Before

1. Purpose and audience

Topic
Facilitating successful discussions

Stated audience
Graduate students with an interest in teaching and learning
- Are any undergraduates teaching assistants at this institution? [question to answer]
- Is there any teaching support for post-docs at this institution? [question to answer]
    - If no, are they a potential audience?
- Does the topic (facilitating successful discussions) have a particular disciplinary pedagogical focus? [question to answer]
    - If so, does it narrow the audience, or can the topic be expanded to include more disciplines?

Purpose
Communicate pedagogical techniques and strategies to facilitate successful discussions
- What does the literature say about common concerns regarding to facilitating discussions? [research to undertake]
- What concerns do new TAs have about facilitating discussions?

Purpose
Increase participation numbers (a broader objective)
- What are the current barriers to participation? [question to answer]
    - To consider:
        - Are all workshops scheduled for the same time / day of the week?
        - Are participants currently finding value in the sessions?

2. Planning logistics

Length
1.5 hours for workshop, 30 min for set-up, 30 min for tear-down: 2.5 hours in total

Location requirements
- On-campus classroom that can accommodate up to 40 participants
- Data projector
- Whiteboards
- Flexible seating for group work

Booking
Who do you contact to book classroom space on-campus?
- Can you book classroom space during the semester?
    - How does this impact the timing of the workshop (i.e. do you have to book outside class time?)

Does the TSS have standing access to any bookable space outside the centre?

Budget
Is there a budget for food for the workshop series or for the workshop [question to answer]
- If so, what is the deadline for ordering food?

Prior resources?
If a part of an on-going series, where are TSS' resources related to this session located?
Do you have any personal resources that could compliment what is currently on-hand?

On-campus experts / external collaborators?
Is there anyone with whom you could collaborate on the design and delivery of the session?

Registration
Is there a registration system that participants can use to sign up?
- Do you add the workshop to the registration system?
    - If not you, them who?
- When are registrations typically added to the system?
    - What kind of lead-time are registrants typically provided to register?
- Does the registration system remind participants of the upcoming session?

3. Communication & promotion
How are workshops currently promoted?
Are sessions individually promoted or promoted as part of the series?
Are you interested in broadcasting or targeting your promotion?
- What methods of promotion can target interested participants?
- What methods of promotion can target the most number of potential participants?
With different audiences, is there a need for different means of communication and promotion?

During

4. Lesson plan
(n.b.: this plan is truncated for the purposes of the example)

Outcome
By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:
- Implement effective strategies to ensure an inclusive and engaging discussion in any classroom setting

Outline
1. Why discussion?
    a. Research evidence
2. Techniques to facilitate discussions
    a. Planning discussions
    b. Techniques

3. Creating "good" questions
4. Dealing with discussion challenges
5. Activity: critical incidents

Critical incidents activity (instructions)
In groups of four – six you will be presented with one of three situations. As a group:
- Elect a reporter and a scribe
- Read the incident
- Diagnose what could be the source of the incident
- If you were the TA in this situation, what would you do to address the issue?

After 10-15 minutes, you will report back to the group.

5. Equipment
- ❏ Laptop
- ❏ PPT presentation
- ❏ Dongle
- ❏ Whiteboard markers
- ❏ Critical incident handout
- ❏ Evaluation forms

6. Event logistics
- ❏ Signage required?
- ❏ Registrants sign-in sheets
- ❏ Classroom furniture setup
- ❏ Does classroom technology require any special access or logins?

After

7. Program Evaluation
Must have:
Short-term
- Immediate feedback on workshop
- Paper evaluation? Online evaluation?
- Quantitative questions? Qualitative questions?

To consider:
Mid-term
- Tools that evaluate the actions workshop participants have taken, if any, as a result of their participation.

Long-term
- Evaluate the workshop series as whole?

8. Review of logistics
Evaluation of:

- room, equipment
- date and time
- other planning decisions, as applicable

9. Reflection
What questions would you ask for your own personal reflection and continuous improvement?