

# Managing programmatic trade-offs for centers of teaching and learning: Applying a segmentation, targeting, and positioning approach to pedagogical offerings

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## Abstract

The demands of current instructional realities for moving to completely online formats have led to dramatic changes in the ways that centers for teaching and learning serve their communities. Pedagogical programs have been adapted, invented, and reimaged for online modalities. In this article, we share an approach borrowed from marketing—segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP)—and describe three cases showing the application of STP in our center’s work with instructors. This approach has helped us clarify and target our pedagogical priorities, allowing us to make appropriate trade-offs to produce more focused educational development programming that better meets our audience’s needs, constraints, and contexts.

**Keywords:** online teaching, graduate student instructors, trade-offs, marketing

The shift to online formats—from the sudden shift to remote teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the sustained commitment to online modalities thereafter—has been a trying time for higher

education, necessitating support for online teaching and learning at an unprecedented scale. In March 2020, many institutions, instructors, and educational developers stepped up quickly, generating just-in-time training sessions, resources, and other channels for support. But as the remote spring led to multiple semesters of online and hybrid teaching, centers for teaching and learning (CTLs) were tasked with imagining more sustainable pedagogical guidance for their constituents, along with new modalities for engaging participants.

During this time, the Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning—which supports thousands of graduate student and faculty instructors at a large, private research university—struggled with how to deliver the engaging, community-building programming that we were accustomed to delivering in person. As we worked to update programs for teaching during the pandemic, we encountered a challenge similar to one confronting the instructors we support: too much to adapt online and too little time to realize these changes. How could we reconfigure and deliver programs that we would be proud of without putting unrealistic demands on our participants (or ourselves as developers)? How would we select which programs to prioritize for online redeployment? By what means would we determine the necessary changes to meet our constituents' needs during these turbulent times?

Answers to these questions emerged when we committed to an objective that is simple in theory but difficult in practice: focus. Instead of trying to be everything for all of our constituents, we needed to prioritize and tune programs to our communities' specific, diverse needs. To do so, we employed an approach commonly used in marketing: segmenting our audience, targeting the segment(s) through program design, and positioning offerings appropriately to our communities. Forcing ourselves to define the scope and limits of each project allowed us to make appropriate trade-offs and better meet our goals.

In this article we begin by defining the marketing approach we used to guide our educational development work. Following this overview, we share how a four-person graduate student programs team of

CTL staff segmented our community of thousands of graduate student instructors (GSIs) across more than 10 schools and highlight through vignettes our targeting and positioning decisions to better serve this large constituency during Summer and Fall 2020. These examples are not presented as direct models to be followed. Rather, we use these case studies to illustrate how and why specific decisions were made in order to aid our colleagues in educational development to consider how to make the difficult choices that are necessary to support teaching in different, rapidly changing contexts whomever their constituents may be.

## **Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning**

The work of CTLs is distinct in many ways from marketing, but since center work can be seen as similar to a service firm within a larger organization (Nyquist, 1986), adopting a marketing approach can help centers focus what our offerings do for defined communities. Although practices and concepts from marketing are relevant to faculty development work, as Bhavsar and Skinner (2008) note, unless a member of the center's staff has a background in marketing, these tools often are not used in educational development work. Bhavsar and Skinner's survey of *To Improve the Academy* and the POD Network listserv archives found that CTLs do not communicate formally about their marketing plans. Since 2008, there have been a few articles in *To Improve the Academy* that discuss marketing topics, such as the application of strategic planning to center work (Kelley, 2018), responsiveness within the Four Rs framework (Wright et al., 2018), and the launch of a center during a global pandemic (Inman, 2021), but these mostly discuss high-level marketing strategy. We have only found one *To Improve the Academy* article that directly applied marketing approaches to the design of educational development offerings (Hilsen et al., 1987). Our article considers application to CTLs of the segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) framework that underpins marketing strategy

and allows the marketer to determine to whom they are selling and how to differentiate their product in their selected audience's minds (Proctor, 2000). In this section, we introduce this marketing concept and argue for its relevance to educational development.

