

Monica Jean Henderson Nomination Dossier Contents

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Introduction and Dedication

I have been a teacher since I was nine years old. In fourth grade, I was assigned to be a second-grader's Reading Buddy and mentor. In that position, I witnessed my first beloved *aha!* lightbulb moment – the one that fuels every teacher's drive to educate and inspire. Since then, I have taught in several academic and non-academic capacities as a private English tutor, adult basic education tutor and teaching assistant, postsecondary peer mentor, graduate teaching assistant (TA), and as a course instructor at SAIT Polytechnic. With every position, I learn more.

This journey has not been an isolated one. I am surrounded by an incredibly intelligent, reflective, and generous community of teachers, students, and academics in my department and beyond who have modelled what I believe to be truly exceptional pedagogies. I am endlessly grateful for the impact their guidance and support has had on my development as a teacher, as a learner, as an academic, and as an individual.

This dossier is dedicated to all of them.

“Wishing you the best in your
journey to becoming a teacher.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

Teaching Responsibilities – Graduate Assistant (Teaching)

As a TA, I have supported professors in two Communication and Media Studies Courses: COMS 201 and COMS 371. **COMS 201: Introduction to Communication and Media Studies** is first-year course that introduces undergraduate students to several inter- and intrapersonal communication theories, as well as a sprinkle of critical theory. Supporting Dr. Monique Solomon, I led two 50-minute weekly tutorials, graded 10-minute tutorial presentations, prepared activities and discussions for the remaining 40 minutes, co-wrote and marked the midterm and final exams, lead a writing workshop, and graded and provided feedback on the final research essay assignment.

COMS 371: Critical Media Studies is a second-year course that picks up where COMS 201 left off. Under the guidance of Dr. Jessalynn Keller, students delve deeper into critical media theories and theorists including but not limited to Western Marxism (Karl Marx; Antonio Gramsci; The Frankfurt School), semiotics (Roland Barthes), discourse theory (Michel Foucault), and feminist theory (Judith Butler). As critical theories, class often hinged on controversial and

political discussions that are often very polarizing – it was my goal to keep discussions open and inclusive in order to allow for a multiperspectival space that encouraged transformative learning. In Fall of 2017 COMS 371 tutorials were a flipped learning space, where student group presentations occupied 45 of the 50 tutorial minutes. After receiving student feedback on this assignment, Dr. Keller adjusted the presentations to 30 minutes for the Fall 2018 semester, a successful learning experience I speak to in the following teaching philosophy. Within the management of two 50-minute lab sessions per week, my duties included conducting a model class facilitation, having check-in meetings with student groups prior to their presentations, grading presentations, preparing conceptual wrap-up discussion and activities, creating exam review and assignment workshops, and grading midterms and a critical media analysis ‘culture jam’ paper.

Teaching Philosophy

My role as a peer mentor and work in undergraduate course CMCL 507: Collaborative Learning and Peer Mentoring was a defining catalyst to my development as a teacher. In this course, I encountered life-changing pedagogical theory that transformed the way I theorize teaching, learning, as well as my Self. This philosophy is aligned with beliefs rooted in some (but not all) of my most influential pedagogues: Paulo Freire, Lev Vygotsky, Peter Jarvis, and John Dirx. In August 2018, I completed the 24-hour Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) and started the 100-hour Teaching Excellence Foundations (TEF) course at SAIT Polytechnic. I am also currently an enthusiastic participant of the Graduate Student Certificate of University Teaching & Learning at the Taylor Institute for Teaching and Learning (TITL). This philosophy is elevated by learnings from these teaching programs, as well as punctuated with quotes from student surveys which illustrate how my beliefs have positively impacted my methods and by extension, their learning.

“This was my first time hosting a peer mentor, and I found Monica to be an energetic, engaged presence for the 201 students... Monica represented the peer mentoring program exceedingly well and I would certainly recommend both Monica and the peer mentor experience to other potential host professors in future.”

- Dr. Samantha Thrift, Peer Mentorship Program Feedback, Winter 2017

Liberating Philosophy

Education should be liberating, so I reject the banking concept of education.

“In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing.”

