-up, and plagiarism
- Statements introducing individual sections of the course throughout the semester

A decent syllabus should include all of the aspects mentioned above, while an exceptional syllabus (a document that provides additional answers to students) should include and move beyond those aspects. For example, an exceptional syllabus would include information on how this course can connect with other disciplines (interdiscipli-

nary), relate to the student's life currently, and explain how this course affects the student in the short and long term future. An exceptional syllabus would also include explanations on how the assignments and other requirements in the course can achieve one or more of the course objectives. Even the inclusion of a tentative timetable showing when the topics will be discussed as well as the distribution of assignments and other course requirements would be considered as part of an exceptional syllabus. So how does one go about deciding if a syllabus is exceptional?

Syllabus Rating Description

Goldsmid and Wilson (1980) created a checklist with seventeen separate categories that should be included in a syllabus. The categories included as well as an adaptation of the questions under each category is located in Figure 1, "Goldsmid and Wilson Syllabus Checklist." This checklist was designed to help create a syllabus and to review existing syllabi. For this study, I was in need of a checklist to rate how in depth the GTAs' syllabi were constructed.

Evolution of syllabus rating

In order to rate the syllabi of the associates in the study, a checklist was created and tested. Using Goldsmid and Wilson's syllabus checklist, I adapted and created a form that after seven revisions was accepted as valid and reliable. The details of this procedure are as follows.

Syllabus Checklist

To ensure this checklist was a valid and reliable instrument, eight preliminary tests with two judges, as well as one final pre-test with six judges were performed. The first six drafts of the checklist were tested by Dr. Wallace and myself. We utilized non-

1. *The Syllabus as a Measure to the Student:*
 - a. Is the substantive framework of the course gotten across?
 - b. Is the calendar of events clear?
 - c. Are requirements clear?
 - d. Are course goals and objectives stated?
 - e. Are course prerequisites - formal or informal - stated?
2. *Course Goals and Objectives:*
 - a. Does the syllabus contain a statement of general goals for student learning?
 - b. Are the general course goals translated into operational statements?
 - c. Are the operational statements of objectives such that the student will know the extent to which they are achieved?
 - d. Can the instructor explain: (1) how the instructional activities of the course will help the student achieve the course goals, (2) how extent to which goals are achieved will be measured?
3. *Instructional Activities:*
 - a. Is there a clear link to course goals?
 - b. Is the need for variation provided for?
 - c. Are the activities appropriate to the skills and abilities required to master subject matter?
4. *Student Load:*
 - a. Quantity?
 - b. Distribution through the semester?
 - c. Variation?
5. *Teacher Load*
6. *Assessment of Testing:*
 - a. Is there any consideration of two uses of testing: (1) for learning, stimulating discussion, basis for diagnosing strengths and weaknesses, (2) for grading?
 - b. Any indication of the type of test to be used?
 - c. Source of test items?
 - d. Are the course goals indicated in a set of questions/problems stated at the outset?
 - e. Instructor is testing what?
 - f. Is there any consideration of relevant data?
 - g. Staging of tests?
 - h. Are there plans for review, preparation for exams?

Figure 1.
Goldsmid and Wilson (1980) Syllabus Checklist
(adapted by Aldea Misenheimer)

7. *Assessment of Paper Assignments:*
 - a. Details on specific requirements?
 - b. Range of acceptable topics?
 - c. Criteria to be used in assessing papers?
8. *The Course as an Element in the Student's Life Space:*
 - a. tying material to student's major and other concerns? To current social issues? Other courses? Special interest groups?
9. *Active v. Passive Teaching - Learning*
 - a. Can students modify agenda, reshape syllabus? Course content?
10. *The Course as Part of the General Framework of Sociology:*
 - a. How does this course fit the framework of Sociology?
 - b. Do social issues override sociological problems?
11. *Office Hours:*
 - a. Is there encouragement for conferences with the instructor?
 - b. Are conferences required? Requested?
 - c. Appropriate matters for discussion?
12. *Preparation and Follow-up of Audiovisual Aids*
13. *Classroom Operations:*
 - a. What alternatives to conventional lecture-discussion procedures?
14. *Flexibility:*
 - a. Is there any flexibility built into the syllabus?
 - b. Are there boundaries to the flexibility?
 - c. Examples of suggested flexibility?
15. *Utility of the Syllabus as a Sourcebook and Guide:*
 - a. Provide students with sources useful in work on assignments?
 - b. Identify common problems in the course?
 - c. Will syllabus be useful to the student after the course?
16. *Structuring the Syllabus around Questions*
17. *Clarity, Organization, and Structure:*
 - a. Does syllabus provide explanations of those technical terms used in the course?
 - b. Is syllabus organized such that it is easily useable?
 - c. Is the course introduction too complicated or long?

Figure 1 (continued).

participating GTAs' syllabi. The first through fourth drafts preliminary tests used one syllabus each. Each test revealed the percentage of the questions misinterpreted in all four test were above fifty percent. The fifth and sixth drafts' preliminary tests used two syllabi each. The fifth pre-test resulted in a misinterpretation of under twenty five percent. The sixth pre-test resulted in a ninety percent inter-rater compatibility. The seventh draft's pre-test was performed by six judges involved in the Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology seminar. The pre-test resulted in an eighteen percent discrepancy.

