



POSTDOC TEACHING OPPORTUNITIES PROGRAM

KICK OFF EVENT & INFORMATION SESSION

April 17, 2025

Are you an international postdoc?

Which department are you from? STEM/other?



Who we are

- ❑ PTOP was founded in 2014 by Natalia Caporale, now professor of teaching at UC Davis: <https://basc.biology.ucdavis.edu/people/natalia-caporale>
- ❑ Like BPA, we are funded by VSPA (exclusively postdocs and visiting scholars)
- ❑ We work alongside BPA to provide an enhanced postdoc experience at UCB
- ❑ Our organization is separate from BPA and VSPA - so please contact us directly for teaching-specific enquiries! ptop-vspa@berkeley.edu



Current committee

See our website for more info! <https://postdoc.berkeley.edu/teaching>



Yifeng Shi

President

Electrical Engineering and Computer
Sciences



Adrian van Kan

Vice-President

Physics



**M. Fernanda (feña)
Palominos**

Vice-President

Integrative Biology



Current committee

See our website for more info! <https://postdoc.berkeley.edu/teaching>



Sam Lewin

Secretary

Mechanical Engineering



Collin Steen

Treasurer

Chemistry and QB3



What we do

Postdoc Teaching Opportunities Program

- ❑ We have a budget (*via* VSPA) to organize teaching-themed events *dedicated specifically to postdocs*
- ❑ PTOp is a central hub for collecting and distributing information about teaching across the university
- ❑ We can also interact directly with the Vice Chancellor of Research (Katherine Yellick) and other senior UCB staff to pass on ***your thoughts and suggestions on postdoc teaching***



So far...

- ❑ Launched a new PTOp webpage for the year 2024-25
 - ❑ Centralised hub for UCB postdoc teaching information, including links to upcoming events, internal and external paid and volunteering teaching opportunities, and other resources. Will be updated regularly!!
- ❑ We have been liaising with BPA, VSPA and various departments to find out about the current state of postdoc teaching affairs across the university
- ❑ Presented results of most recent postdoc teaching survey to VCR and discussed possibilities for next steps moving forward. **We need more responses to maximise our chances of making change!**



Examples of previous events

- ❑ Intensive 1.5-day workshop (over two Saturdays) on various aspects of teaching, delivered by an expert

INTENSIVE – EVIDENCE BASED TEACHING WORKSHOP:
89 applicants across disciplines. Capacity: 20 postdocs.

Syllabus:

Day 1: 8 hours (9am-6pm)

Block 1: Introduction to Active Learning Strategies

- Introduction to Evidence Based Teaching
- Transmissionist vs Constructionist Teaching
- What is active learning? Practices to promote active learning.

Block 2: Assessment

- Formative vs Summative Assessment.
- Different forms of assessment.
- Blooms taxonomy and implementing it in question design.

1 hr lunch break

Block 3: Diversity in the Classroom

- Diversity and Equity in teaching.
- Inclusive class environments.
- Stereotype threat and its effect in the classroom.

Block 4: Course Design:

- Designing a syllabus.
- Backwards design.
- What are learning objectives?
- Provide materials for teaching statements.

Homework: Write a teaching statement and a syllabus for peer review.

Day 2: 4 hours. (9-1pm)

Block 1: Peer review.

- Peer review of Teaching Statement
- Peer review of syllabus

Block 2: Planning a class session

- Instructional models: The 5 E Models and class design.
- The first day of class: Ideas and planning





Examples of previous events

- ❑ Opportunity to prepare and deliver a one-off lecture in a group
- ❑ Receive constructive feedback and provide the same for others



What paid/volunteer teaching is permitted under different postdoc contracts?

- **On campus** opportunities:
 - Domestic postdocs can be hired as graduate student instructors in some departments with supervisor approval: ask your department (& we can help finding out) if this is possible for you! Sadly, there's no opportunity on this for visiting scholars.
 - The postdoc union contract allows for a reduction of efforts (% of hours dedicated to research) with written approval from the supervisor
 - Mentoring undergraduate students is fine if your PI approves. **No need to change % effort**
 - Most postdocs should be eligible to give guest lectures - ask your advisor if possible. **No need to change % effort**
 - In general, **internationals**: check your contract/email us & contact Berkeley International Office

What paid/volunteer teaching is permitted under different postdoc contracts?

