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Just the Two of Us: Those Who Co-Teach, Co-Learn

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Abstract

Teaching librarians are always seeking opportunities to improve their professional practice. Traditional forms of professional and personal development—attending workshops and conferences and reading the scholarly and practitioner literature—are valuable and useful, but often ignore the powerful personal connections we have between colleagues. Using a narrative approach, this article will provide two teacher librarians' stories about their experiences with team teaching as a method of professional development. Turning the traditional mentorship model on its head, each librarian contributed equally to the relationship and took the risk of being vulnerable in order to learn from one another. A newer librarian, looking to expand her teaching toolkit, become acculturated to her new institution, and develop her teacher identity, taught alongside an experienced librarian looking for new teaching techniques, a way to prevent "burnout," and a more intentional and reflective approach to teaching. In addition, the authors will discuss the theoretical underpinnings of the benefits of team teaching and will provide recommendations for others through an account of how they planned, managed the classroom, and assessed student work.

Keywords: Team teaching; Professional development; Instruction

Introduction

Librarians who want to teach have long had to learn "on the job."¹ Graduate schools offer varying levels of coursework focusing on instruction (both in depth and in breadth) and often don't require an instruction-related class,² causing many new instruction librarians to feel underprepared when they enter the workforce.³ Although LIS programs are increasingly offering courses on teaching and learning,⁴ they may not have been available when mid- and late-career librarians were in graduate school.

Once librarians are in professional positions that include teaching responsibilities, they typically have to rely upon one-time formal professional development opportunities offered through professional organizations (such as workshops and conference presentations), enroll in additional formal education,⁵ or consult the literature to engage in self-directed independent study to supplement their on-the-job training.⁶ Although very helpful, this type of professional development is not context-specific and can be difficult

for people to apply to situations at their own institutions.⁷ Additionally, short workshops or conference presentations don't allow for the time needed to truly transform one's practice.⁸ For librarians at any point in their career, this type of skills-based professional development may address only teaching techniques while ignoring the emotional/psychological aspects of teaching.⁹ Leaving the emotional side of teaching unaddressed may lead to burnout¹⁰ and/or feelings of inadequacy and low self-confidence.¹¹

Another psychological aspect of teaching that is often unaddressed by both graduate coursework and professional development is the formation of a teacher identity.¹² Teacher identity "provides a framework for teachers to construct their own ideas of 'how to be', 'how to act' and 'how to understand' their work and their place in society"¹³ and is an important complement to the teaching skills that can be learned in school, at workshops, and by reading the literature. A developed teacher identity is linked to a strong sense of self-efficacy and agency,¹⁴ making it



extremely important for those who teach to focus on their identity formation with intentionality. In the K-12 education literature, much attention is paid to this important concept. However, within librarianship, the formation of a teacher identity (or a teacher-librarian identity, perhaps) is rarely articulated. In a survey of academic instruction librarians, Walter found a "...lack of a consistent teacher identity among academic librarians."¹⁵ Julien and Genuis found in their survey of Canadian librarians that formal preparation was linked to a sense of teacher identity, although less than 50% of postsecondary librarians took a formal instruction course during library school.¹⁶

Librarians have a long history of collaborating with each other and disciplinary faculty, yet there is surprisingly little research that discusses the professional benefits of teaching alongside a librarian colleague. Team teaching is prevalent in K-12 for special education and language instruction.¹⁷ Within higher education, team teaching has been generally well received by students¹⁸ but found to produce no significant difference in student achievement.¹⁹ Within librarianship, a team teaching approach can be used to demonstrate collaboration between disciplinary faculty and librarians.²⁰ But team teaching has great value in helping librarians learn more about teaching from their colleagues. Teachers at any level who recognize that they are operating in their zone of proximal development may benefit from working with their peers in order to strengthen their teaching ability.²¹ Team teaching is a "way of working together with someone in order to become a better teacher in your own terms,"²² as opposed to the imposed terms of a formalized workshop or presentation. Inviting a colleague into our classroom may also help illuminate aspects of our teaching that we would not normally see, which may, in turn, change the way we see ourselves.²³

In supportive working environments that have a culture of learning, many librarians may have the opportunity to learn informally from their more experienced colleagues. The literature includes many examples of these types of "accidental" relationships, but emphasizes the need for more formalized mentoring and long-term orientation programs to help ensure the success

of new librarians.²⁴ For more experienced librarians, these relationships can be rewarding but often ignore the professional development needs of the mentor. Even in places with a strong culture of teaching and learning, seasoned librarians may be left to their own devices to identify and participate in appropriate professional development activities.