The first and second draft of the checklist were merely preliminary steps in an attempt to find the most important qualities of a syllabus. Through the review of the literature, which included Goldsmid and Wilson's (1980) Passing on Sociology as well as Lewis' (1998) Tips for Teaching Introductory Sociology, it was discovered that beyond the basic information of instructor's name, office hours and office location existed a lack of connection for the student and the course as a whole. These two drafts focused on the connections between items on a syllabus.

The third and fourth drafts of the checklist were attempts to "fine tune" the questions and to start working on the inter-rater reliability. The consistency of the choices for answers were scrutinized as well as the wording of the questions. Several questions required more explanation in order to achieve reliability, therefore, a longer, more detailed description was added to several of the questions.

The fifth and sixth drafts were tested for reliability using four separate syllabi by two judges. This was when I discovered a manual for explanations of certain questions was in order. The lengthy explanations began to confuse the reader about the questions on

the checklist. So, in the attempt to prevent confusion, a manual was created to place the "instructions" otherwise known as explanations away from the checklist questions. After the separation of the directions/explanations from the checklist questions, the rater reliability rose tremendously between the two judges. This helped create the final draft.

This final draft, along with the manual, was tested by six judges that were knowledgeable in pedagogical instruction and syllabus construction. None of the six panel judges were included as subjects in this study. This test utilized a introductory sociology syllabus from 1988 to ensure none of the test judges would be able to identify the instructor. A question and answer forum occurred after the testing was complete. After this test and utilizing some of the suggestions, the inter-rater reliability of the checklist was proven. This draft was sent to the four official syllabi rating judges. The four judges were chosen on the basis of availability. A list of potential judges was first created, with the prerequisite that the person must have previous experience and knowledge in syllabus construction and pedagogical instruction.

Syllabus Manual

In order to maintain the validity and reliability of the syllabus checklist, a manual was created. Every question is included with a description, definition and/or example for clarification. The manual was intended for the judges to refer to in case of questions. This was to discourage the four judges from asking me questions - to keep my influence out of the rating of the syllabi.

The first two drafts were an attempt to explain those questions that contained confusing vocabulary and unclear directions. The format that was adopted was laid out

through the second draft. Neither of these drafts were tested, but merely edited for content and grammar. The main point of these two drafts was to create an easy to follow guide that would lead the raters down the same path of thinking without influencing the answer.

The third and fourth draft were tested in conjunction with the syllabus checklist drafts five and six. This combination was tested by the two independent judges knowledgeable in pedagogical instruction and syllabus construction, Dr. Sam Wallace and myself. The fourth draft was also the manual used by the panel of six judges testing the seventh draft of the syllabus checklist. After the question and answer session, the fifth draft occurred.

This draft was the result of the testing by the six judges on the testing panel. The question and answer session between the judges and I helped the evolution of this draft by pointing out discrepancies and misleading information. This fifth draft was sent with the seventh draft of the syllabus checklist to the four final rating judges. The main reason for this manual was to prevent the four final rating judges from speaking to me directly with their questions. Instead of asking me, the judges would refer to the manual.

Justification of Questions

The rating system was intended to reveal how much time, energy, thought and training went into the preparation of that particular syllabus. Only the first syllabus of each Graduate Teaching Associate was chosen. This was an attempt to see how much previous training should be necessary to create an adequate syllabus. Particular questions on the checklist coincided with the questions on the Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (CTEP - student evaluations). The topics included availability of Instructor, workload for

students, and clarity of student responsibilities.

Most syllabus creation articles emphasized how the syllabus is formed around the course objectives. Therefore, one of the most important aspects of a syllabus are the course objectives and/or goals. These objectives set the standard of participation in the class for the student and the instructor as well as providing connections to other areas of life such as areas of academia and the future. The objectives should be written in clear, operational definitions which are attainable by the student and instructor. All of the assignments and course requirements should support or assist the student or instructor in achieving the course objectives. Therefore, if the instructor spent time creating this syllabus with some thought and training, this connection should be evident between the course objectives and the requirements and assignments.

Potential Problems

Even after the testing of several drafts of both the checklist and the manual, one of the four judges became confused on one of the questions on the checklist. Because of the time frame, this question could not be revised in the checklist nor the manual, therefore, several syllabi do not have a rating for the same question. The syllabi was only rated by one judge. Therefore, the possibility of personal interpretation may be included in the rating of the syllabi.

The first syllabus of each associate was decided upon in hopes to create a consistency in prior training. Unfortunately, several associates did not create a syllabus for their first course so the second class syllabus was used. Even though this still fits, prior training may have occurred before the creation of the second class' syllabus.

CHAPTER THREE

FINDINGS

Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of twenty-five graduate teaching associates in the Department of Sociology at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. These graduate teaching associates have all taught their own introductory sociology course, either Sociology 110: Social Problems and Social Change or Sociology 120: General Sociology. Of the twenty-five participants, one associate did not have a syllabus for the course taught, leaving a total of twenty four participants with varying number of syllabi.

The response rate for the questionnaire was fifty two percent (N=13), thus only thirteen participants provided information about previous training. However, information on attendance in the Sociology 510 Teaching seminar was available through class rolls for the entire sample. Therefore, other information on training could not be attained for the remaining twelve participants (non-questionnaire). Because of the small sample size, the response rate shrank the sample size for several variables to only thirteen. Table 2, "Basic Demographics Characteristics of the Sample" gives the basic demographic characteristics of the sample!