Although products (such as, in a CTL framework, pedagogical programs) are often designed to appeal to the widest possible audience, audiences have varying wants and needs, differences that can be meaningfully addressed (Proctor, 2000). Because catering to these differences at the individual level is difficult, targeting groups is a middle ground between individual outreach and treating everyone as equal (Lehmann & Winer, 2005). These groups are formed by disaggregating heterogeneities into clusters with distinct demands (Dickson & Ginter, 1987). These demands alone are not enough to make a segment useful, however. Ideally, segments have a size that is reasonable to address; have demands that are identifiable, reachable, and cause the group to respond differently; and are stable enough to be addressed consistently (Lehmann & Winer, 2005). To determine what differences exist in our audience, we might ask who our audience is (i.e., demographics), elicit information about our audiences' attitudes or preferences (i.e., psychographics), or observe how our audience behaves (Proctor, 2000).

For instance, consider a pedagogical program that has a focus on designing learning activities. In determining what segments to serve in this workshop, we might first consider the demographics of our constituencies: Are they graduate students, postdocs, or faculty? Do they have teaching experience, and what kind? Which disciplines do they teach, and at what level? Going deeper, we can consider their psychographics or behaviors: What is our audience's view of teaching or professional development programming? How invested are they in teaching? Is our audience looking for practices they can implement in a current teaching assignment or looking toward a future, different teaching context? Slicing across these segments, we could reasonably come up with numerous segments that could be addressed, which are shown in Table 1. There are differences (however nuanced) between

**Table 1. Possible Segments for a Center for Teaching and Learning**

Segment name	Descriptor	Differentiator
New Graduate Student Teaching Assistants in the Sciences	Newly graduated from college, first term at the institution, no teaching experience and unaware of the center, not confident in their teaching at all	Anxious about entering the classroom, open to trying new things in order to be prepared
Graduate Course Design Fellows	Experienced GSIs designing a course for the first time based on their research, have attended center programs before but as teaching assistants, mostly from the humanities and social sciences	Excited about their agency in the new role but looking for support and guidance to excel in this new pedagogical task
Research Postdocs on the Academic Job Market	Instructors who may not have been in the classroom for a while due to their research, familiar with CTL offerings, looking to prepare for a teaching demo in an interview, likely from the sciences	Interested in presenting their teaching and figuring out how to connect past experience to future teaching roles
Faculty Members New to Teaching Online	Experienced faculty instructors who have never taught online before now, have not visited the center before, very confident in how they teach, and may be looking for the closest online analog for what they are already doing in the classroom	May be expecting more technical support instead of pedagogical support

the wants and needs of each segment, and trying to attract all of these to the same workshop on lesson design may leave some of the segments unsatisfied—or even confused.

Once groups are segmented, targeting one or a few of them allows for focus: a deeper understanding of a segment's unique needs resulting in effective messaging and product development (Dickson & Ginter, 1987). This often means that the product's appeal moves toward one group and away from others, a trade-off that needs to be accepted for effective marketing. After a defined segment has been selected, the product should be positioned to that group. Positioning entails the decisions and actions taken to create a clear and meaningful concept of the product in the intended audience's minds (Lehmann & Winer, 2005). Effective positioning avoids the "everybody trap," in which a

product tries to appeal to everyone and does not have a distinct identity for anyone. Ruling out potential audiences for a product helps to avoid this trap (Ries & Trout, 2001).

### Using STP in an Educational Development Context

In a CTL context, the STP approach challenges developers to decide whom a program serves and how that program specifically does so. This allows for focus on the context of the targeted instructor, which helps us communicate to those instructors the specific value of a selected pedagogical program. STP dovetails with approaches common in educational development such as Fink’s (2013) method for designing significant learning experiences, the first step of which is determining relevant situational factors, or backward design, which requires eliciting from students their potential misunderstandings, preconceptions, and questions (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). The connection of STP to these approaches is visualized in Figure 1, in which

