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INTRODUCTION

Welcome Message

This publication is dedicated to all “teachers” at Brock University, whether new to the institution or veteran faculty members. While the Brock Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies provided the initiative for the compilation of this handbook, the first edition, published in 1994, was the result of a collaborative effort undertaken by the Centre and a number of Brock faculty and program staff committed to faculty development at our institution.

Our thanks to all members of the Brock community who contributed to this resource in all its previous editions. A quick reference guide of teaching practices, strategies and tips is always useful and we hope this handbook will continue to evolve over the years to be truly reflective of good teaching at Brock.

To that end we would encourage you to share your strategies with your colleagues and us by dropping in for a visit to the Centre in TH253A. Tell us what works – or what doesn’t – in your classroom. Browse through our collection of web links, resources and books, or come out to one of the faculty development workshops offered throughout the year. Continuing the reflective dialogue about our classroom, and sharing what we do, makes for great learning – and teaching.

We wish you a successful and rewarding teaching experience at Brock.

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Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies (CTLET)
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September 2009
About the CTLET

Structure

The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies is administratively independent of any Faculty, with the Centre Director reporting directly to the Vice-President Academic. The Centre Director is also a member of the Senate Committee on Teaching and Research. The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies fulfills its purpose and mandate through the following means:

Mandate

The mandate of the Centre for Teaching, Learning, and Educational Technologies is to support, promote and advance the quality of teaching at Brock University. The Centre is administratively independent of any faculty.

Brock University Mission Statement

Brock University flourishes through the scholarly, creative, and professional achievements of its students, faculty and staff. Offering a range of undergraduate and graduate programs, Brock fosters teaching and research of the highest quality. As a diverse and inclusive community, we contribute positively to Canada and beyond through our imagination, innovation and commitment.

Basic Information on Brock

Demographics

Brock University was named for General Sir Isaac Brock, who lost his life at Queenston Heights during the War of 1812. His last words are said to have been "Surgite! Push on!" which have become the University's motto.

Brock opened its doors in 1964. The first seven courses in English, French, Geography, History, Mathematics and General Science were taught in a downtown St. Catharines church until the University could occupy its first quarters in a renovated refrigerator plant at the bottom of the Niagara Escarpment. Several years later, the campus moved to new buildings at the brow of the Niagara Escarpment, most prominent among them the Schmon Tower (named for Arthur Schmon, who headed the Brock University Founders' Committee).

Today Brock has seven Faculties, a number of interdisciplinary programs, and offers graduate degrees in all Faculties. In 2007, the University had 577 full-time faculty members/ instructors and 831 permanent staff. There were 17,006 students, 13,623 full-time and 3,383 part-time students. In 2007, there were a total of 1,259 graduate students.

Brock University was built with the financial and moral support of the entire Niagara community. The University is the seventh largest regional employer. The community has full access to athletic facilities, the Centre for the Arts and the Library.

For more detailed information, see the publication Brock Facts, issued annually by the Office of Institutional Analysis.
TEACHING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Planning Your Course

Modified from “Designing Courses”. Speaking of Teaching Newsletter. Stanford Teaching & Learning Center. Vol. 13 (2) and Dee Fink

There are some basic questions that you can ask yourself to facilitate planning a new course or restructuring an existing curriculum.

♦ To whom is this course addressed?
♦ Where is this course situated in the program structure?
♦ Are there any prerequisites for the course? If so, how will this influence the structure of the course?
♦ Is this a compulsory course?
♦ What level is it at?
♦ What prior learning will your students have had?
♦ What are the best ways to find out?
♦ What assumptions about the subject might they need to unlearn?
♦ Why will the students be taking the class (as opposed to why you hope they are taking the class)?

Next, reflect on your strengths as a teacher:

What do you do best? Giving lectures, leading discussions, designing writing assignments, designing exams?

Another way to put it: how will you most likely be able to make a difference for your students?

Try making a list of your strengths as a teacher and how you hope to make a difference for your students. See if it will be possible or appropriate to play to your strengths (or develop new strengths) for this course.

Finally, some broader preliminary questions: is the course part of a curricular sequence?

- If so, what issues should be taken into consideration?
- Is this an existing course?
- If so, what sort of feedback did you receive last time?
- What did student performance on exams and assignments indicate about how these assignments were helping the students to achieve your learning goals for them?
- Or is this a new course? If it is a true blank slate, you have an opportunity to design from scratch. If it is a new course, what is your vision for it? What do you hope that it will help your students to accomplish?

Reflecting on and ultimately answering these many questions will prepare you for the heart of the learning-centered course design process: identifying and clarifying your learning goals. At the end of your course, what should your students be able to do, know, or understand as a result of their work in your course?
Taking some time to contemplate the knowledge, attitudes, and skills that you hope your students will have by the end of the course you are designing will have an invaluable effect on your course design process. These goals provide the floor plan for every other choice you make, and your choices will be influenced far less by external limitations.