The sample was divided into twelve males and thirteen females. Twenty four of twenty five associates were Caucasian, the remaining one of Native American descent. Because of the prior knowledge of attendance in the Sociology 510 Teaching seminar, I was able to determine eighteen associates had some form of prior teacher training; one associate had no training; and I was left with six associates from which I had no

Table 2.
Basic Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic	Male	Female	Total
Total Sample	12	13	25
A. Race			
Caucasian	12	12	24
Non-Caucasian	0	1	1
B. Prior Training			
Yes	8	10	18
No	1	0	1
Data Unavailable	3	3	6
-Sociology 510 Seminar			
Yes	5	4	9
No	7	9	16
C. Responded to Questionnaire	7	6	13
<i>*Training</i>			
-GTA Campus Wide Seminar Training	6	5	11
-Chancellor's GTA Mentoring Program	2	0	2
-Outside Training Exp.	4	3	7
<i>*Education</i>			
-Working on M.A. while teaching	3	3	6
-Working on Ph.D. while teaching	4	3	7

information on any prior training.

Of the thirteen respondents to the questionnaire, eleven had attended the G. T. A. Campus Wide Seminar training; two attended the Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology seminar; two attended the Chancellor's G. T. A. Mentoring Program; and seven had teacher training experience outside of the University of Tennessee. Of those thirteen, six associates were currently in the Masters program in the department while seven associates were enrolled in the Doctoral program.

Analysis

In review of the seven hypotheses I began this study with, I have only succeeded in proving one hypothesis. Below are the hypotheses.

Hypothesis #1: Teacher Training is effective for teaching undergraduate Sociology.

Hypothesis #2: The more training a graduate teaching associate acquires the greater his or her improvement in teaching.

Hypothesis #3: Training assists in creating better syllabi.

Hypothesis #4: Graduate Teaching Associates who have taken Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology seminar will score higher on syllabus rating and on student evaluations (CTEP).

Hypothesis #5: Gender of the graduate teaching associate will not have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor.

Hypothesis #6: Age of the GTA will have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor.

Hypothesis #7: The time of day the course was offered will have an influence on the undergraduate students' evaluation of their instructor.

The correlation between the amount of training and the student evaluations (CTEP) was 0.207. There was no significant increase in the student evaluations with the amount of teacher training the associate acquired ($p=0.497$). Thus hypothesis #2 was eliminated.

		CTEP	Amount of Training
CTEP	Pearson Correlation	1.000	.207
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.497
	N	25	13
Amount of Training	Pearson Correlation	.207	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.497	
	N	13	13

Utilizing the t-test, the average syllabus rating for those associates who attended the Sociology 510 Teaching seminar was 74.78 and the average syllabus rating for those associates who did not attend the seminar was 72.47. There was no significant difference in the syllabus rating of those associates who did or did not attend the training seminar ($p=6.79$). This disproves my third and part of the fourth hypotheses.

	Attended Sociology 510	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Syllabus Rating	Yes	9	74.7778	12.1014	4.0338
	No	15	72.4667	13.5640	3.5022

$t=.420$, $df=22$, $p=6.79$

The average of the student evaluations (CTEP) of those associates who attended the Sociology 510 Teaching seminar was 4.01 and the average of the CTEP of those associates who did not take the teaching seminar was 3.79. There was a significant difference ($p=0.033$). This shows that attending the Sociology 510 Teaching seminar increases the overall average of student evaluations. This supports the second half of the fourth hypothesis.

	Attended Sociology 510	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CTEP	Yes	9	4.0056	.1901	6.338E-02
	No	16	3.7850	.3116	7.791E-02

$t=1.921$, $df=23$, $p=.033$

Utilizing the t-test, the average CTEP for females was 3.78 and the average CTEP for males was 3.96. There was no significant difference between the gender of the instructor and the average student evaluations ($p=0.112$). This disproves my fifth hypothesis.

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CTEP	Female	13	3.7754	.2773	7.692E-02
	Male	12	3.9608	.2842	8.205E-02

$t=-1.651$, $df=23$, $p=.112$

The correlation between the age of the Instructor and the average of the student evaluations (CTEP) was -0.465. There was no significance of the age of the Instructor and the CTEPs ($p=0.109$). This eliminates my sixth hypothesis.

		CTEP	Age Entered Graduate Program
CTEP	Pearson Correlation	1.000	-.465
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.109
	N	25	13
Age Entered Graduate Program	Pearson Correlation	-.465	1.000
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	
	N	13	13

The average of the morning classes' student evaluations (CTEP) was 3.86 and the average of the afternoon classes' CTEPs was 3.70. There was no significant difference between the time of day the classes were offered and the average of the student evaluations ($p=0.385$). This disproved my last hypothesis.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
CTEP	Morning	6	3.8550	.3255	.1329
	Afternoon	7	3.7029	.2819	.1066

$t=9.04$, $df=11$, $p=.385$

Since I have shown proof of at least one example of training improving student evaluations (CTEP), I will say that my first hypothesis, that teacher training is effective for teaching undergraduate Sociology, is still provable.