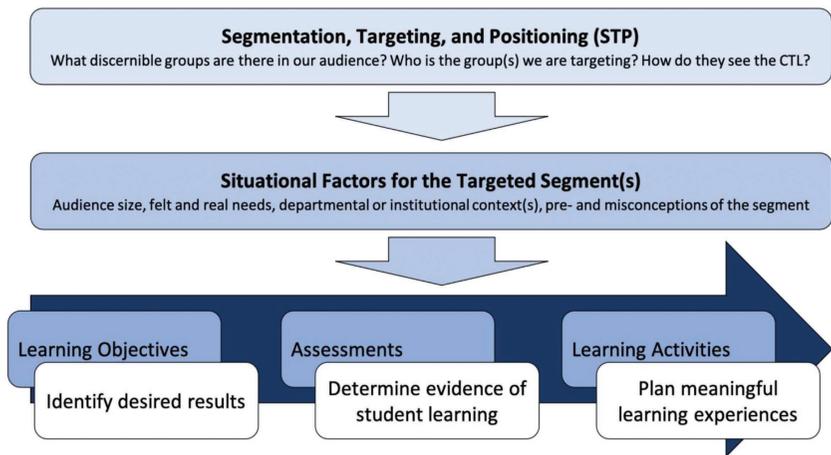


Figure 1. Visualization of how the segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) marketing approach can be used to narrow the focus of a CTL program by helping identify situational factors that then inform the use of backward design in developing a pedagogical workshop.

we encourage educational developers to use STP as a means to better define the target audience for programs prior to design.

STP has pushed us to decide whom programs are *not* for in order to better serve communities on which we wish to focus. This is difficult, as we have a broad mandate, and, as Brookfield (2007) notes, “For many of us, just getting teachers to show up at faculty development events is a triumph in itself” (p. 67). However, by segmenting and targeting to better understand how individual instructors can navigate and grow within our offerings, we are able to clarify to instructors which CTL programs are meaningful and relevant to them (as we show later in our case studies). For example, being clear that a workshop on course design is for instructors familiar with backward design rather than those who are new to educational development can allow for a more directed conversation that does not start with pedagogical basics. A learning community that is designed for instructors of color may allow space for unpacking specific challenges that are not comfortably addressed in a general session. While educational developers often have audiences in mind for pedagogical programs, STP allows for a clearer means of making strategic choices. Adopting STP can help CTLs avoid trying to address all potential teaching and learning needs in any single program by diversifying which groups are served across their slate of offerings. This allows CTLs to engage groups who may not otherwise recognize themselves in appeals to a more general audience, which is in fact highlighted as an element of a proficient/functioning center in the ACE-POD CTL matrix (Collins-Brown et al., 2018).

Though this marketing approach does bring many benefits for CTL work, we do not recommend the adoption of STP, or other marketing approaches, wholesale. After defining value for consumers using an approach such as STP, marketers work to capture and create value from their customers by selling them a product and sustaining their patronage (Dolan, 1997). Educational developers, however, are not just interested in affecting our constituents’ view of the value of our pedagogical programs but also work to motivate real change in

participants' teaching practices. The real value that we create lies in improved learning experiences for students—in the application of the programs we design and advertise by participating faculty. Because of that difference, we are presenting a marketing approach merely as an initial step in the development of effective pedagogical programs: a structured means of defining targeted audiences for programs, addressing needs of that segment, and understanding the trade-offs that may be needed to appeal to the selected group of instructors.

### ***Applying STP Through Positioning Statements***

A helpful way to bring STP concepts together is to draft a positioning statement, which generically has the following form: “[Our product] is [single most important claim] among all [competitive frame] because [single most important support]” (Dolan, 1997, p. 4). In this example, the competitive frame refers to alternatives or competitors' products from which the marketed product needs to be differentiated. We have adapted this for a teaching and learning context as follows: “For [community/segment(s)] who [specific need of the community], [our program] helps instructors to [main goal or benefit of the program]. Unlike [alternatives], this program [major point of difference].” In Table 2, we have included a few questions that may help those getting started with the STP framework for pedagogical programs that may facilitate the writing of a positioning statement. To show this approach in action, we will discuss examples of segments in our community and provide cases that show how we have targeted and positioned programs in our context.

### **Segmenting Our Community**

The Columbia University Center for Teaching and Learning supports a great array of instructors—ranging from faculty members at all levels of teaching experience, to lecturers and adjuncts in professional

**Table 2. Guiding Questions for Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning for Educational Developers Prior to Designing Pedagogical Programs**

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**Segmentation: What discernible groups or communities are there in your audience?**

- How do instructors at your institution organize themselves (by school, division, discipline, department, demography, level of courses taught, rank or role, etc.)?
- Are there career milestones (e.g., new faculty, future faculty about to enter the market), teaching roles (e.g., non-tenure-track faculty, teaching assistants, first-time instructors of record), or common interests (e.g., gateway courses, DEI initiatives) that may bring instructors from across the institution together in meaningful ways?
- What are the teaching challenges (shared or unique) that these communities encounter?
- What are the beliefs, values, and behaviors of these groups that affect how they teach or engage in educational development? What teaching needs or wants do they have?