In team teaching, both partners provide valuable contributions that are difficult to obtain through other means of professional development. The more experienced librarian can draw upon her years of classroom teaching to provide the new librarian with an expanded repertoire of teaching approaches and utilize her knowledge of the institutional context to help the new librarian become acculturated to a new workplace. The new librarian also contributes to the relationship by offering a fresh look at established curriculum, helping the veteran to reflect upon long held assumptions and practices, and helps to engage the veteran in her teaching in a new way in order to prevent the dreaded "burnout." For both librarians, having a trusted colleague to talk to and reflect with about their teaching can help them to articulate and develop (or, re-articulate/re-develop) a strong teacher-librarian identity.

This article will provide two teacher-librarians' stories on team teaching as a method of professional development. A new librarian, looking to expand her teacher identity and teaching toolkit, taught alongside an experienced librarian looking for new teaching techniques and a more intentional and reflective approach to teaching. The authors conclude with recommendations for others through an account of how they planned, managed the classroom, and assessed student work.

Context

California State University, San Marcos is a masters-granting institution with approximately 11,500 students.²⁵ Since 1995, it has had a strong first-year experience course, General Education Lifelong Learning (GEL) 101, which is completed by over 80% of students in their first year.²⁶ This course covers general self-development, college success, health information, career and



major selection, and other basics of being a college student. Librarians are responsible for planning, teaching, and grading five hours of the course, called the Research Module, that introduces students to the academic research process and focuses on their role as student-scholars within the university.

The librarians teach from a common curriculum during the Research Module. The learning outcomes are the same and many of the librarians use very similar lesson plans and assignments. The five hours of contact time are delivered over the course of two weeks in either six 50-minute sessions or four 75-minute sessions. Throughout the Research Module, students work in groups on a research project where they are required to identify their information needs, find and use appropriate sources, and synthesize what they've learned in an infographic. Students share the work they are doing in the course management system via discussion forum posts. Due to the nature of the shared curriculum, it is necessary for some amount of training to bring new librarians up to speed before they can teach the Research Module.

Talitha's Narrative

Why I wanted to team teach, and why other new librarians might, too

During graduate school, I identified early on that I wanted to enter into the field of instruction librarianship. So, when I accepted my first position as an instruction librarian, I was thrilled. I was excited by the possibilities afforded by the new job, felt supported by my colleagues, and enjoyed working so closely with students. However, even though I had taken many instruction-related courses and participated in several internships during my graduate program, I still felt overwhelmed by the amount and depth of instruction I had to deliver. In my first semester at CSUSM, I was tasked with preparing, delivering, and grading eight sections of the Research Module for GEL 101—a daunting task! I taught the different modules with varying levels of success, but generally felt underprepared to teach full classrooms of college students and lacked confidence in everything from lesson planning to grading. During that first se-

mester, I read articles and blogs to try to learn new teaching strategies and signed up for any teaching workshops I could. However, a lot of what I tried out in class felt kind of random and haphazard, further contributing to my lack of confidence rather than alleviating it. For example, if I read about a new activity on a blog, I would throw it into my lesson plan because I knew I wanted to incorporate more interactive components during class time, but I didn't have the classroom experience to have any idea about whether or not it had a good chance of actually engaging the students.

As is common with many new instruction librarians, I was feeling frustrated and uncertain about my teaching. Although I had taken many courses focusing on information literacy instruction, most of what I now know about teaching was learned "on the job." I felt like there was a lot that was expected of me, but I didn't know exactly what it was and how to go about learning it. I eventually discovered that rather than additional coursework on teaching and learning or attending more workshops, what I needed was to work with someone with more experience at my institution. Although I am most comfortable learning in a traditional classroom setting, I knew that what I most needed was practical help from someone within my institution who understood our student population, our workplace culture, the resources available to us at our institution, and specifically the GEL 101 Research Module. The professional development I needed could not be obtained through outside means, regardless of the quality of the instructors or course content. Also, like many other new instruction librarians, I wanted more specific feedback on my teaching performance to help me identify areas to improve and validate my feelings of what was and wasn't working.²⁷ Although the field of instructional improvement stresses the importance of institution-specific orientation programs for new disciplinary faculty to help them become better teachers, these types of programs are few and far between in academic libraries.²⁸ Team teaching provided me with the professional development I needed and allowed me to engage in this type of intentional, collaborative learning without the existence of such a program at my institution.