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSION

Shortcomings and Problems

Several problems occurred during the implementation of the research project. The following problems occurred during the questionnaire and student evaluation phase.

The first problem was discovered during the distribution of the questionnaires for the first time. The problem came to my attention that three former graduate students had graduated, thus leaving the University of Tennessee and did not leave a forwarding address. This eliminated three potential participants from this study since I was unable to reach them in any form or fashion.

The second problem that developed also involved the questionnaire. Since the sample group was the size of only twenty-five graduate teachings associates, being comprised of those who taught their own class between Fall 1995 and Fall 1997, it was important to have a high return rate for the questionnaire. Even though I achieved a fifty two percent return rate, I only had information necessary to prove or disprove my hypotheses on thirteen graduate teaching associates.

Furthermore, as a third problem, the analysis quickly revealed there was little variation in all respondents' student evaluations (CTEP). To show this small variation in the CTEPs is atypical for a department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, I have chosen three departments to compare with the Sociology CTEPs. The three departments are Economics, English and Statistics. These statistics were derived from the Spring 1997 semester publication of the Tennessee 101. The introductory courses in each department

were chosen and only graduate teachers were included, all professors were excluded from the below statistics.

In the English department, for example, five instructors had ratings of "poor" and "very poor" on all eleven items evaluated by the students. In the Department of Economics, five instructors had ratings of "poor" and "very poor" on five to eleven of the eleven items evaluated. In the Department of Statistics, three instructors had ratings of "poor" and "very poor" on ten to eleven of the eleven items. In contrast, of all the instructors in the Department of Sociology, only five had ratings below "poor."

Contribution of Project to Sociology

Before now, evaluating teacher training was unheard of within the discipline of Sociology. Even though little was concluded from this project, the project itself poses as an opportunity to upcoming graduate students interested in teacher training. This project may also serve an unintended purpose by encouraging mandatory teacher training for all graduate teaching assistants before those assistants receive an associateship and teach their own course.

Conclusion

"Those who conduct research on teaching believe in the long run their research will contribute to the public good through the improvement of education. It is as if we have all been raised on the same fairytale" (Flanders, 1976, p. 167). To repeat this quote seemed to sum up the intention behind this study. If I could only show this University, at least the Department of Sociology, how important teacher training is; how this training benefits every person and department within this University. I may have designed this study after a

fairytale, but I was always the dreamer. Hopefully, I have provided someone with a stepping stone to help create reality from the fairytale! "The more difficult task is to show how this fairytale may someday become true by making changes in both teacher education as well as how we conduct research on teaching" (Flanders, 1976, p. 167).

LIST OF REFERENCES

LIST OF REFERENCES

- American Sociological Association. (1991). Liberal Learning and the Sociology Major. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.
- Ballantine, J. H. (1977) "Course Analysis of Some Introductory Syllabi." Introductory Sociology: A Set of Syllabi and Related Materials. Charles A. Goldsmid, ed. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association Teaching Resources Center, 5-7.
- Benson, D. E. & Lewis, J. M. (1994, April). "Student's Evaluation of Teaching and Accountability: Implications from the Boyer and the ASA Reports." Teaching Sociology, 22, 195-199.
- Boyer, E. (1990). Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities of The Professoriate. Princeton: Carnegie Foundation.
- Center for Undergraduate Excellence (1998). Academic Guide. The University of Tennessee.
- Chaichian, M., Ewens, W., Macheski, G., & Backus, N. (1986, July). "Getting People Started: Teaching for Sociology Graduate Students at Michigan State University." Teaching Sociology, 14, 168-175.
- Donald, J. G. (1985). "The State of Research on University Teaching Effectiveness." Using Research to Improve Teaching (J. G. Donald & A. M. Sullivan, Eds.), San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Pp. 7-20.
- Dukes, R. L. & Victoria, G. (1989, October). "The Effects of Gender, Status, and Effective Teaching on the Evaluation of College Instruction." Teaching Sociology, 17, 447-457.
- Ewens, B., & Emling, D. (1976, January). "Survey Conducted on Teacher Development in Sociology." American Sociological Association Footnotes, 4, 1-4.
- Flanders, N. A. (1976, May). "Research on Teaching and Improving Teacher Education." British Journal of Teacher Education. Vol. 2, No. 2, 167-174.
- Gigliotti, R. J. (1987, October). "Are They Getting What They Expect?" Teaching Sociology, 15, 365-375.
- Goldsmid, C. A. and Wilson, E. K. (1980). Passing on Sociology: The Teaching of a Discipline. Washington, D.C.: American Sociological Association Teaching Resources Center.