– Paulo Freire, in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

Perhaps the most prevalent teaching fallacy is the ‘sage on the stage’. Many of us—including myself—have been guilty of subscribing to this notion. Like many teachers, I started on this path as a naturally good student. Teaching seemed like a natural career choice for me – after all, I was smart, a good talker, and thought I had something to offer. When I encountered Freire’s work, however, I was incredibly humbled to discover how flawed my initial perspective on teaching had been. It took some reflection that much of my success was due to my inherent cognitive compatibility with the banking concept of education which privileged memorization and discouraged lateral thinking and creativity. So as a peer mentor and teaching assistant, I turned to flipped classrooms as resistance to the top-down, oppressive, ‘banking’ model. I employed flipped

“Very effective, easy to listen to, kept the discussion interesting & relevant to our interests.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 201 Winter 2018

classrooms in order to free students from the shackles of traditional teaching methods in which facts are ‘deposited’ in students for future recall, and rather foster transformative critical reflection and empower students to be accountable for their own learning.

Liberating Methods and Strategies

Flipped lessons and contemporary discussions. Flipped classrooms require me to surrender control and put immense trust in students to take charge of their learning. In my COMS 371 Fall 2017 tutorials, 45 minutes of the 50 minute sessions were comprised of student-led class facilitations. After collaborating with my co-TA to create a model presentation in the first week, every week our students would teach that week’s concepts to their classmates. After a conceptual presentation, they would then embark on an activity they designed which put the concepts into action through media analysis, learning games such as *Kahoot!*, or thought-provoking questions that inspired discussion. As the teaching assistant in this classroom, I had to practice restraint, patience and trust in my students to lead the tutorials. This meant not jumping-in to prove *my* knowledge, and rather give learners space to flourish on their own and demonstrate *their* knowledge (*see Appendix D for a full set of survey responses related to my discussion method*).

While this lack of control was scary at first, it was incredibly rewarding. I had very positive feedback of my skill for allowing students to facilitate discussion, but also for asking questions that would kick-start the conversation back up again if the class got quiet. On my behalf, this required constant presence and critical thinking, to be able to quickly and contextually steer renew the discussion and help put things back on track.

Following student feedback regarding their tutorial time, the student class facilitations were reduced to 30 out of 50 tutorial minutes in the Fall 2018 semester. With the extra time, I could review the concepts as described by the preceding group, and then facilitate a critical discussion of the theory applied to a contemporary media example *different from lecture*, such as applying political economy to the 2017 Cambridge Analytica scandal, or encouraging students to analyze SNL’s Brett Kavanaugh skit from a critical cultural studies/culture jamming perspective. Based in my experience with flipped classrooms and trusting students, I strongly agree with Paulo Freire, when he contests that “[the humanist, revolutionary educator’s] efforts must be imbued with a profound trust in people and their creative power. To achieve this, they must be **partners of the students** in their relations with them.” This students-as-partners approach is becoming more recognized in collaborative teaching practice and in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL). As a student partner in SoTL research (*see Appendix E*), I can attest to the empowering nature of being seen as a peer, not as an inferior, by the educators around you.

“Very good at leading groups when the class didn’t know what to say (silence). She had lots to contribute that sparked mine and classmates ideas to discuss. She would also clarify if a concept was hard to grasp.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2017

“The TA was great at encouraging the students each week during our group presentations. She led when the class needed to be led, and stepped back when necessary in order for us to take advantage of the lab and learn to our fullest capacity.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

Educational technology. Part of creating a relevant and contemporary learning environment, I believe, is using modern, interactive digital tools to revolutionize the classroom. One such tool is *Padlet*, which has changed the way I imagine collaboration. *Padlet* is a live-updating post board emulation tool which allows users to see their fellow collaborators' additions in real time. In COMS 201, I used this tool as a way to have students connect with their own social media (SM) and reflect on their SM use critically in a collaborative environment. Students screenshotted and shared their Instagram posts, and then as a class, they analyzed their own posts through the concept of back-stage/front-stage (what preparation the audience doesn't see, versus the finished product they do see). Later in the semester, during an exam review session, I assigned pairs of students to different topics throughout the semester and then had them formulate sample exam questions and post them to a *Padlet*. Using informal polls (classroom assessment techniques) during class, I learned how much students love *Padlet*. It a tool which truly lets students' ideas take centre stage.

Scaffolding Philosophy

I believe in scaffolding, so I promote future-oriented feedback and support.

"Scaffolding refers to the temporary use of instructional support that provides the learner ease of access to the targeted zones of the subject matter until it becomes internalized."

– Robert Lake, in *Vygotsky on Education: Primer*

"Monica was very good about giving feedback on assignments. Good suggestions on what to improve, also praise for things that were well done."