**Targeting: Who is the group(s) you are targeting?**

- How big is the community that you are trying to engage with the pedagogical program? Is this group big enough/too big for the offering being designed?
- How does this group differ from other groups that you could reach with this offering?
- What pedagogical needs or challenges does this group have? What benefits would this community uniquely get from the offering being designed?
- How can this community access the center and find out about this program (e.g., already involved with the CTL, signed up for a mailing list)?

**Positioning: How does this group(s) see the CTL or the program being offered?**

- What does the selected group or community think about the CTL or the specific topics of the pedagogical program being offered?
  - What teaching challenges does this community face that could be used to make the offering being designed relevant to them?
  - What alternatives does this group have to help them address teaching challenges that they face (e.g., other CTL offerings, units on campus that provide support, disciplinary conferences, external training)? What differentiates this program from its alternatives?
  - What may drive or prevent this group from engaging with the CTL or this offering?
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schools, to graduate students working as teaching assistants (TAs) as well as instructors of record. Though many of our programs have long been marketed to groups (e.g., faculty interested in learning more about inclusive teaching or instructors leading clinical courses or new TAs), in recent years we have begun to focus on groups of participants more strategically and with more nuance. Such targeting has allowed us to better apply our efforts when racing to provide and sustain online pedagogical support. To illustrate this, we will focus here on refinements to graduate student programming during 2020.

Graduate student teaching support at our university launched in its current form in 2015, when a smaller unit within the graduate school merged into a new, university-wide CTL. Currently, most participants

in Columbia CTL programs are Faculty of Arts and Sciences graduate students from humanities, social science, and science departments, increasingly joined by peers from engineering, health science, business, journalism, social work, and many other fields. This means that our graduate student programs serve a wide range of participants who:

- come from a wide spectrum of academic and professional disciplines;
- may have few teaching opportunities within their program—often in limited roles as TAs—or teach frequently or serve as instructors of record;
- are assigned to a great variety of roles in which they interact with students, including discussion sections, recitations, labs, and office hours;
- teach in person as well as online; and
- seek teaching development that applies to careers within as well as beyond the academy.

Addressing such disparate contexts, experience levels, and needs is a challenge well known to centers serving a general graduate student population. We therefore group GSIs from across these many diverse backgrounds and experiences to create segments that can be served with greater contextualized focus. For instance, we support and guide graduate student fellows to develop workshops that meet needs within their home departments; a workshop that runs in, say, the mechanical engineering department will be quite different from one in the classics department, even if the general topic is the same. We also offer seminars and learning communities that address interests in specific programs and populations, along with interdisciplinary reading groups based on affinity. Each of these programs is positioned appropriately to attract and meet their target audience. We can thus enhance our abilities to move beyond just addressing a general graduate student audience and work toward meeting the needs of specific groups that may not otherwise be seen or served (e.g., niche events for specific types of disciplinary teaching approaches or learning communities that serve minoritized groups). Having a variety of segment needs served throughout our programming slate also allows us to keep

graduate students engaged in our programming as they grow and change over their time at the university, as people and in their teaching needs.

These offerings, as disparate as they may be, derive from a core set of values defined at the launch of the CTL, which remain central to how we assess success across our graduate student offerings. These values are rooted in insights from Preparing Future Faculty initiatives dating back to the 1990s (Winter et al., 2018) but pertain equally to participants charting non-academic paths after graduation. These values are:

- **Application and practice.** The CTL should ensure that developing teaching insight and skills is not limited to graduate students with current teaching assignments. Therefore, programs are structured so that all participants can apply, practice, and reflect on teaching approaches and methods even without an immediate context.
- **Agency.** The CTL should prepare graduate students for instructional contexts in which they have more control. This entails the creation of opportunities to define learning objectives, design original assignments and courses, and articulate visions for effective instruction within their disciplines, along with discovering and practicing agency even within limited TA roles.
- **Community building.** The CTL should instill collegial trust and support across its broad range of participants through peer-to-peer interactions as much as possible. Beyond extending the CTL's scope and reach, the staging of peer interchange, support, and mentorship prepares participants to better discover, articulate, and reflect on instructional practices no matter what professional, future context in which they find themselves.