- The Graduate School. (1998). TENNESSEE: The University of Tennessee, Graduate Catalog/Knoxville 1998-1999. University of Tennessee, Pp. 31.
- Hamilton, L. C. (1980, October). "Grades, Class Size, and Faculty Status Predict Teaching Evaluations." Teaching Sociology, 8, 47-62.
- Huck, S. W. and Allen, J. E. (1997, January) The GTA Mentoring Program: A Model for Improving Undergraduate Instruction at "Research" Universities. The University of Tennessee, Knoxville.
- The Learning Research Center. (1984, Fall). Teaching-Learning Issues: The Evaluation of Instructors and Related Personnel Decisions, No. 54. University of Tennessee, 4-11.
- Lewis, J. M. (1998). Tips for Teaching Introductory Sociology. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company.
- Mansell, A. L. (1975, October). "Teacher Training for Further and Higher Education: Some Thoughts Across the Binary Line." British Journal of Teacher Education. Vol. I, No. 3, 349-358.
- McCabe, J. J. C. (1979, May). "Induction and Initial Teacher Training." British Journal of Teacher Education. Vol. 5, No. 2, 157-164.
- Pescosolido, B., & Milkie, M. (1995, October). "The Status of Teacher Training in U.S. and Canadian Sociology Departments." Teaching Sociology, 23, 341-352.
- Rudduck, J. (1985, October). "Teacher Research and Research-Based Teacher Education." Journal of Education for Teaching. Vol. 11, No. 3, 281-289.
- Seldin, P. (1984). Changing Practices in Faculty Education. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Student Government Association, UTK (1996, Fall). Tennessee 101: A Guide to Courses at The University of Tennessee. The University of Tennessee, Pp. v - xv.
- Toch, T. (1998, May 4). "Cutting Classes." U.S. News & World Report. Pg 33.
- The University of Tennessee. (1997). TENNESSEE: The University of Tennessee Undergraduate Catalog/ Knoxville 1997-1998. University of Tennessee, Pp. 13, 16.
- Wallace, S. E. (1997) "Sociologists as Teachers." Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology. (S. E. Wallace, Ed.) Knoxville, TN: Graphic Creations Academic Services Division, 13-21.

Yorke, M. (1977, May). "Staff Development in Further and Higher Education: A Review." British Journal of Teacher Education. Vol 3, No. 2, 161-168.

Zeller, R. (1985, December). "Using Student Evaluations of Instructors to Improve Instruction." American Sociological Association Teaching Newsletter, v 10., no. 6, 2-6.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A.
SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRE

September 28, 1998

As you may know, Dr. Sam Wallace and I are conducting a research project on the evaluation of teacher training within the department of Sociology. As a graduate teaching assistant or associate, you have had exposure to training seminars and courses available through the University of Tennessee and possibly elsewhere. Your insight is very valuable to the success of this study.

Unbeknownst to us, our original questionnaire contained material that could be used as identification at a later date. Hopefully, this new questionnaire will eliminate the previous problem. Also, as an added security, I am the only one who will see the questionnaires. The number located in the upper left hand corner of your questionnaire is for my identification purposes only. Once I receive the questionnaire, your name is deleted from my personal database and only a number remains. Dr. Sam Wallace and Dr. Amy Chasteen (University of Southern Mississippi) will see the data only in the final database for analysis. The original database is on a password only security feature and is only on my personal home computer.

Of course, your participation is completely voluntary. Filling out this questionnaire will only take a few minutes and will be taken as your informed consent to participate in the study.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at the following numbers:

Aldea Misenheimer 974-6021
Dr. Samuel Wallace 974-7028

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Aldea R. Misenheimer

**AFTER COMPLETION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE, PLEASE RETURN TO
ALDEA MISENHEIMER'S BOX. THANK YOU!**

Fall 1998
Sociology Department
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Evaluating Teacher Training
Misenheimer and Wallace
(974-6021) (974-7028)

Sociology GTA's

I. Teaching Experience at the University of Tennessee after Spring 1995.

Please place an "X" in each box that corresponds with the semester and approximate class time when you taught Sociology 110 (Section A) and/or Sociology 120 (Section B) below. If you do not remember the time of the course taught, choose a time of day that was a close approximation. This does not include discussion sections, evening classes or summer semester courses.

A. When did you teach Sociology 110: Social Problems and Social Change?

	<i>Fall 1995</i>	<i>Spring 1996</i>	<i>Fall 1996</i>	<i>Spring 1997</i>	<i>Fall 1997</i>
8 to 9 AM					
9 to 10 AM					
10 to 11 AM					
11 to noon					
noon to 1					
1 to 2 PM					
2 to 3 PM					
3 to 4 PM					
4 to 5 PM					

B. When did you teach Sociology 120: Introduction to Sociology?

	<i>Fall 1995</i>	<i>Spring 1996</i>	<i>Fall 1996</i>	<i>Spring 1997</i>	<i>Fall 1997</i>
8 to 9 AM					
9 to 10 AM					
10 to 11 AM					
11 to noon					
noon to 1					
1 to 2 PM					
2 to 3 PM					
3 to 4 PM					
4 to 5 PM					

II. Teacher Training and Experience

A. Programs attended and teaching experiences

Please place an "X" in the boxes below to indicate teacher training program(s) and/or teaching you have experienced.

	Campus Wide GTA Seminar	Sociology 510: Teaching Soc.	GTA Mentoring Program	Non UTK Teaching Exp.	Other Programs
Before Fall 1995					
Fall 1995					
Spring 1996					
Fall 1996					
Spring 1997					
Fall 1997					

1. If you have indicated "Non UTK Teaching Experience" above, please list the total number of courses taught: _____
2. If you have encountered teacher training programs, or courses that included any form of teacher training, and you have indicated "Other Programs" under Table A, then please provide the requested details below:

Name of Program	Length of Program	State located	Description of Program

B. Evaluating Teacher Training Programs and Experiences

We would like for you to remember and evaluate each program or course you have attended that included teacher training. Using the scale located below, evaluate each program according to the usefulness towards preparation.