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2017

To a student, uncommunicated expectations that do not align with course content and/or learning outcomes feel like an intense betrayal of trust of both their instructor and of education in general. The last thing I want is for students to feel disenfranchised by education and/or risk exacerbating their stress. To this end, I strive to promote learning that increasingly builds on students' existing knowledge, so they know they have the power and tools to succeed. I have not had the power to design courses as

a teaching assistant, so I employ scaffolding techniques in future-oriented feedback which is rooted in students' existing strengths yet constructively geared towards students' improvement and future success not only in my course but in future courses. I also take their feedback very seriously. I transcribe all of my PDF student survey responses and write reflective annotations in them in order to keep myself accountable to students, in the same way I expect them to be accountable to me. To extend this reflective practice, I also request feedback letters from all of the professors I support.

Scaffolding Methods and Strategies

Detailed, future-oriented feedback. As I learned in my *Theories & Issues of Postsecondary Teaching and Learning* badge workshop series at the TI, feedback is the one of the most, if not *the* most, important teacher tool to facilitate student learning and success. Providing accurate feedback on class presentations requires a teacher to be incredibly present and engaged in the classroom. When evaluating COMS 371 student facilitations I mentioned earlier, I kept a unique hardcopy grading rubric on hand and took detailed notes not just on a group level, but also

"Monica provided the best feedback I have ever received from a COMS TA (I am in my 4th year of my undergrad). Very thorough and constructive feedback. I very much appreciated it!"

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

“Monica was very detailed and descriptive in feedback. She writes in individual feedback and group feedback. She not only comment on what was presented but provides advise for future success.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2017

individually in order to provide each individual member of the presentation group personalized feedback (*see Appendix A for a sample feedback form*). I believe personalized feedback is important for several reasons. One, it recognizes the unique challenge for students to be adaptable to learning styles different than their own. Two, while a strong presentation may appear cohesive and seamless, if a student who was clearly struggling with the presentation only receives glowing overall feedback, they will not have the same opportunity to learn.

Three, on the other side of that argument, overall negative feedback on a poor presentation does not acknowledge the extra effort of students who clearly excelled in a leadership role in the presentation process. Finally, it allows me to individually *challenge* and *motivate* each student to improve their presentation delivery skills based on their observed strengths and areas for growth. This scaffolding practice gives students the information they need for future success.

Writing support. For many students, the final essay in COMS 201 was the first piece of writing they produced at a university level. Knowing that writing is an emotional and stressful experience for many, I provided a writing workshop several weeks before the final paper, complete with academic writing skills (creating a thesis statement, organization and headings, setting measurable goals, and the importance of eating healthily and drinking water during the process). It was also my responsibility to introduce them to academic research protocols, such as locating journal articles and using an APA formatting guide. Going forward, I provided ‘thesis statement checks’

“Great instructor. Lesson on essay-writing was especially valuable. I’m in 4th year and did not expect that lecture to have value for me, but it was the best writing advice I’ve ever heard.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 201 Winter 2018

to all students via e-mail, where I would identify the strengths and areas for growth in their approach to their paper, as well as offer any further writing support (*see email in Appendix B*).

Mind-mapping and board work. Every week, I incorporate technology like *Padlet*, *Kahoot!*, and prepare slides complete with embedded images, videos, or other media texts for analysis, paired with discussion questions and topics unique from that week’s lecture content. However, I’m a little old-fashioned in that I love writing on the board. The reason I see board work as a scaffolding technique is that as the class moves forward in a discussion, I record discussion responses and ideas physically on the board, allowing students to have a physical representation of where the lab discussion has been, and how we are building on those ideas as we discuss.

I particularly enjoy using board techniques for review sessions. For a midterm review session in COMS 371 Fall 2018, I projected the midterm concepts Dr. Keller shared that week in lecture directly onto the whiteboard. Then, as an entire class, we drew a mind-map (*see Appendix C for photos*) which connected all the concepts to their respective theorist and theoretical tradition, and also drew lines of influence between the different theories. This technique is effective in at least two key ways: first, students are partners with me and with each other as we co-create

“Fantastic at leading group discussions and breaking down concepts, especially her use of mind maps or concept maps on the board.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

the review; second, it is fun! Students love to see the mind-map build, and many took photos of it to take home and review further. The extra 20 minutes in Fall 2018's section made these varied activities much more possible, and demonstrated how changing the structure of the lab could increase student learning and engagement, while still allowing for flipped classroom facilitations.

In COMS 371, students are asked to do a creative writing assignment—a “Culture Jam”—in which they critically analyze an advertisement for ideological meanings, and then challenge those meanings by reinventing the ad in a way which exposes them. I did this assignment myself in COMS 371 with Dr. Keller as an undergrad, and was simultaneously thrilled and anxious about the creative aspect, since by then I had comfortable with the standard research essay. Acknowledging these feelings, I planned and executed a Culture Jam workshop where the class and I jammed an advertisement *I drew on the board*—this made it possible for me to erase text, add images, and brainstorm with the students about how any ad they chose could be manipulated.

