

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP · FALL 2005**  
**ASSIGNMENT 3**

JOHN KERL

**Organization and Record Keeping**

I am doing well in terms of organization and record keeping. (I don't think organization is a significant area for improvement for me.)

I have a multi-pocket tote bag which I use for 110 as well as my own classes. I'd intended to keep two separate bags, but (1) I have one of my classes right after 110, with no time to switch, and (2) one bag has turned out to have enough room for everything.

Classroom/office materials: In pockets on the front of my tote bag, I have my TI-83, scissors, a little stapler, a flat 3-hole punch, pens, and chalk for the classroom. I found that the latter's cardboard box was getting smashed, so I got an Altoids tin (perfect size!) to keep chalk in.

For papers: I have two items in my bag. The first is a 3-ring binder, with dividers. I have sections for lesson plans, sign-in sheets, 110 instructor guide, syllabus, grade sheets, and notes I take while observing other 110 instructors. The second main item is a divided file folder. This is fantastic! It closes with a big flap, so nothing falls out, and it's a portable filing cabinet. I have pockets for things to be graded (homework, quizzes, and exams), things already graded, orphans (homework for which a student wasn't present on the day it was handed back), and extra copies of handouts. This leaves a few extra pockets. As my binder and/or file folder fill up, I take old stuff and put it into my filing cabinet in my office.

The flow of class time is smooth: I pass out the sign-in sheet, pass back the previous homework while the new one is coming in, file the latter, then flip to my current lesson plan.

**Board Work and Verbal Presentation**

My board work is OK in some ways, but not others. What I do well is: (1) Writing the day's homework and agenda at the left side of the board, enclosed in a box. (2) Blocking out my board work. There are two side-by-side boards in my classroom; I divide these into 2 or 3 columns each. I generally go from left to right, then cycle back to the left end and start over (unless there's, say, an important definition I want to keep in one column). This gives the students enough time to catch up before I erase anything. (3) I try to write down everything I'd like my students to put in their notes, but I'm not convinced I don't miss anything.

My handwriting is good when I really focus, but gets bad when I rush myself — in particular, when I am writing something for my fellow grad students. In 110, I don't ever let it degenerate into scribbles, but it could improve.

I think my speaking volume is OK — not too soft or loud. As with writing, it is easy for me to talk too fast — especially with my peers. I don't think I've let my talking speed get too bad in class, although on my next evaluation, I'll ask the evaluator for feedback.

My handwriting is definitely my biggest opportunity for improvement in this area.

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*Date:* September 13, 2009.

## Previous instructors

Previous instructors who have been positive and negative role models for organization, record keeping, board work, and verbal presentation, and how that has influenced my teaching:

Record keeping I really don't see as a student — although as an instructor it's crucial to me. As a student, I do my assignments, get them back, and receive a grade at the end of the semester. I don't know how much or how little of a mess my instructors go through to obtain that final result.

Verbal presentation: (\*) One guy who talked way too loud — this made me uncomfortable, and is something to avoid. (\*) Another had truly wonderful materials, but copied his notes to the board verbatim. He was fabulous and knowledgeable, and missed the opportunity to really interact with us, to give us some different viewpoints beyond his canned notes. As the semester progresses (I have been teaching for an entire month now!) I find myself making shorter lecture notes. I want to have examples prepared, etc. but other than that I want to be facing my students most of the time, and being as spontaneous as I can tolerate. (\*) I had an instructor once who was very energetic — even hyperactive. I don't want to go to the extreme, but I do want to appear excited about what I'm doing.

Organization: Pat Kano's presentation during TA training was great. I'm not doing the full Kano, but he did inspire me to be well-organized. As a result, organization has been the most pleasant, got-it-right-the-first-time aspect of my nascent teaching experience. Regarding instructors I've had — it seems to me that good organization is something you do *not* notice — which is the way it should be. Certainly, I recall an instructor flipping through her notes a lot. Another noticeable sign of disorganization is when an instructor writes a significant amount of stuff on the board, which I write down, at which point they erase half of what they wrote, change notation, etc. As a student, I find this annoying — as a result, one reason I have class notes is so that I can get my lecture right the first time. Another thing I found very annoying as a student was when an instructor would ask students what time it was, and then realize “Oops, looks like I went 5 minutes over.” I swore that when I taught, I would never do this. I wear a watch and use it to organize my time.

Board work: It is from previous instructors that I learned to block my board work into columns. I've seen some utterly gorgeous handwriting — as a student, I loved these professors for that reason. As yet, I haven't even approached their quality handwriting.