Adherence to these values has helped the Columbia CTL make strategic choices among the many expectations of us by the university community. The values allow us to define scope: If a program element is not connected to these values, it likely should be cut. Though we try

to make all three values present throughout our programs, they play into offerings in different proportions, depending on programmatic needs and constraints. Articulating these values helps us to recognize and make necessary trade-offs: to prioritize or limit efforts for specific groups of GSIs and to assess and improve our offerings along defined lines.

## **Challenges Brought on by the Shift to Remote and Online Teaching and Learning**

Before the pandemic, about 1,200 (non-unique) graduate student attendees would participate in about 100 CTL-led or supported events around campus each year. After adjusting our programming in March 2020 to meet the new remote conditions for the rest of the semester—yielding a similar number of graduate student attendees as a normal, in-person term would—we determined that continuing to lead pedagogical programming in this way was unsustainable. This realization, derived from the rapid changes required to meet our audience’s needs in remote teaching, led us to strategize around how we could continue to serve our community in a more sustainable way going forward.

This is where we determined trade-offs were needed to make our programs successful and more relevant to the challenges of teaching during this time while avoiding staff burnout. We decided we needed to redesign many of our offerings for online delivery—synchronous and/or asynchronous—and we determined which programs would be prioritized for this redesign (not only for modality but also for content) based on our understanding of our graduate students’ needs. The following cases detail three such prioritized projects that forced us to decide what to cut back, transform, or sustain within these programs in order to meet the additional pressures of programming during the pandemic. Each of these programs was redesigned in the few months preceding the Fall 2020 term and ran in August and September 2020.

These strategic considerations, forced by the pandemic, led us to use the STP framework and have allowed us to meet our community's ongoing teaching needs. As a result, attendance at Fall 2020 synchronous online workshops equaled or even surpassed Fall 2019 workshop attendance, despite the shift from in-person programming and increased burdens on many of our graduate students during the pandemic. We have also found that responses on feedback surveys on the online versions of these offerings have been similar to what we had collected prior to the pandemic.

## Case 1: Supporting Hybrid & Online Learning and Teaching

**Positioning Statement:** *For GSIs who are new to online teaching and are not instructors of record (i.e., TAs), Supporting Hybrid & Online Learning and Teaching (SHOLT) helps instructors connect online teaching practice to their current pedagogical frameworks and practices. This asynchronous course allows instructors to flexibly engage with the content and provides an online learning experience that they can pursue at their own pace. Unlike other CTL offerings, this program focuses on the delivery of online instruction instead of on online course design and does not try to build community among participants.*

Since teaching in an online format was new for our institution, the development of this course raised many questions: What would be the scope of SHOLT? Should we focus on skills for current TA roles or also for future roles (developing agency)? What content would be appropriate when online teaching looks so different across our institution?

After understanding the context GSIs would be entering, we decided to focus on a large segment: any GSIs who were teaching online for the first time. To narrow this, however, we decided that our graduate student-focused SHOLT would not be for instructors of record but instead directed at GSIs who were working in a course led by a faculty instructor. We thus worked to position SHOLT as an accessible offering for GSIs teaching online regardless of experience teaching in

person: a one-stop asynchronous course for practical online teaching strategies that participants can revisit at any time.

Targeting all GSIs—independent of role, context, or modality—meant that we needed to prioritize general, good online teaching practices and their application over our other values. Thus, SHOLT was designed to be self-paced and without interaction between participants and linked to additional resources that addressed concerns of graduate students in TA roles, such as general assessment tips or strategies for the first day of class. For application, we paired modules that delivered content with exercises that participants take back to their instructors of record (and any other TAs in the course) to complete together. This approach helped us reach instructors who may not have engaged in an offering more broadly focused on online course design and assessment.

Clarifying what SHOLT was and was not going to be, and for whom, was useful in allowing us to make the trade-offs necessary to produce this program quickly and effectively. Our decision to focus on practical skills for TAs teaching online at our institution at the expense of preparing participants for future online or hybrid teaching roles helped to reduce the time participants needed to complete modules. Deciding that SHOLT was not to be a course in which we prioritized community or agency drastically streamlined this program's development.