Emotional, Holistic, and Soulful Philosophy

Education is emotional and should be soulful, so I reject mind-body dualism.

“Education is fundamentally about individuals who learn, grow and develop, and not about merely transmitting knowledge.”

– Peter Jarvis, in *Towards a Philosophy of Human Learning*

In modern Western thought, the rational mind is seen as superior to the body as a tool for knowing the world. I reject this assumption. The classic Cartesian mind/body split does not account for emotional, soulful, spiritual, or mythological ways of knowing, and it privileges cognitive learning styles best-suited to Paulo Freire's banking concept of education. Instead, I acknowledge that when a student enters the classroom, they are bringing with them not only their minds as tools for knowing, but *also* their bodies, emotions, experiences, beliefs, values, and cultures. This orientation towards teaching is especially crucial in the discipline of media studies, where meanings are contested across cultures, personal constructs, ideologies, and belief systems that do not always align neatly with my own.

“Friendly and approachable, open to discussion and encourages students to have opposing views and defend them with no judgement.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 201 Winter 2018

“She was very inclusive, and made all ideas welcome. Great TA, always smiling and made coming to class (tutorial) interesting and enjoyable.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2017

“Felt like it was a safe environment to speak my mind w/out feeling judged.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

Emotional and Soulful Methods and Strategies

Humour and authenticity. Translating what John Dirx refers to as “nurturing the soul in adult learning” into a teaching method is not as cut-and-dry as the practice of providing constructive feedback. For me, incorporating soul into the classroom means being authentic, engaged, and demonstrating my passion for the topic in a way that in order to humanize the experience of learning. These beliefs manifest in the ways I

“Amazing! Super helpful and great at explaining concepts. Very approachable and funny.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2017

appropriately incorporate humour to make controversial topics accessible, manage discrimination in class discussion with respect for the original speaker but also in a way that moves the topic back to a constructive, safe space, or simply how I enter the classroom with a smile, or make myself available outside the classroom in a way that respects my personal boundaries, but also that meets students where they are at.

E-mail. Learning is non-linear, so challenges can occur outside the classroom and require a TA to be flexible with their time and modes of communication to suit diverse student needs and schedules. For these reasons, I believe e-mail communication to be a key responsibility in my role as a TA. To me, respectful, swift, and feedback-oriented e-mail practice (*see Appendix B for samples*) is part of acknowledging the emotional and holistic dimensions of learning – if a crucial e-mail isn't answered in a timely manner, it could potentially cause undue stress and emotional turmoil, especially at high-intensity points of the semester. From a holistic perspective, a weak e-mail practice could also lead to a sense of distrust between student and teacher where students wonder where else a teacher 'isn't on top of things'. In my first semester as a TA, I would typically answer e-mails within an hour at all times of the day and night. As I grew, I realized that this was both an unrealistic and unsustainable expectation of myself, that I needed to preserve my energy in order to be the best TA I could be in other areas. So, after the first semester, I created a new 24-hour policy where I promised to students on the first day that I would respond to all e-mails within 24 hours, with the exception of weekends. The following semester in COMS 201 Winter 2018, my e-mailing was equally effective, less draining, and my feedback was still very positive.

COMS 371 Fall 2017 Survey Responses

- She was very approachable, could always be emailed and was passionate about the topics.
- Monica was very helpful in one on one discussions regarding projects. She was also very easy to communicate with over email.
- She did great. Very fast answering e-mails and couldn't ask more of her.

COMS 201 Winter 2018 Survey Responses

- Good at responding to emailed questions.
- Monica was super helpful, always replied to emails promptly.
- Constant communication via email to clarify difficult terms + aid in constructing thesis statements effectively.

Educational Research

I was introduced to SoTL in Fall 2017 when I enrolled in the cohort-based *Foundations of SoTL* workshop series, hosted by Dr. Kiara Mikita, as part of my pursuit of the TI's Graduate Student Certificate. Kiara's guidance through foundational SoTL texts was extremely inspiring, and felt like a direct continuation the passion for pedagogy kick-started for me in my undergraduate peer mentorship class. As a past peer mentor, and a mentee of several excellent faculty, mentorship became my central SoTL inquiry during that semester.

“Amazing TA! Very approachable, open-minded and always interest in what everyone has to say. Keeps the session going fluently and always makes it entertaining.”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

Luckily, during this time, I was invited to participate in a SoTL project with Dr. Dawn Johnston, Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning and Student Engagement, Faculty of Arts) and Teaching Professor, as well as then-PhD candidate, now College of Discovery, Creativity and Innovation (CDCI) instructor, Dr. AnneMarie Dorland. Our research centres on

our unique mentorship ‘constellation’ of having mentored or been mentored amongst ourselves and across shifting academic roles. We presented this research in workshop format at the 2018 University of Calgary Conference on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching, as well as at the 2018 Annual Conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSOTL) in Bergen, Norway (*see Appendix E for our ISSOTL abstract*). For my participation in this conference as a student presenter, I was also awarded the ISSOTL Emerging Scholars Fund. We have submitted this work to the UCalgary journal, *Papers on Postsecondary Learning and Teaching*. Through this dissemination, we hope our mentorship-mapping technique will facilitate others’ reflections on their roles as mentors and mentees in their academic micro-communities.

The experience of conducting this research and exploring mentorship, academic hierarchy and boundaries, and of attending international SoTL conferences has greatly impacted t my teaching practice and academic network. I now see all moments in teaching and learning as mentorship and partnership opportunities (*see Appendix B for a sample mentorship e-mail*). Reflecting on this research has illuminated for me the true impact of Dr. Johnston and Dr. Dorland’s mentorship on my academic career, and has encouraged me to be more mindful of how I may mentor my colleagues and students going forward.

Educational Service and Leadership

I derive great meaning from serving my academic community in a variety of roles. My passion for educational voluntarism began in

2015, when I became a volunteer Supported Adult Learning (SAL) Tutor at Bow Valley College. In this role, I tutored disabled adults in reading, writing, math, and computer skills. This experience was rewarding in so many ways – meeting incredible individuals, teaching them, and learning so much from them about commitment to learning and the role of privilege in society in return. Possibly the biggest reward was discovering a new trajectory for my academic career, as my Master’s thesis and proposed doctoral research are now based on digital policy’s relationship to funding of Adult Basic Education (ABE) in digital literacy. It is through the pursuit of this research that I learn more and more about the relationships between education and social justice, which in turn influences my teaching reflections and practices.

“I think she (Monica) is absolutely awesome (smart, approachable, interesting, knows material very well) (so far, best TA I’ve ever had) (very considerate)”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

“Loved having you as my T.A. <3”

- Tutorial Survey Response, COMS 371 Fall 2018

At the University of Calgary, I took on my first educational leadership role as a Peer Mentor in Winter 2017. As a graduate student, I currently serve as Vice-President of the Communication, Media and Film Departmental Graduate Association (CMFDGA), where I strive to provide meaningful experiences for graduate students in order to support their well-being

and, as an extension, their teaching and learning during their program. This has taken the form of informal mentorship, and encouraging my fellow graduate students to pursue the TI’s graduate certificate. Before serving as Vice-President, I was the MA representative of our CMFDGA to the Graduate Representative Committee (GRC) of the Graduate Student’s Association (GSA). In this role, I communicated important initiatives surrounding student life and fees to our CMFDGA from monthly GRC meetings, and voted on behalf of my fellow CMFDGA members.

Two recent roles have allowed me to further explore the relationship between my identities as a teacher and researcher. In November 2018, I served as an adjudicator at the UCalgary Student Union's Undergraduate Research Symposium (URS), where I provided feedback on the Five-Minute Thesis category. As of January 2019, I am now a Student Representative on the ISSOTL Conference & Convenings Committee. Currently as a committee, we are working to make the 2019 Call for Papers (CFP) and subsequent conference more inclusive and diverse to reflect SoTL values.

"I just want to thank you for being an amazing TA. Honestly the best COMS TA I've had since I started my degree. I appreciate everything you have done for us during the semester."

- Student E-mail, COMS 371 Fall 2018

Closing Reflection and Teaching Goals



I have imbued critical reflection on my various teaching beliefs and methods throughout this dossier. Some things worked (discussion questions, humour and authenticity), and some things didn't (responding to e-mails at all hours, 50 minute student class facilitations). I would say the more imperative teaching practice I have learned through reflection is the importance of being 100% present in the classroom. I have found that only by practicing mindfulness and being completely in the moment has enabled me to respond most effectively to my students' needs, as well as to notice and act on my own areas for growth.



My immediate teaching goal this semester, on top of adapting to a new teaching environment (FILM 301), is to focus on my professional development and finish the TI certificate. I have completed three of five TI badges (*in red, see left*). As I move towards its completion, I welcome the opportunity to continue upgrading my teaching toolkit with critical practices learned from my last four workshops.



