

## ASIANetwork Luce Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow Program

### Additional Advice from the Teaching Fellows, 2015 – 2016

Compiled by Teddy Amoloza

See also [Advice from the Teaching Fellows](#) at the ASIANetwork website

#### Advice for Future Fellows

- **Get involved in orientation activities and teaching workshops at the start of the year.** This will help you to get to know new faculty and build a cohort. One of the most important aspects of my time was the close group of colleagues/friends I made.
- **Create scholarship deadlines.** Before starting my fellowship I lined up three/four conference and presentation opportunities to make sure I was working on drafts of my article. This helped me to keep up an active scholarly agenda while developing a teaching portfolio.
- **Seek out teaching workshops and mentorship.** In addition to my formal mentorship, I learned a great deal by participating at teaching workshops on campus. These venues gave me access to new and interesting pedagogical strategies while also creating a community.
- **Encourage students to drop in during office hours.** Perhaps my favorite aspect of my Bucknell experience was my engagement with students who were funny, interesting and challenging. Encouraging students to attend office hours helped create the key additional time needed to draw out my students during class discussion. It also led to meaningful student-teacher engagement that helped me shape class assignments and discussions to challenge my students.
- **Be strategic in developing courses:** If you are able to design your own courses, be sure to create at least one upper-level course in which you can demonstrate to some extent the application of your research to your teaching.
- **Take full advantage of funding opportunities in the college:** In addition to funding for conference travel, look into resources available for course development and scholarly research, which can be best utilized when teaching loads are reduced, as is the benefit of this position.
- **Repeat teaching one of the courses:** Many of the insights I gained about teaching was from teaching the same course both fall and spring. Teaching completely outside my comfort zone was also a learning experience, and I would encourage fellows not to shy away from such an opportunity.
- **Take creative risks in your teaching.** As a postdoc, you have the freedom to experiment with new topics, quirky assignments, and novel pedagogical methods.

- **Accept social invitations.** This is an obvious one but it was important to make time for friendships. Connect with your fellow ASIANetwork Luce postdoc fellows.

### **Advice for Future Mentor/Coordinators**

- As much as possible, select a mentor who is tenured, not one going through the tenure process.
- Introduce your fellow to colleagues early in the semester, both in and outside your own department.
- Schedule regular weekly meetings with your fellow. Regular meetings allow for important check-ins and feedback for both mentor and fellow.
- With one or more colleagues (in the same or related fields), observe a fellow's class early on in the Fall semester, to provide detailed feedback for the fellow.
- Encourage your fellow to give a mid-term evaluation to students.
- Discuss and share information about the teaching evaluation forms and process at your institution early in the Fall semester.
- Encourage your fellow to present a sample job talk to peers during the Fall semester. We did this as part of a regularly scheduled faculty colloquium series.
- Make sure your fellow is defined as a faculty member for administrative purposes to ensure that they were included on faculty listservs, etc.
- In order to guarantee there will be significant enrollment in a course, ensure that at least one course the fellow offers is one that is regularly offered in your department at a desirable teaching time.
- Be mindful of the Spring deadlines for listing of Fall courses, so that the fellow's course(s) can be included for Fall registration purposes. Since this deadline might be prior to the hiring of the fellow, the Fall may be the best semester to have the fellow teach a regularly scheduled course.
- If you will be cross-listing a course, make sure to approach the department chair as soon as possible about the process. We learned that departments have different procedures for cross-listing ; coordinate the scheduling of cross-listed courses, to avoid conflicts.
- Promote your fellow's courses as much as possible, formally and informally. Ask your fellow or administrative assistant to prepare an appealing flyer (as a PDF) to send to colleagues and students. Ask students in your department to help with publicizing the fellow's courses via social media.

Mentor Quote: “Ensure that the post-doctoral fellow works with a mentor who is able to provide advice and suggestions on a daily or near-daily basis; there are too many “nuts and bolts” type issues related to teaching that cannot be anticipated. It will save the fellow the burden of having to pick up the phone every time a small issue arises. Second, make sure the fellow is comfortable with the classrooms and the classroom technology so that s/he can keep the focus on teaching. Third, vet all syllabi before the semester begins to ensure that the language and student workload are consistent with the institution - expectations differ from institution to institution, especially if the fellow is coming from a research institution.”

Mentor Quote: “In general, my advice would be to have as much involvement in all aspects of the process – from the initial grant application, to the hiring process, to orientation events for the fellow, as possible. I think everything worked as well as it did for us because of our postdoc’s immediate integration into the department and College, and introduction to faculty and administrators. The frequent meetings we had throughout the year, as well, were essential to effective teaching and course management especially as this was her first independent course load. In short, be supportive, informative, and available.”

Mentor Quote: “Host institutions need to understand that they are getting short-term faculty who might need a great deal of support, and that this experience is just as much about helping new PhDs get a start as it is about receiving support in a needed area.”