## Case 2: Teaching Orientation for Graduate Students

**Positioning Statement:** *For first-time GSIs teaching in any role or context (e.g., instructor of record or TA, in person or online), our two-part Teaching Orientation for Graduate Students (TOGS) helps instructors prepare for their first day of class by centering on two deliverables—a first day plan and policy statement—and is delivered through an asynchronous module and optional synchronous session. The asynchronous module, unlike synchronous offerings, emphasizes increased flexibility for participants and deprioritizes community building. The*

*synchronous session, unlike other CTL offerings, is not intended as a standalone activity; instead, it is a dedicated space to debrief, elaborate on, and model ideas from the asynchronous modules and build community through peer feedback of the deliverables. Neither part has a focus on online instruction, instead foregrounding strategies that can be adapted to any teaching modality.*

Unlike the previous case, TOGS has been offered for GSIs every fall for many years by our center. Over time, the orientation has come to focus on preparing participants for the first day of class by introducing basics of inclusive teaching, including strategies to set clear expectations and build rapport with and among students. During TOGS, participants engage in various activities that culminate in drafting a policy sheet and first-day plan. As an in-person program, TOGS ran for five hours, with time for participants to connect with one another and more experienced instructors.

With the shift to online teaching and pedagogical programming due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we had many choices to make regarding TOGS: Would we directly move the program online (same program, five hours synchronously)? How would we maintain the community building aspects we had in person? Would we add online teaching content into TOGS?

By drafting a positioning statement during this transition, we were able to clarify what our program was and was not. We decided our targeted segment was new GSIs and agreed to refer experienced instructors who were teaching online for the first time to another offering (SHOLT). By targeting first-time instructors, we were able to maintain focus on the first day and meet GSIs at this common anxiety point. As developers, this decision kept TOGS limited and reasonable, making our participants' first CTL training one that foregrounds good (ever-green and context-agnostic) pedagogy that can be used after instruction has returned predominantly in person.

Moving from a solely synchronous session to an asynchronous module, supplemented by an optional synchronous session that made space for community, helped us offer choice to and reduce demands

on already stretched graduate students. Instead of needing to arrive on campus early, or to decide between TOGS or another school-wide or departmental orientation, graduate students could access our training on demand. We also saw that GSIs continued to access the asynchronous materials throughout the semester, far into the term, further demonstrating the value of this on-demand resource. The TOGS focus and redesign, driven by exigencies during the pandemic, will yield benefits that we'll continue to reap even after campus life returns to normal. For example, going forward, we no longer need to compete for space on campus the week before classes. Orientation will now always be available to our GSIs—with reminders to our target audience before each term—instead of restricted in time and space to before the fall, and has been transformed into a resource base available to GSIs throughout their early teaching experiences.

Using an STP approach narrowed our scope and helped us better serve the segment of first-time GSIs. By better understanding our audience, we made decisions that met those participants where they were and clarified to them what TOGS was. In this case, we prioritized our center's value of application and practice over the instructional agency we emphasize in other offerings, while creating a path for GSIs seeking community to join us for an optional session.

### **Case 3: Essentials of Teaching and Learning Series**

**Positioning Statement:** *For inexperienced GSIs teaching as instructors of record or as TAs, our Essentials of Teaching and Learning (ETL) series provides a fundamental understanding of human learning and foundational tenets of instructional planning, classroom implementation, and assessment. ETL equips inexperienced instructors with practical knowledge about evidence-based teaching practices to apply immediately in their classroom for equitable and inclusive teaching. Unlike other pedagogy workshops at the CTL, the ETL series is a flipped offering, requiring participants to complete self-directed*

*online modules prior to live, online sessions that prioritize community-building, peer-to-peer discussions over content delivery.*

Our ETL series is another of our main offerings for GSIs, available every fall and spring semester. This sequence of four 90-minute workshops runs at the beginning of each term to help new and inexperienced instructors develop the skills necessary to teach effectively. ETL serves as a major entry point into our CTL's programming and, because of this, it showcases all three of our major values: application and practice, agency, and community building.

When preparing to offer ETL for the first time online we had to assess necessary trade-offs to provide the experience we wanted for our community, similar to other programs. Unlike the previous examples, however, here we decided to maintain the presence of all three of our major values. The trade-off became a question not of what to cut but of what to add in order to protect the values modeled in this program. This led to the decision to develop 30-minute asynchronous modules preceding each 90-minute workshop.