What I got out of team teaching, and what other new librarians might learn

Throughout the course of my team teaching experience, I learned a lot about myself, my institution, and about teaching. Working so closely with Allie over an extended period of time provided me with a unique perspective that was lacking in all other types of professional development in which I had engaged before. For newer librarians, working one-on-one with a more experienced colleague is invaluable and offers a focused, intentional, and intensive way to improve your professional practice and can help you to feel like you are “part of the team.”²⁹ LaGuardia et al. describe the typical learning experience of a new instruction librarian as “trial by fire” wherein a librarian uses her “survival instincts” to figure out what works and what doesn’t. However, using trial and error as a means to improve your teaching can take years, especially in library settings where you’re often teaching one-shot sessions and don’t have the chance to build rapport with students or teaching faculty.³⁰ By collaborating with another librarian on a single course, I was able to improve my teaching much more quickly than had I been working on my own.

One of the main benefits of team teaching for not only librarians new to instruction, but for librarians new to an institution, is the acculturation to a new workplace. In the new employee orientations I attended at my university, I mostly learned about aspects external to the library. These orientation sessions did not help me to understand the specific culture of my department and the “way things are done” within the library. The literature indicates a need within librarianship to acculturate new librarians by having them work closely with a more experienced colleague.³¹ This can help librarians to learn the more abstract aspects of their positions which can seem “not worthy of mention,”³² but which are nonetheless invaluable to being able to navigate a new workplace. Team teaching with a trusted colleague allowed me to gain both practical skills (such as learning how to use our university’s course management system) and cultural knowledge specific to my institution and department. Team teaching goes beyond the traditional mentorship model in that

the power dynamic of expert/novice is dispensed with and both librarians work as equal collaborators on a specific project. I was able to work with Allie on the exact same course, with the same group of students, and with the same disciplinary faculty—the mentoring and assistance I received was incredibly relevant to what I needed to learn. After this experience, I felt more confident in my role as a faculty member at this institution because I had a trusted colleague who could help to identify key players, potential issues, and the “unspoken” ways of conducting business at our university. However, beyond learning practical skills and becoming socialized to my institution, perhaps the most important way in which I grew through this team teaching experience was in my grounding as a teaching librarian and in the development of my teacher-librarian identity. This relationship provided the space in which to discuss larger issues I was encountering, my feelings surrounding my instruction, and my burgeoning teaching philosophy. As a new instruction librarian, I found that there weren’t many resources out there focused on helping me to “discover who I was” as a teacher. Team teaching allowed me to address this aspect of my professional and personal development. In planning sessions, during delivery of instruction, and during debriefing meetings, working with a more experienced teaching librarian helped me to form my own idea of the kind of teacher I wanted to be and provided me with an example of what I could be. That team teaching relationship was the basis for one of the most valuable professional development activities in which I had ever engaged.

Allie’s Narrative

Why I wanted to team teach, and why other experienced librarians might, too

When I received tenure in 2012, I had been teaching for six years. During this time, my teaching responsibilities included delivering instruction to students in the social sciences and participating in my campus’ first year experience programs (which include lifelong learning, speech, and writing classes). I came into my position with a good pedagogical foundation, but I had little actual classroom experience. For a va-



riety of reasons, I was left with little support as a new teacher and was left to learn to teach by trial and error (as is the case with many new librarians). Although I could easily approach my colleagues about ideas I had or with questions about pedagogy, there was little actual collaboration on curriculum and, as with many professors in higher education, I felt isolated.³³