E (*excellent*), **VG** (*very good*), **G** (*good*), **F** (*fair*), **P** (*poor*), **VP** (*very poor*)

1) Name of Program _____

Semester/Year Taken _____

Rate (*please circle*): **E** **VG** **G** **F** **P** **VP**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of this program/course?

2) Name of Program _____

Semester/Year Taken _____

Rate (*please circle*): **E** **VG** **G** **F** **P** **VP**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of this program/course?

3) Name of Program _____
Semester/Year Taken _____
Rate (*please circle*): **E** **VG** **G** **F** **P** **VP**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of this program/course?

4) Name of Program _____
Semester/Year Taken _____
Rate (*please circle*): **E** **VG** **G** **F** **P** **VP**

What were the strengths and weaknesses of this program/course?

C. Expectations of Teacher Training

Given your experiences and participation, if any, in teacher training, what would you now recommend as the ideal teacher training program? Please include details such as specific content for this ideal program.

III. Background Information

A. Gender (please circle): M F

B. What age were you when you entered the graduate program here at UTK?

C. Please list below type of degree earned (*Associates, Bachelors...*), year degree was received, and the state in which the degree was obtained.

Type of Degree	Date Received	State

APPENDIX B.
SYLLABUS RATING CHECKLIST AND MANUAL

Syllabus Checklist

Mark the number box that relates best with your answer

I. Objectives

1. How specific are the objectives?

1	No objectives exist
2	Too general, cannot be operationalized
3	Uneven, some can be operationalized, some are too general
4	Specific, all are operational

2. Are the objectives motivating?

1	No objectives exist
2	No, not motivating
3	Mixed, some are and some are not motivating
4	Yes, motivating

II. Strategies

3. How many strategies are listed in the requirements and/or the class schedule?

1	Three or less
2	Four or five
3	Six or seven
4	Eight or more

4. Rate the **stated** connection between the strategies and the objectives.

1	No objectives and/or strategies listed
2	No stated connection
3	Mixed, some are stated, some are not
4	Clearly stated connections

5. Rate the clarity of the statements connecting the objectives and strategies.

1	Clear
2	Mixed, some are vague, some are clear
3	Not clear
4	No statements/connections were listed

6. Rate the student work load.

1	Little work is required.
2	Some work is required.
3	Enough work is required.
4	Too much work is required.

III. Substantive Framework

7. Clarity of course content?

1	No content stated
2	Content is vague
3	Content is mixed, some clear and some vague
4	Content is clear

8. Rate the **stated** connection between the course and the discipline.

1	Connection clearly stated
2	Ambiguous
3	None stated

9. Rate the **stated** connection between the course and the college/university.

1	Connection clearly stated
2	Ambiguous
3	None stated

10. Rate the **stated** connection between the course and the short term future.

1	Connection clearly stated
2	Ambiguous
3	None stated

11. Rate the **stated** connection between the course and the long term future.

1	Connection clearly stated
2	Ambiguous
3	None stated

12. Rate the adaptability of the course to *individual learning*.

1	can not determine
2	"rigid" course; no individual learning
3	somewhat adaptable; some individual learning
4	adaptable to student learning; significant individual learning

IV. Student Evaluations

13. Rate the clarity of the requirements for the assignments.

1	Clear
2	Mixed; some are clear, some are vague
3	Not clear

14. Rate the clarity of the **stated** criteria for the evaluation of students.

1	No criteria stated
2	Not clear
3	Mixed, some are clear while others are not
4	Clear

15. Rate the attendance policy.

1	No policy stated
2	Not clear
3	Mixed, some vague and some clear
4	Clearly stated

16. Rate the clarity of the make-up policy.

1	No policy stated
2	Not clear
3	Mixed, some vague and some clear in clarity
4	Clearly stated

17. Rate the clarity of weights of each required assignment.

1	None stated
2	Not clear
3	Mixed, some vague and some clear
4	Clear

18. Rate the clarity of the grading for the entire course.

1	None stated
2	Not clear
3	Mixed, some vague and some clear
4	Clear

19. Rate the **stated** connections between the basis for students' grade and the course objectives.

1	No objectives and/or evaluations listed.
2	No stated connection
3	Mixed, some vague and some clearly stated
4	Clearly stated connection

20. Rate the exams' clarity on frequency and dates given.

1	Not stated
2	One is stated (either frequency or date)
3	Frequency and date are clearly stated

21. Rate the **stated** value of the exam(s).

1	None stated
2	Vague
3	Some detail is stated
4	Details are stated clearly

22. Rate the clarity of the nature of the exam.

1	Details are stated
2	Some detail is stated
3	Vague
4	None stated

23. Rate the **stated** material to be included on the exam.

1	Clearly stated
2	Some criteria are stated
3	Vague or none stated
4	None stated

V. Instructor

24. Rate the accessibility of the Instructor.

1	Very accessible (i.e., liberal office hours, phone #, e-mail, office location, fax, mailbox)
2	Somewhat accessible (i.e., some office hours, at least one phone number and maybe an e-mail)
3	Limited accessibility (i.e., some office hours)
4	Inaccessible (i.e., by appointment only)

25. Rate the approachability of the Instructor.

1	Not approachable, lack of humor or encouragement
2	Somewhat approachable, some humor or encouragement
3	Approachable, humor and encouragement

26. Rate the teacher work load for the entire semester.

1	Too much
2	Just right
3	Simple
4	Data not available

VI. Summary Assessment

27. Taken as a whole, choose the *best* statement that describes one possible communication by the instructor to the student.