Beyond the TI, it is my goal to continue evolving as a SoTL researcher by seeking out RAing opportunities, as well as potentially designing my own project with Dr. Keller about how student learning benefits from a creative media analysis assignment (the Culture Jam) compared to a traditional research essay format. I have also applied to doctoral programs, in part based on each institution's philosophy regarding teaching and learning. In my doctoral studies, I hope to continue my growth as a TA in order to continue building a strong foundation of teaching practice on which to house my future teaching career.



My heartfelt thanks for your review of my dossier and for your consideration of me as a recipient of the Graduate Assistant (Teaching) award.



Sincerely,

Monica Jean Henderson
MA Student and Teaching Assistant
Faculty of Arts | Department of Communication, Media and Film
University of Calgary

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness – Appendix A

Summative, Future-Oriented Feedback of a Student Presentation

The following represents summative feedback comments on a student theory presentation in COMS 371 in the Fall 2017 semester. Every student received individualized comments. I included ways they could each individually challenge themselves to improve their delivery.

Section	Comments	Grade (5 pts)
Conceptual understanding (10 pts) -key ideas -theorists -importance to media studies	This portion of the presentation was very well done. You were very thorough when overviewing the school (telling us both of its names, its differences from the F-school, and using images of the school to put a 'face to a name', so-to-speak). I appreciated your emphasis on encoding/decoding as a theoretical model, as a tool for analysis rather than a law of nature. In this section I would have liked to see examples to illustrate how the codes work so that, going into your media example, your classmates could have already been thinking about this and analysing the video themselves in their heads. Your description of the theory's importance to media studies was very sophisticated. Great work.	9 (4.5 x 2)
Originality (5 pts) -examples -class activity	Your Daniel Sloss/Jackson Pollock media example was very relevant and illustrated the theory very well. However, I would have liked to see the media example shortened a bit: your analysis after the example was very thorough, but felt a bit rushed because of the video's length. A two-minute section may have been more effective. The timeliness and relevance of your Tweet-decoding activity was well-chosen. Great work.	4.5
Logistics: Lab organization and execution -TA meeting -lab session ran smoothly -Project report	Your TA meeting and reports were all done very professionally. I have taken a point off here because the organization of your session was a bit difficult to follow. You went into incredible theoretical depth, which was appreciated; however, often your oral script would not match up with what was on your slide, which was at times confusing. You also sometimes used terms without defining them, only to define them later on (e.g. "connotative meanings"). Overall group grade is 4/5.	4
Group grade (5 pts)	—	5

Grade: 22.5/25 points

Individual Comments: [Anonymous], you had a skilled analysis of how encoding/decoding is related to social practices. I was very impressed by the depth of your portion of the presentation. However, due to not having simpler/complementary slides to support your points, it was a bit over-detailed at times. For future presentations, I urge you to simplify your oral script to something a bit more accessible and conversational than academic writing. Great work. 😊

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness – Appendix B

E-mail for Student Support, Mentorship, and Formative Feedback

The following represents a supporting mentorship e-mail sent to a former student in Winter 2018 after I attended their presentation at a graduate-level research conference.

Hi [Anonymous],

Just wanted to send you a quick note that I was very impressed by your presentation at [Graduate Student Conference]. Everything from your research to the confidence and professionalism you exuded were awesome.

You were very brave to attend as an undergrad, something I don't even think I would have done. I think you should be very proud of yourself.

Good luck with the rest of your semester.

Sincerely,

Monica

The following represents sample formative assessment of student work conducted over email in Winter 2018. The student sent me a thesis statement and outline for their final essay.

Hi [Anonymous],

I think this is a great topic and clearly you are very passionate about it. What is particularly strong about this intro is your road map -- just make sure you also include a **theory section**. I just have a few pointers to narrow down your thesis and make for a more focused paper:

1. Avoid generalized, unsubstantiated statements. While some of the claims you make may be true (such as "addiction becoming far more widespread"), you need to give evidence that this is true, perhaps from a newspaper article or a research article.
2. In your thesis (which I assume is the bolded text) make it clear to me which topic question you are answering with this paper. I assume you're responding to **topic 1 (re: mass communication)**, but I should be absolutely certain.
3. Finally, also in your thesis: you need to make a clearer argument. While I can *sense* what your position is on the "belittling of those suffering from mental illness", you do not make it explicit. Right now you are only stating that this belittlement exists, rather than taking a position (for/against, and why).

I hope this feedback helps you! Please feel free to send me another draft if you have any more questions.