Post-tenure and mid-career, the resources I had initially found useful (e.g. attending teaching workshops and conferences, reading the literature) were no longer providing me with the growth and information I needed. I was having a hard time keeping my teaching and course content feeling fresh and innovative, which led to a general feeling of burnout and decreasing self-esteem (which further perpetuated the burnout, a cycle described by Isaac A. Friedman and Barry A. Farber³⁴). In their germinal measure of burnout, Maslach and Jackson describe the symptoms as including emotional exhaustion, negative and cynical attitudes towards students, and a negative evaluation of one's work.³⁵ My feelings of burnout are common among academic, and specifically teaching, librarians.³⁶ Especially pronounced in instruction librarians is the repetitiveness of classes taught, encounters with hostile or disinterested students, and "lack of stimulation, true challenge, and intellectual excitement."³⁷ Team teaching allowed me to address these feelings I was experiencing and offered a solution for burnout because it counteracts the repetitive nature of instruction and offers a new perspective on one's teaching.³⁸

When Talitha was hired, I realized how many similarities we shared, from our teaching philosophy and style, to what we see to be the most important skills and concepts to teach freshman students, to the way we solve problems. My preferred work style is collaboration; one of the reasons I became a librarian (and specifically a teaching librarian) was because of the collaborative nature of the profession. Collaborating with a colleague can help with problem solving – it opens the door to many more solutions than one person can develop on her own. Collaboration is also necessary to move from one's zone of proximal development to one's zone of actual development.³⁹ Additionally, teachers who collaborate build a shared repository of knowledge and

inquiry that can actually transform the way they teach.⁴⁰ Butler et al. state that teachers benefit from "opportunities to share expertise while engaged in a common pursuit,"⁴¹ leading to "richer knowledge" than is possible when we work individually. As many teaching librarians know, knowledge is socially constructed,⁴² which is why we require so many of our students to work in teams or small groups. Why wouldn't we use that same model of learning for ourselves?

The idea for team teaching came about because we both knew we could learn from each other. Neither of us wanted a traditional mentoring relationship where the authority imparts knowledge to the novice; I was looking for a partnership where we could learn with and from one another. What I needed was something that would shift my conceptual knowledge about teaching, which is something that cannot be attained in the short time period available during a workshop or conference presentation. Richter et al. describe informal learning opportunities (such as team teaching), as being "...embedded in the classroom...which allows teachers to reflect upon their practice and learn from their colleagues."⁴³ Parker Palmer emphasizes the need for a strong connection between the subject, the student and the self in a teacher: "Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher."⁴⁴ I needed a reflective, long-term team teaching relationship to help me find my identity and integrity as a teacher.

What I got out of team teaching, and what other experienced librarians might learn

Since our teaching philosophies and styles are so similar, it was easy to take Talitha's techniques and integrate them into my own teaching toolkit. I also found some new ways to describe some difficult concepts to students using analogies and metaphors. Participating together in the classroom – not just observing someone else teach – offered an expanded range of my teaching practices.⁴⁵

I also learned how to be more intentional in my teaching, spending more time reflecting about what I do. I tend to teach on the fly and hope



that my activities work out well. When they do, I add it to my toolkit and save it for next time. Since co-planning is imperative to successful team teaching, I needed to be more intentional about the planning decisions I made and articulate my rationale. In our planning together, Talitha demonstrated the importance of being intentional about what she does, and reflecting back on it after. Since we planned and taught together, it was useful to sit and talk about what we did and how well it went (and sometimes, why things didn't work). Reflection and intentionality have improved my teaching because I've looked more specifically at learning outcomes, if the students are meeting them, and how I can improve next time.

As previously mentioned, teaching in libraries is solitary with sometimes only the students to offer feedback. It's hard to know if the outcome of the class is a result of my teaching skills, the students' attitudes or some larger cosmic forces. Team teaching is hugely validating for this reason: "Colleagues' perceptions help us gain a clearer perspective on the parts of our practice that need closer critical scrutiny....Talking to colleagues helps us become aware of how much we take for granted in our own teaching and how much of our practice is judgmental."⁴⁶ Your team teacher can verify that what you are doing is of sound pedagogy and that the students were having a bad day. Validation can have an impact on self-confidence, which can change your perspective on your own teaching, and help challenge you to continue to improve.

While Talitha described how team teaching helped her to define her teacher identity, team teaching helped me to redefine who I am as a teacher. Through my early years of teaching, I developed my teaching techniques, learned as much as I could about my subject areas and about how college students learn, and worked hard to play the part of the teacher. It wasn't until after team teaching that I realized that the piece I was missing was myself. As I worked so hard to become the expert teacher, I'd lost my passion, my connection to students, and who I was as a teacher. Seeing my teaching in a new perspective challenged me to look inward to find who I am and who I want to be as a teacher. Palmer describes this as the *undivided self*, where

"...every major thread of one's life experience is honored, creating a weave of such coherence and strength that it can hold students and subject as well as self."⁴⁷

Our Recommendations

The recommendations below are based on our experience, but also supported by other team-teachers.⁴⁸

Choose your co-teacher thoughtfully

Most importantly, you need to trust your co-teacher (and be trustworthy, yourself). As Conderman and McCarty say, "[Co-teaching] is...a vulnerable endeavor....Co-teaching exposes one's strengths as well as one's weaknesses."⁴⁹ If you are in an environment where there are few people like you, and you don't have strong open relationships with your colleagues, look outside the library. Find a colleague in a different department and work slowly to build the trust needed to teach in the classroom together. It is imperative for teachers to discuss their instructional beliefs prior to co-teaching, otherwise it could result in an uncomfortable atmosphere in the classroom.⁵⁰ Although we shared a very similar teaching philosophy and style, there were inevitably some differences that needed to be addressed. However, as long as you are open and flexible and respect your co-teacher's philosophy and style, you should be able to have a team teaching relationship that is productive for both parties. Through open discussion, you can come to a shared appreciation for one another's philosophy, which leads to "mutual understanding of the context."⁵¹

Also important is to make sure that you and your team teacher complement one another in multiple areas. You will want to create a partnership where each person can play off one another's strengths, from a disciplinary, personality, or teaching style perspective. Strive for ego strength and balance, confidence in self and respect of others' gifts.⁵² Not only will this strengthen the actual instruction provided and thereby help the students, but it will allow for a more equal partnership where each person brings something to the table. You will want to avoid collaborating merely to say that you have

done so – poorly planned partnerships can cause a lot of frustration for all involved, from the team teachers to the sure-to-be confused students. One of the reasons that our team teaching partnership worked so well is that we each brought different strengths and experiences to the table – Allie came from a social sciences background, Talitha from a science background; Allie had more experience working with the specific student population, Talitha brought fresh eyes to the curriculum. A questionnaire developed by Bailey, Dale and Squire⁵³ may be useful in determining if you and your partner are well suited to team teach together.

If you work at an institution where people already talk openly about their teaching, you will likely have a good idea with whom you would want to work and how to best approach them. However, if you don't work in a library where these types of conversations are commonplace, you will have to more carefully consider the best arena in which to bring up the possibility of a team teaching partnership. If there is one person in particular with whom you would like to work, a one-on-one discussion or email would probably work best. However, if you are open to collaborating with a number of different people, you may want to discuss the idea during a departmental meeting or during a work retreat. This approach has the added benefit of potentially involving more than two librarians and creating multiple team teaching pairs. Most importantly, you must cement your team teaching relationship far prior to the beginning of the actual delivery of instruction, for reasons that will be discussed below.

Communicate openly and listen with humility

As with all collaborative endeavors, communication is key. There should be an "ongoing process of reflection and action, characterized by asking questions, seeking feedback, experimenting, reflecting on results, and discussing errors or unexpected outcomes' of actions."⁵⁴ See yourself as an "expert learner" rather than *the* expert in the class. This may involve letting your guard down and allowing yourself to be vulnerable. Don't steal the spotlight; allow your collaborator and students to participate by modeling good listening and inquiry skills. Learning to share control of the classroom with another teacher

may lead you to feel more comfortable sharing control with the students.⁵⁵

Dedicate time to early and thorough planning

Keep in mind that team teaching takes more time to plan, teach, and assess rather than less time. Team teaching should consist of three phases: (1) pre-instructional planning, (2) instructional in-class teamwork, and (3) post-instructional follow-up work.⁵⁶ Our planning started similarly to how we would plan for individually taught classes, with the most significant difference being the time spent on planning. The preparation needed for team teaching included elements from our regular planning, such as refining lesson plans, reconfiguring activities, rereading articles, and rewriting assignments. In addition, we had to identify which of us would deliver the various portions of the lessons, who would be responsible for contacting students outside of class, and who would be responsible for grading the assignments. Not doing so can have negative impacts on your class and on student learning.⁵⁷ During these planning sessions, we also discussed our preferred teaching styles, classroom management techniques, and our expectations of student work.

Be present and engaged in the classroom

As mentioned previously, our teaching and classroom management styles are very similar, so we didn't anticipate any conflicts might arise during a class session (and were correct in our assumption). We worked together to team-teach three Research Module sections, each of which consisted of four sessions. Due to scheduling conflicts, there were two modules where one of us was not able to attend one of the class sessions, but by and large we were both present during the majority of the modules. The literature on team teaching emphasizes the importance of having both instructors present during all class sessions, as this can provide "...students with an opportunity to see true collaboration in action."⁵⁸ From the instructors' points of view, attending one another's lectures can better allow for the "...integration of different subjects and disciplines."⁵⁹ While co-teaching a class separately is an effective way to

share workload, it is not as effective for professional development learning.

During each class session, each of us was responsible for directing some portion of the class, whether it was delivering a lecture or leading an activity. For the students, these team-taught sessions provided them with exposure to different teaching styles (appealing to students' different learning styles), techniques, and perspectives. For us, while one was teaching, the other librarian typically would work on loading course material into the course management system or respond to forum posts. During the more important lectures, we would both be "on" in order to provide a complementary perspective to the conversation. For example, the third day of class includes an in-depth lecture and conversation about scholarship, include disciplinary values. This conversation allowed each of us to explain our disciplines (STEM and Social Sciences) and provide a broader perspective on that topic.

Share grading responsibilities

To simplify grading, we decided that each of us would take the lead for a specific class' assignment(s). This allowed for some continuity in grading for the final assignment. One of the drawbacks in team teaching is that students can feel increased levels of anxiety because they "...often worry whether instructors will apply consistent grading standards."⁶⁰ To help alleviate this anxiety, we were very clear on who the "lead librarian" was when it came to grading. This could also be addressed by having clear grading rubrics that could be used by either member of the team teaching pair.

In GEL 101, students work on their final projects in groups, resulting in only five or six projects to grade. When we team-taught our first section, the lead librarian was responsible for grading the final projects. This worked, but did not give the other librarian the opportunity to weigh in on the final project. Instead, we found that grading each project together gave us the opportunity to check our assumptions on the expectations we have for our students, and allowed us to reflect on how we could help them do better next time. This may not be feasible in classes with large amounts of graded work but is an ideal to strive for.

Focus on your teaching identity

Team teaching provides the opportunity for both new and seasoned professionals to develop their librarian-teacher identity. Having a well-developed librarian-teacher identity affects all parts of our professional lives and can help us to feel more confident and assured even when we deal with constant change in our workplace.⁶¹ A good first step to (re)developing your librarian-teacher identity is to complete the Teaching Perspectives Inventory (TPI), a tool aimed at helping you uncover your beliefs, intentions, and actions surrounding your teaching.⁶² Your TPI results will give you a good starting place from which to examine what you mean to accomplish through your teaching and what you actually do in the classroom—a key step in becoming your "authentic" self as a teacher.

Spending time focusing on your librarian-teacher identity will likely be an emotional task since it requires a great deal of vulnerability to let down the "persona" of being a teacher.⁶³ Parker Palmer states, "If identity and integrity are more fundamental to good teaching than technique—and if we want to grow as teachers—we must do something alien to academic culture: we must talk to each other about our inner lives—risky stuff in a profession that fears the personal and seeks safety in the technical, the distant, the abstract."⁶⁴ Once you grow to trust your team teaching partner, they may help you to talk about your teaching identity in a safe and supportive manner. This can be scary, but well worth the time and emotional effort!

Conclusion

Team teaching is a collaborative method of professional development capable of moving a teacher librarian from her current level of teaching skills to her greater potential. Although team teaching requires a significant investment of time and energy from both participants, the benefits far outweigh the costs. Whether you are new to the profession or your institution, or a more experienced librarian with years of classroom experience, team teaching can introduce you to innovative practices, (re)develop your teacher identity, and provide the opportunity to

learn from your colleague. For those seeking tenure and promotion, team teaching may provide the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to collaboration and to improving one's teaching. Team teaching is different than other methods of professional development because it involves close collaboration with a colleague in order to make long-lasting changes to our teaching and it allows us to see ourselves from a different perspective. Successful team teaching involves choosing a co-teacher you trust and can be vulnerable with, participating equally in the planning process, and being open and flexible enough to learn from another.

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