1	"This is your course." This is an adaptable course, you will be involved in every aspect of learning.
2	"This is a 'by the book' course with some variation." On certain assignments, you will have input, but the overall course is run by me.
3	"Do it my way." This is a very rigid course.

28. If you were a student, would you recommend this course to another student based solely on this syllabus?

1	Enthusiastically.
2	Yes.
3	No.
4	Absolutely not.

Comments

Training Manual for Rating College Syllabi

This booklet instructs you how to rate a sociology course syllabi selected for study. To assure uniformity in ratings, please refer to this booklet for clarification of any questions you may have.

I. Overview of Project

I am currently conducting a research project designed to evaluate teacher training for Graduate Teaching Associates. As part of this project, I have selected six semesters worth of sociology course. These syllabi are to be rated by a panel of judges knowledgeable in course construction, which includes syllabi preparation.

I am asking you to volunteer to be one of the judges. If you volunteer, you will be asked to rate six or seven syllabi. This entire rating process should require no more than 90 minutes of your time. I would like you to complete the rating without any outside help. This includes receiving help from other judges, friends, colleagues and even myself. If you absolutely need help, please contact me, the project director, Aldea Misenheimer via e-mail at anastasia.sca@juno.com. P.S.: I have made every effort to maintain the anonymity of the syllabi, but if in spite of my best efforts you are able to recognize or identify the Instructor of the syllabus, please return the syllabus to me and I will provide an alternative.

II. Syllabus Checklist

A. Part I. Objectives

1. How specific are the objectives?

Objectives are also called goals for the course. These objectives (if they are listed) should be able to be operationalized. For example: if you have an objective like: "To understand the knowledge of Sociology," this becomes too abstract for the student to be able to attain. If the objective was rephrased as: "To understand the knowledge of Sociology through vocabulary, theories, historical figures, and application through the use of readings, lectures, and hands on experimentation," this becomes extremely specific and the student can see how to attain this objective. *Rate the objectives solely by their specificity.*

2. Are the objectives motivating?

For example: To say, "You will learn basic interviewing skills" would be more motivating than "To help become a better person."

B. Part II. Strategies

3. How many strategies are listed in the requirements and/or class schedule?

Strategies are any forms of teaching including: lectures; discussions; group work; research papers; term papers; examinations; textbook(s) readings; additional reading(s) like magazines, academic journals, and reserved readings; student journals; and movies.

4. Rate the stated connection between the strategies and the objectives.

The connections must be stated within the syllabus to be rated. If there are no strategies or objectives listed, choose #1.

5. Rate the clarity of the statements connecting the objectives and strategies.

For those stated connections between the objectives and the strategies, rate their overall clarity.

6. Rate the student work load.

Take into account the frequency, quantity, length, and difficulty of the assignments and examinations.

C. Part III. Substantive Framework

7. Clarity of course content?

Use the course description and the objectives and strategies as your rating basis.

8. Rate the stated connection between the course and the discipline.

Rate only the stated sentences that link this course to the discipline of Sociology.

9. Rate the stated connection between the course and the college/university.

Rate only the stated sentences that link this course to other disciplines outside of Sociology (interdisciplinary).

10. Rate the stated connection between the course and the short term future.

Rate only the stated sentences that link this course to the student's immediate life in, and possibly outside, the University.

11. Rate the stated connection between the course and the long term future.

Rate only the stated sentences that link this course to the student's future in, and possibly outside, his or her career.

12. Rate the adaptability of this course to individual learning.

Consider how flexible this course is to individual learning, individual interests, or individual schedules. This includes the student's choice in selecting among course requirements and research paper topics, the encouragement of creativity and the encouragement to participate.

D. Part IV. Student Evaluations

13. Rate the clarity of the requirements for the assignments.

Looking only at assignments, rate how clear these assignments are explained (i.e., what is to be included in the term paper, what type of media clippings, what research is necessary, etc.).

14. Rate the clarity of the stated criteria for the evaluation of students.

Look at criteria explaining how the exams, papers and other assignments will be graded. Rate the clarity of this criteria.

15. Rate the attendance policy.

The attendance policy may be included anywhere in the syllabus. Rate only its clarity.

16. Rate the clarity of the make-up policy.

The make-up policy may be included anywhere in the syllabus. How specific is this policy? What constitutes an excused absence in order to make-up the work? Which assignments and exams are allowed to be made-up? What about late submissions?

17. Rate the clarity of weights for each required assignment.

Rate how clear each assignment's importance to the total course grade is stated and/or listed. I.e., this term paper is worth 25% of your grade.

18. Rate the clarity of the grading for the entire course.

Rate how clear it is to the student on how to attain a good grade in this course.

19. Rate the stated connection between the basis for student's grades and the course objectives.

Only those statements connecting the student's grades to the objectives should be considered. This connection should show how the grade this student receives relates to the achievement of the objectives (goals) for this course.