- Without changing contracts, postdocs can teach through Berkeley Extension, but no more than once per fiscal year and outside of their regular working hours (e.g. weekends/after hours) so it does not interfere with their postdoc duties

UC Berkeley Extension

Academic Areas ▼ Student Services ▼ Blog ▼ Berkeley Global

Teach for UC Berkeley Extension

<https://extension.berkeley.edu/static/about/jobs/teaching/>



- Berkeley Extension is the UCB continuing education program, offering courses, certificates and programs for personal and professional development to the general public

What paid/volunteer teaching is permitted under different postdoc contracts?

- **Off campus** opportunities:
 - Postdocs are full-time employees, means that taking on an entire course at a community college would be considered a conflict of commitment
 - Off-campus teaching may be a little bit more complicated and may need further approval from supervisors and even funding agencies
 - This is especially true in the case of international postdocs, which may also need approval from BIO (if J or H) or from their Visa Sponsor program (if F, OPT).
 - International postdocs are only allowed to receive payment as specifically noted on their Form DS-2019 (unless given prior written authorization by an International Advisor)
 - Following authorization (from your advisor/department), a postdoc can be compensated for occasional off-campus lectures, consultations, and/or seminars
 - Check your contract individually and feel free to email us!

What paid/volunteer teaching is permitted under different postdoc contracts?

Previously, PTOF has established connections with

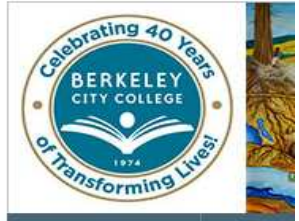
- Berkeley City College (physics and math part time jobs)
- Cal State East Bay (psychology, health sciences, chemistry part time jobs)
- Holy Names University (chemistry part time jobs)



CALIFORNIA STATE
UNIVERSITY
EAST BAY



HOLY NAMES
UNIVERSITY
Since 1868



We are here to listen

What type of teaching you're interested in?



College-level teaching

Full-course lecturing?

Teaching assistant?



Guest lecture

One-off invited



**Elementary/
middle/high
school-level
teaching/outreach**

We are here to listen

Instead of “real” teaching, you may also want to learn & practice!



Workshops



Seminars from specialists
on teaching and pedagogy



Finding a group of
postdocs for
teaching/presenting
practice



Suggestions for future events

- ❑ **Lunchtime/evening talks** e.g. *‘navigating the teaching experience part of a faculty job application as a postdoc’*
- ❑ **Training workshops:** half day/full day (either workday or weekend) with an expert instructor, put this on your CV as training!
- ❑ **Opportunities to practice lecturing:** prepare a give a lecture on a broad topic and get feedback from the audience afterwards

Benefits



Getting you familiar with
the US teaching system



Improve your presentation/
communication skills



Certificates to
strengthen your CV



Make new friends!



Useful teaching resources

That you might not have been aware of! We will do our best to collect all teaching related events on our website.

Center for Teaching & Learning

<https://teaching.berkeley.edu>

[Home](#) [About ▼](#) [Consulting](#) [Programs ▼](#) [Research & Assessment ▼](#) [Teaching Guides & Resources ▼](#) [Teaching Newsletter](#)

SLAM: Science Leadership and Management <https://qb3.berkeley.edu/education/slam/>



Center for the Integration of
Research, Teaching and Learning

CIRTL

<https://cirtl.net/>



Upcoming events



VSPA-Sponsored Course

Pathways to Scientific Teaching

May 7 and 8, 2025 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM



Upcoming events

Teaching & Learning Conference

May 9,
2025

Student Voice,
Liberation,
and the Places
We Teach

- ❑ One-day conference with invited talks, and interactive demonstrations
- ❑ Targeted at a mixture of faculty/students/postdocs
- ❑ Register online by April 24th!

<https://teaching.berkeley.edu/programs/2025-teaching-learning-conference>



Next steps

We want to organise events that you want to go to!

Link to teaching survey here! We might want to send out our own survey

Join our mailing list:

<https://groups.google.com/a/lists.berkeley.edu/g/ptop>



Keep up to date with upcoming events and find information on our website:

<https://postdoc.berkeley.edu/teaching>

Suggestions or something you want to see? Contact us anonymously through a Google form on our website or scanning this QR code:



Thank you & always keep in touch! **Questions?**

Yifeng Shi - President

Adrian van Kan- Vice President

M. Fernanda (feña) Palominos - Vice President

Sam Lewin - Secretary

Collin Steen - Treasurer

Contact us:

ptop-vspa@berkeley.edu

Join our mailing list:



Contribute to the
teaching survey:

