



# PIE NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by:  
the Program for Instructional Excellence  
at Florida State University

## LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome to the first PIE Newsletter of the 2022-23 school year. Now that pumpkin spice...well EVERYTHING... is available and the Fall Semester has gotten underway, we hope you take the time to learn about the Program for Instructional Excellence (PIE). PIE offers training that will help all graduate students, if you are a current TA or not. There are workshops on how to use the digital tools offered by FSU, how to have a good school/life balance, on educational practices in the classroom, and on professional development. In this newsletter, we highlight some of the opportunities that PIE offers. You can also visit the website, join the TA Community Support Site (in Canvas), or stop by our Community Hours on Zoom throughout the week to learn more about PIE and all it can offer you.

## RETURNING TO CAMPUS

The Covid-19 pandemic was one of the most significant disruptions in education history but the shift to remote instruction and learning at FSU was remarkably swift and it ushered in all sorts of innovations that expanded our ability to teach and learn, regardless of time and location. Of course, just as we were all getting used to a "new normal," this semester's return to face-to-face teaching marks the next chapter in the ever-changing world of Higher Ed. For some TAs, it may be your first in-person teaching experience and the vibe of students seated in a classroom is quite different than interacting with little boxes on our monitors. So, as we all get used to the "new, new normal," this space in the newsletter will cover opportunities and challenges related to the transition.

For example, returning to an in-person environment may make it easier to notice a student who seems overwhelmed, struggling, or potentially in crisis. Remember, there are many University resources available to help them succeed including tutoring centers, computer labs, counseling and health services, and services for designated groups, such as veterans and students with disabilities. As a TA, you may have the opportunity to share these resources or perhaps even make use of them yourself.

The following list is not exhaustive, so please check with your advisor or the Dean of Students office to find out what services are available if you are unsure how to help a student in need:

- Free Tutoring Services - <http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring>
- Office of Accessibility Services (Tallahassee Campus) - <https://dsst.fsu.edu/oas>
- Counseling & Crisis Resources (Counseling & Psychological Services at FSU) - <https://counseling.fsu.edu/>
- Stress Management & Wellness Coaching (Center for Health Advocacy & Wellness or CHAW) - <https://chaw.fsu.edu/>
- Victim Advocate Program - <https://dsst.fsu.edu/vap>

NOTE: Panama City students can visit the FSU Panama City Counseling Center website (<https://pc.fsu.edu/students/counseling-center>) for local resources and help.

# SLICE OF ADVICE



Are you trying to improve your teaching, but unsure of how to go about doing that? No problem—PIE's got you covered! The PIE Services committee is a group of PIE Teaching Associates who specialize in teacher training through workshops and teaching observations. Throughout the semester, PIE Services members conduct classroom visits for TAs interested in receiving feedback on their instructional methods. If you request a classroom visit by using the Qualtrics form linked here, you'll meet with a PIE Associate who will walk you through our observation criteria, and you'll have the chance to receive detailed feedback and suggestions after your observation. If you'd like to read the observation criteria before you request an observation, they're available in a Microsoft Word document on PIE's webpage (<http://pie.fsu.edu/>).

If you're looking for teaching advice but unsure whether a teaching observation is right for you, no problem! PIE Associates also hold regular office hours via Zoom to answer any questions you may have about teaching and professional development. You can access a full listing of PIE Associate office hours by visiting the TA Community Support Site on Canvas and navigating to the "Zoom" tab.

PIE also hosts workshops on professional development-related topics, such as building a CV and writing teaching philosophy and diversity statements. We send regular emails about these workshops, and you can find detailed information about upcoming events on PIE's webpage. Our next event, "Writing Equitable Letters of Recommendation," will be on October 14th via Zoom. You can register for it by following this link.

## UPCOMING PIE EVENTS



### Writing Equitable Letters of Recommendation

October 14th from 1-2:30pm

Location: Zoom

Registration: [https://bit.ly/10-](https://bit.ly/10-14_LOR)

[14\\_LOR](https://bit.ly/10-14_LOR)

### Engaging Your Students in a PIE-rate Adventure!

**(HALLOWEEN SPECIAL)**

October 26th from 3:30-5pm

Location: In-Person; Honors, Scholars, &

Fellows House 4th Floor

Nancy H. Marcus Great Hall

Registration: [https://bit.ly/10-](https://bit.ly/10-26_HALLOWEEN)

[26\\_HALLOWEEN](https://bit.ly/10-26_HALLOWEEN)

# TA SPOTLIGHT

Featuring: PIE Services Committee



This month's TA Spotlight is on the members of the PIE Services Committee, which was designed to help graduate assistants improve their teaching skills. As you can see here, the committee has people from several different departments working together to offer you assistance. This year, the committee includes:

Chandler Blount: College of Music

Zac Odermatt: Department of Philosophy

Wenting Song: Educational Psychology & Learning Systems

Mahdi Khadem: Biological Science

Darius Robinson: Educational Leadership & Policy Studies

And me, Elaine Hendriks Smith. I have a MA in Theatre and am currently a second-year Ph.D. in Theatre Studies. Before returning to academia, I worked as a professional theatre maker for 20+ years.

I am looking forward to visiting your classrooms for teaching observations this year. It is exciting to meet TAs from other departments, see what interesting innovations you have in your classrooms, and offer you my feedback. I hope to be able to meet some of you soon!

Do you know someone in your department that should be in the TA Spotlight? If so, please nominate them by sending an email to [PIE-info@fsu.edu](mailto:PIE-info@fsu.edu).