20. Rate the exams' clarity on frequency and dates given.

Rate how clear is it stated in the syllabus how many exams will be given and when they will be given.

21. Rate the stated value of the exam(s).

Rate how important are the exam(s) to the grade of the student.

22. Rate the clarity of the nature of the exam.

Rate how clear the details are in explaining the nature of the exam. It should explain how many of each type of questions and what each type of question is worth. (I.e., 25 multiple choice questions at 4 point each, 10 matching at 10 points each and 1 essay worth 50 points for a total of 200 points).

23. Rate the stated material to be included on the exam.

This criteria would include parts of the course like lectures, readings, films as well as previous exams (accumulative).

E. Part V. Instructor

24. Rate the accessibility of the Instructor.

In order to decide how accessible this Instructor is to the student, the number of ways to communicate with the instructor will be our indicator: phone number of office or home; directions to and/or location of office; e-mail address; fax number; daily schedule; office hours; location of mailbox.

25. Rate the approachability of the Instructor.

Would a student feel comfortable approaching and talking to the Instructor based on this syllabus?

26. Rate the teacher work load for the entire semester.

Assume this syllabus was designed for a class of 45 students. Take into account the length, frequency, and nature of the examinations and assignments e.g., essays, journals, etc...

F. Part VI. Summary Assessment

27. Taken as a whole, choose the *best* statement that describes one possible communication by the instructor to the student.

Taken as a whole, what does this syllabus communicate to you about student input for the course?

28. If you were a student, would you recommend this course to another student based solely on this syllabus?

APPENDIX C.
HUMAN SUBJECTS BOARD

(This form may be reproduced on a personal computer and printed on a high quality printer.)

FORM A

Certification for Exemption from IRB Review for Research Involving Human Subjects

IRB# _____

Date received in OR _____

- A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR(s) and/or CO-PI(s):**
Aldea R. Misenheimer (U.T.) G.T.A. Department of Sociology – CO-PI
Dr. Samuel E. Wallace (U.T.) Professor Sociology – CO-PI
Dr. Amy Chasteen (U. Southern Mississippi) Assistant Professor – CO-PI
Dr. W. Lee Humphreys (U.T.) Professor Religious Studies – CONSULTANT
- B. DEPARTMENT/UNIT:** Sociology
- C. COMPLETE MAILING ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBERS OF CO-PI(s):**
Department of Sociology 974-7028
913 McClung Tower 974-6021
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, TN 37996
- D. TITLE OF PROJECT:** Evaluating Teacher Training
- E. EXTERNAL FUNDING AGENCY AND ID NUMBER:**
Application to be submitted following certification
- F. GRANT SUBMISSION DATE:** Not applicable
- G. STARTING DATE:** Immediately following certification
- H. ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE:** 20 weeks after certification
- I. Objective(s) of Project:**
a) To determine if teacher training improves teaching syllabi.
b) To determine if teacher training improves instruction.
c) To identify which teacher training provides the most improvement.
d) To assess the impact the types of teacher training create
- II. Subjects:**
The subjects will include Graduate Teaching Assistants or Associates at the University of Tennessee during 1995 and 1997.
- III. Methods or Procedures:**
The information will be attained through three data sources. Two of the sources are published, which are the teacher evaluations in the Campus Teaching Evaluation Program (Tennessee 101) from 1995 to 1997, and the course syllabi. The third source is a mailed questionnaire to the instructors with a cover sheet designated as the Informed Consent Form.
- IV. CATEGORY(ies) FOR EXEMPT RESEARCH PER 45 CFR 46:** Categories 1, 3, and 4.
- CERTIFICATION:** This research described herein is in compliance with 45 CFR 46.101(b) and presents subjects with no more than minimal risk as defined by applicable regulations.
- Principal Co-PI: Aldea R. Misenheimer Aldea R. Misenheimer April 8, 1998
Co PI: Dr. Samuel E. Wallace Samuel E. Wallace April 8, 1998
Dept. Review _____
Comm. Chair: _____
- APPROVED:**
Dept. Head _____

VITA

Aldea Renee Misenheimer graduated from Farragut High School in 1992, under the assumed name of Aldea Jones. She attended Queens College in Charlotte, N.C., Western Carolina University in Cullowhee, N.C., and The University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She graduated from The University of Tennessee, Knoxville in December of 1996 with a Bachelors Degree in Arts and Science, major of Sociology, and a concentration in Criminal Justice. During her undergraduate education, Aldea volunteered and interned for several non-profit and governmental organizations - Gateway Youth Homes, Haywood County District Attorney, Knox County Sheriff, and the Tennessee Board of Paroles. She remained at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville with the Department of Sociology graduate program. She was married in June of 1997 to Wes A. Misenheimer.

While in the graduate program, Aldea taught discussion sections for four consecutive semesters under the direction of her committee chair, Dr. Samuel E. Wallace. After completing Sociology 510: Teaching Sociology seminar, she strived to improve her teaching skills in any way possible. She attended teacher training programs such as the Campus Wide GTA Seminar and the Learning Process Model Seminar hosted by the Process Education Institute and Pacific Crest. She was also a member in the Chancellor's GTA Mentoring Program from 1998-1999. She served as a representative for the Teaching, Religion and Methods specialities in the Union of Sociology Graduate Students.