Cheers,

Monica

Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness – Appendix D

Sample Student Responses to Tutorial Survey RE: Discussions

The following represents three full sets of all tutorial survey responses to the question: “**How effective was the teaching assistant in performing the following functions: Leading discussion groups?**” You will notice that Fall 2018’s responses are much more detailed. In this section, before the tutorial survey, I emphasized to the class how seriously I take their feedback, and let them know I would be reading and transcribing all of it. There is a notable difference in the feedback.

COMS 371 Fall 2018

- Monica created a safe and comfortable space for everyone to share their contributions as well as ask any questions we had. She encouraged students to participate in a friendly and upbeat manner.
- Monica was really good in leading discussion groups as she always found an interesting topic to discuss and get the class involved.
- Monica was great at facilitating group discussion, She would add her own thoughts to contribute to our learning + understanding
- Monica was very good at commanding & leading discussions. Keeping topics focused & relevant. She asked thoughtful leading questions to facilitate discussions.
- very effective, solidifies my understandings of concepts
- Very effective
- Monica was enthusiastic and always came to our tutorials prepared with her own slides.
- Monica is very good at sparking the conversation and getting/keeping class discussion going in the right direction. She make everyone welcome to speak their thoughts.
- Monica does an outstanding Job leading class discussions. She explains concepts very well and provide constructive feedback. Monica provides examples while she explains theories
- Effective
- Group presentation
- Very effective in keeping talk continuous. Good at leading us into the right topic/area without giving it away. We could think of it on our own which I think helps to remember it.
- Very effective and understanding, good guiding questions and thorough responses
- Very good, always on track. Informative. Listens to everyone’s ideas, no one gets shutdown.
- Really great. I learned a lot from her during the lab sessions. She supplemented the lecture material by effectively exploring topics in more depth.
- Effective, I liked the “map” session before the exam to review concepts/discuss.
- Very confident and easy to understand. When there was a lull in the class she was very good at picking up the conversation.
- Good at taking control of discussions and keeping the group on track with the minimal amount of time she had.
- She was really good @ getting the group into discussions by giving us good questions to analyse the text/media. She also created a very good environment to share ideas without feeling judged (ie. safe space).
- Very informative, helpful, attentive, engaging. Very approachable.
- Really well, she allowed us to discuss ideas w/ her about the previous lecture and confirmed understandings of the lecture content
- She assigned people when needed. There was enough help when she came around to check on groups.
- Very effective, more effective than actual lecture lol. Felt like it was a safe environment to speak my mind w/out feeling judged.
- Very helpful in [unclear writing] the students engage in course concepts. Discussions were led with respectful treatment to students and their questions.
- Really good and effective. Very thorough and helps to understand material.
- Very good. Discussions were very relevant to course material and provided helpful clarifications. I really liked the examples we used to apply the concepts like the SNL day.
- Fantastic at leading group discussions and breaking down concepts, especially her use of mind maps or concept maps on the board.
- Very well done. After presentations, her “wrap up” were concise & well organized.
- She was informative and ensured that the opinions and ideas were heard. Made sure to correct any ideas that may not be in line with the course concepts. Always encouraging those who do not have a chance to speak up. Focused on covering the big concepts of a recap, especially after presentations.
- Very effective! Kept up to the schedule on time while still allowing time to gather all groups in class discussion.
- Very efficient with managing time. Allows the chance for everyone to speak up. Keeps discussion on track.
- Kept us on track always. Allowed students to share. Made concepts clear if group presentations were not clear.

COMS 201 Winter 2018

- Very effective and more than competent.

- Great.
- Fair.
- Started many discussions. Asked good leading questions.
- Quite good + enthusiastic and good at leading the conversation.
- was really good @ generating conversation through different in class activities
- Made us think more deeply about a theory by asking questions, while not just giving us the direct answer, made us think about it.
- Very involved
- Very good
- Very good. Prompted the class to engage in discussions.
- Always kept the discussion going, offered valuable insights
- Had good and effective questions for us to answer. Put in a good effort to get everyone to participate. good at explaining things multiple times so we understood
- Monica was very successful at starting good class discussions
- Monica was helpful in getting the class started on the right foot to get engaged with the discussion and recognized if we were stuck on how to get started
- Very well spoken in tutorial when leading discussion. Clarified theories well in review, gave clear instructions for us in tutorial and made expectations clear in assignments.
- She always tries to encourage us + contribute herself. Overall very good!
- very effective, easy to listen to
- Was great at leading the class and getting people to participate.
- Not so well. She enthusiastic about opening a discussion.
- Terrific facilitator – very informative, encouraging + engaging. Manages class well.
- Very good! Moved discussions forward when needed.
- She was good at getting discussions started or keeping them on track.
- Very effective – enthusiastic and engaging. easy to converse with
- Grabbed the attention of the class by using activities as a class or a group
- fun & exciting, kept me engaged in labs consistently
- It's done well she seems well versed in the topic
- Effective in encouraging the class to participate + allowing individuals to be heard/feel comfortable.
- pretty good pushed discussion pace/Involvement
- Great leadership and understanding of group dynamics, always supporting new topics of conversation.