The asynchronous component of the hybrid format afforded instructors time to process new content at their own pace and return to it as desired. Synchronous sessions, alleviated of the burden of introducing content for the first time, prioritized extended peer-to-peer discussions focused on content application to current teaching endeavors. The expansion of ETL accentuated our team's objectives of community building and instructional agency, without sacrificing the scope of the program's learning objectives. Developing the hybrid program's online modules had the added benefit of showcasing to GSIs the advantages of intentionally considering how to leverage asynchronous and synchronous spaces. Feedback from these sessions, along with consistent enrollment from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020, has demonstrated that this change has not affected our community's desire to engage in this program.

While the COVID-19 health crisis and move to remote/online teaching provided the impetus to transition ETL into a hybrid format, our team had long desired to build more time into sessions for richer

peer-to-peer discussions. The two-part structure designed and delivered during the pandemic will persist in the series when in-person sessions resume. This decision has had the added benefit of giving us an asynchronous resource base that we can share with graduate students who wish to engage in more advanced center programs but who have been unable to participate in the full ETL sequence.

This example shows that even when using the STP approach, a decision can be made to maintain the scope of a program. Here, the trade-off made was not on content or values but on time asked from participants and from us as developers. Deciding early on to target the same audience with the same goals allowed for changes to the format that improved the ETL experience for our participants during a challenging time without diminishing the program's reputation.

## **Conclusion**

The STP approach common to marketing provides another way for CTLs to determine who their audience is and what that audience needs. Though a marketer's goals may be very different from an educational developer's, marketing concepts can help to lay the groundwork for pedagogical approaches such as backward design. A better understanding of the contexts of and needs for the various instructors with whom CTLs engage allows for developers to segment audiences based on similarities and position programs targeted to these segments. By being clear to audiences about which programs are primarily geared for them, developers can let go of generality in favor of pertinence and focus.

To help demonstrate how this approach can be useful, we shared three cases of how we have segmented our graduate student audience and targeted these different segments, as summarized in Table 3. We selected these examples to help show the flexibility of the STP approach in helping to focus development of pedagogical programs in fast-changing conditions. Doing so has also allowed

**Table 3. Summary of Segmentation, Targeting, and Positioning in the Center for Teaching and Learning Offerings**

Offering	Supporting Hybrid & Online Learning and Teaching (SHOLT)	Teaching Orientation for Graduate Students (TOGS)	Essentials of Teaching and Learning Series (ETL)
<b>Targeted segment</b>	TAs at any level of experience who are new to teaching online	First-time GSIs (who may be instructors of record teaching alone or TAs)	Inexperienced GSIs who are currently teaching and interested in deepening their pedagogical practice
<b>Positioning of program</b>	Short, flexible, asynchronous online course that prepares TAs for delivering instruction online (and not in the design of online courses)	Evergreen, modality agnostic, asynchronous resource about teaching at our institution that prepares GSIs for their first day of class, with an optional synchronous session for peer review	Flipped workshop series that equips instructors with practical, inclusive, and evidence-based teaching practices that they can immediately apply in their classrooms
<b>Trade-off</b>	Deemphasized agency and community in favor of development time, shortened training time, and flexibility	Prioritized application and participant flexibility over agency and content about online teaching and learning; community building was optional, limited to the synchronous supplemental session	To maintain the brand of the series, more time devoted to creating asynchronous modules that preceded each session and more time requested from participants engaged in this program

us to address and meet the needs of smaller constituencies within our graduate student population. As we have better defined segments of graduate students for our programs, we have been better able to create workshops and resources for those who were not yet served. By changing the ways and means that participants interact with our programs beyond in-person workshops, we have strategically opened up our CTL to participants who had not otherwise been able to engage with us for various reasons (e.g., distance, childcare, or timing). Creating differences in our pedagogical offerings and clarifying how these differences can meet varied needs of GSIs

across our curriculum (beyond what we have shared in this manuscript) have allowed for improved pathways at our CTL that foster continued teaching development. We plan to keep these changes as our center prepares for supporting instructors and will continue to make strategic decisions around what programming to offer and in which modalities.

Though our cases show how we made decisions for our context, they are not necessarily models to be followed. The needs and priorities for every audience and institution are different. However, at a time when demands on CTLs and instructors are high, we hope the STP approach and our examples may help educational developers prioritize, make pedagogical offerings more impactful, and create more accessible options for the diversity of participants served in their communities.

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## **Biographies**

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