
CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Creating Meaningful Learning

**5th Annual GS Colloquium
Saturday, September 6th, 2008
University of Texas at Austin**

Submission Deadline: Monday, 5:00 p.m., June 16th, 2008

You are invited to submit a proposal for the 2008 Graduate Student Colloquium (GSC) at the University of Texas at Austin on Saturday, **September 6th, 2008**. This year, the goal of the colloquium is to showcase current best practices and research, related to effectively **engaging undergraduate students in learner centered teaching environments designed to create meaningful learning**.

Graduate students—especially those currently assigned as teaching assistants or assistant instructors, as well as graduate students looking forward to their future faculty roles—are the primary audience for the colloquium. Graduate student instructors contribute greatly to the level of teaching excellence at every university, and our 5th annual meeting is an exciting opportunity to advance your pedagogical, professional, and personal development.

This year's theme is *Creating Meaningful Learning*. We expect that this theme will spark new ideas and transform critical conversations into lively, interactive, and engaging sessions. We welcome submissions from all academic disciplines. Sessions are scheduled to last one hour and will run concurrently.

The UT Austin Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) program is one of the first in the country to model a Graduate Student colloquium based on a competitive selection process for submitted proposals. The colloquium is also innovative because of the professional support it offers presenters. This support can take many forms, including formative feedback on submitted proposals, pre-colloquium session dry-runs, and peer-driven question and answer sessions.

Types of Proposals

This year our call includes three different categories:

1. interactive workshop sessions that demonstrate best-practices in creating meaningful classroom learning environments
2. poster sessions that draw on original research conducted by presenters about teaching and leaning in the classroom
3. a TA/AI Panel focused on reflections by the panelists about their experiences as a graduate student instructor

The University of Texas Honor Code - The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect towards peers and community.

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Workshop Proposals:

We welcome proposals for a variety of sessions featuring research, best practices, and hands-on workshops **involving pedagogical strategies that encourage, support and focus on creating, nurturing, maintaining, and envisioning meaningful learning opportunities for UT's undergraduate students.** Your goal is to present knowledge in such a format that participants leave with clear ideas about how to apply, extend, or adapt the information from each session to their own classes. Key words to consider as you prepare your submission are: active, constructive, intentional, authentic, and cooperative.

Your session proposal must include these elements (Please limit proposals to 1500 words.):

- 1) Title
- 2) Abstract (250 word limit)
- 3) A description of the session topic
- 4) A conceptual framework for your work – for example, theoretical or empirical basis, goals, implementation, and assessment
- 5) A description of the session's interactive components
- 6) A description how your session relates to the conference theme (see below for suggested topics)
- 7) Expected outcomes for session participants
- 8) Describe how your presentation can be applied in cross interdisciplinary settings.
- 9) Include any draft handouts and other resources that will be a part of your session.

Presenters are expected to exhibit effective presentation skills *and* to use interactive learning techniques to engage session participants.

Accepted proposals will contain one or more of the following:

- 1) A plan for participants' learning via discussion
- 2) Small group work
- 3) Demonstrations
- 4) Hands-on activities
- 5) Role playing
- 6) Other interactive learning strategies

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Poster Session Proposals:

The focus of the poster sessions is **original research on meaningful learning in the classroom and its related processes**. Entries can be by individual graduate students or group collaborations which include UT graduate students.

Poster Proposals Guidelines:

- Title of the Research Poster
- Abstract (no more than 250 words)
- Detailed description of the research including purpose, relation to pedagogy, and outcomes (no longer than 1,500 words)
- Name of applicant(s)
- Contact Information

Panel Proposal:

This year the Colloquium will include a discussion panel featuring an interdisciplinary group of graduate students who will share their teaching challenges and successes.

If you would like to be considered for this panel, please email a short biography, why you are interested, and your curriculum vitae to: aspects@lists.cc.utexas.edu with the subject line: *Invited Panel*

Suggested Topics

Overarching topics for the 2008 colloquium address different aspects of meaningful learning: (1) Meaningful Learning through Discussion, (2) Meaningful Learning through Writing, (3) Meaningful Learning through Technology, and (4) Assessing Meaningful Learning. Acceptable session topics include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Meaningful Learning through Discussion

- Using discussion to engage and motivate students
- The roles of discussion in the classroom
- How to build rapport with students to foster discussion
- Socratic discussion
- Managing sensitive discussion topics
- Crafting engaging discussion in the multidisciplinary classroom

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2. *Meaningful Learning through Writing*

- The roles of writing in the classroom
- The relationship between writing and discussion
- Incorporating discipline-specific writing strategies in the multidisciplinary classroom
- Writing to an audience
- Process-based writing
- Writing in the multi-cultural, multi-lingual classroom

3. *Meaningful Learning through Technology*

- Online communication and collaboration
- Emerging technologies used to foster communication
- Facilitating online discussions
- Online tools and peer review processes

4. *Assessing Meaningful Learning*

- Peer-peer evaluation
- Assessing Discussion
- Assessing Presentation
- Assessing Writing
- Assessing Technology Integration

Submission Process

1. Proposals should be submitted electronically, as an email attachment, to aspects@lists.cc.utexas.edu no later than Monday, 5:00pm June 16th, 2008.
2. Your proposal must be in one of the following formats: .pdf, .doc, .rtf
3. Name your document using the following convention:
<Your last name>_08GSCProp.<format>, e.g. Garza_08GSCProp.doc
4. At the beginning of your proposal, indicate who the presenters are, and which type of proposal you're submitting.
5. If you have any questions, please e-mail aspects@lists.cc.utexas.edu.