COMS 371 Fall 2017

- She was good at taking people's examples and helping them understand the concepts.
- She was really good at leading discussions and making people feel comfortable to talk.
- Did very well in facilitating conversations & guiding conversations back to topics needed to be discussed
- Monica was great, she was helpful, constructive and tried to bring clarity to complex concepts.
- Monica was great at leading group discussions. She was knowledgeable and enthusiastic and always had great points to add to the discussion. She was good at keeping the class engaged in the course material.
- very good, explained things well, especially concepts that were confusing
- very effective, helped to lead discussions when we were stuck
- Very good at leading groups when the class didn't know what to say (silence). She had lots to contribute that sparked mine and classmates [sic] ideas to discuss. She would also clarify if a concept was hard to grasp
- Awesome because if it was silent she would bring up thought-provoking ideas, questions + comments for the class to think about.
- She is very confident and clear when explaining course concepts, she makes it easier to understand the concepts and leads discussions very well.
- Very good
- Monica was excellent at facilitating group discussions. She was highly involved, but also allowed discussion to evolve naturally.
- Very good, helped + gave good examples to help facilitate conversation
- Very organized / Engaged / Not afraid to provide input
- organized / clear instruction
- Did very well, kept us on topic and kept it fun.
- Very good. Engaged the audience very well, talked about topics w/ alot of knowledge & made topics very understandable.
- Amazing! Super helpful and great at explaining concepts. Very approachable and funny.
- Great, she kept the groups on track and asked questions to keep them going.
- She was good, kept discussions going when it got quiet.
- Decent, a bit condescending at times but overall decent.
- Very good, I felt she has a deep understanding of the topics and did her best to make sure everyone understood.

ISSOTL Abstract – Appendix E

Henderson, M. J., Dorland, A. & Johnston, D. (2018, October 25). *Moments in mentorship: Establishing inclusive micro-communities across shifting academic roles*. Workshop presented at the Annual Conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Bergen, Norway.

The following represents our official abstract I wrote and submitted for our (myself, Dr. Dorland, and Dr. Johnston) workshop presentation at ISSOTL on October 25, 2018.

Shifting roles in academic communities mean that boundaries between mentors and mentees are in continuous flux. We represent a dynamic mentoring relationship between a senior faculty member, a senior doctoral student and a junior graduate student/recent alumnus. Our relationship is characterized by shifting subject positions and boundaries over a five-year period of working together, and we have now added a new layer to this history as SoTL co-researchers. Our strong relationship is an indication of how fluidity in mentorship may provide the foundation for supportive and inclusive micro-communities which allow space for the “significant conversations” (Roxå & Martensson, 2009) key to moving learning cultures forward.

In addition to “significant conversations” (Roxå & Martensson, 2009), we draw on Roxå, Martensson and Alveteg (2011)’s network approach to teaching and learning cultures and Lave and Wenger’s understanding of communities of practice (1998) to analyze our relationship. We critically explore the typically hierarchical nature of academic mentorship relationships, and ask how we can acknowledge all members as meaningful agents? We propose that by identifying all subject positions in a multivalent mentoring relationship as launching points for innovation and growth, we can establish mutually fulfilling relationships that positively impact the success of mentors and mentees within an academic micro-community. We contend that such relationships can in turn influence the teaching and learning practices of a wider learning culture by creating lasting moments of engagement, recognition, and insight.

In this workshop, we model our complex relationship using a constellation-mapping technique, and then call upon participants to reflect on their own subject positions in multi-level mentoring relationships. Ultimately, we engage participants in a discussion of generative strategies for fortifying existing academic micro-communities, and/or facilitating the development of new mentorships which have the potential to be lasting sites of meaningful academic discourse.

Overall Ratings of Effectiveness | Very Good or Excellent – Appendix F Tutorial Survey Responses – All Semesters

Course and Semester	Very Good	Excellent	Total
COMS 371 Fall 2017	3/36 (8%)	29/36 (81%)	32/36 (89%)
COMS 201 Winter 2018	8/30 (27%)	20/30 (67%)	28/30 (93%)
COMS 371 Fall 2018	8/36 (22%)	23/36 (64%)	31/36 (86%)
All Respondents	19/102 (19%)	72/102 (71%)	91/102 (89%)