Instead, whenever you make a design choice, the deciding factor will be how the consequences change or support the learning goals at the foundation of the course. Difficult though it may seem, try to limit yourself to a total of only three to five goals. The goals can be general or specific, but either way, they will eventually be broken down into sub-goals that will shape the design of the course and which will ultimately dictate the content, the assignment structure, and the day-to-day classroom format as well. For instance, if one of your goals is for your students to be able to assess the value of secondary critical arguments, it might be worthwhile to consider what steps are involved in this process, and design a session or two, as well as an assignment, that will model this process for the students and give them a chance to practice and develop this skill. For every knowledge-based learning goal, there should be a skill-based goal: what do we want our students to be able to do with the knowledge they gain from our courses?

When we consider the learning goals of our courses, we can discover the often unarticulated subtext to our teaching: what matters most? Why do we hope that students will take our courses? What is the value of this subject for us, and how can we best convey this to our students? By taking a learning-centered approach to course design, as opposed to a coverage-driven approach, student engagement with the meaningful qualities of the course is far more likely to be achieved.

Once you have outlined your learning goals for the course, the material you decide to use to support your learning goals may be quite different from what you initially set out to teach. You may have discovered that some of the material you thought was appropriate for the course doesn’t really offer you an opportunity to help students reach your goals for them, and similarly you may have realized that there are several other texts or case studies that would support your goals much more clearly and substantially.

Starting with the list of your learning goals, make a short list under each goal of the content materials that will contribute to your hopes for what students will be able to take away from your course. Make a note beside each content topic regarding your plan to use it to support the goal under which it is listed. This will help you remember your learning-centered strategy as you plan your syllabus and outline your lecture notes.

The Calendar

Once all of the planning outlined above has been completed, you are finally ready to take out a calendar. But not just any calendar: start with the university’s academic calendar so that while planning you can take all the university holidays into consideration. More than one professor has been frustrated weeks into a course after realizing that a lecture had been planned for an unexpected university holiday, or that the term ended a few days earlier than expected. Now that the calendar is out, creative thinking about your course can take a new turn. Using your original learning goals list, map out a logical progression of knowledge and skills building over the course of the academic term. As a clear pattern emerges and you add the course content and developmental assignment structure onto the calendar, see if you can break down each week of the course into themes that will support your learning goals. This will help the students understand the trajectory of your course even better.
Backward Design

You’ve got your calendar in one hand and your content in the other…you are ready to design your course!
“What will I cover?” But wait…that is forward thinking…and the most successful courses are designed backward. “What should they learn?” Or even more boldly, what should they remember next quarter, or next year?

Step 1 Consider your own rationale for teaching this class.

- What is important to you about the material?
- About the way you plan to teach the material?
- About how the students interact with the content?

Step 2 Skip directly to the end of the course.

Distill five (or fewer!) major learning outcomes. (If this number is too small for comfort, you can add more later if you really must… but stick with 5 or less now… this is the way to get to the underlying, often unifying, themes of your course.) Think broadly about these outcomes… content or foundational knowledge is but one broad category in which you might have specific goals. For other ideas, turn to the back of this page!

Step 3 Work Backwards.

- What skills will demonstrate achievement of the learning goals?
- What content is required to support those skills?

Why bother?

Some of the best payoffs include:

- The outcome goals will be threaded throughout the course. They provide unifying themes and context for the material you cover.
- These choices define the skills embedded in homework, projects, exams, etc. Students who have met the learning goals will be able to do what? Student work becomes more obviously relevant to the topic, exam questions or projects become more authentic.
- This process helps distill the huge content “problem.” Cutting content is always painful, but we know we have to do it… working backwards establishes priorities.
Course Objectives

Instructional objectives are explicit statements describing in concrete terms what students are expected to learn or be able to do (how you expect them to change) as a result of instruction. It is important that a logical link exist between the educational objectives, the delivery of the course, and the evaluation of students during and at the end of the course.

Objectives are operational statements that refer to concrete and precise learning behaviours. These behaviours have been categorized into different domains: the cognitive, affective (attitudes and values) and psychomotor (motor and perceptual skills). Bloom's (1956) taxonomy refers to the cognitive domain; Krathwohl (1964) has described a taxonomy related to the affective domain, and EJ. Simpson (1965-1966) presents taxonomy for the psychomotor domain. Because of the limited space in this document and because university education is largely concerned with attaining cognitive objectives, the focus here will be on presenting cognitive objectives of instruction and more specifically those described by J.S. Bloom.

Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives

Bloom views educational objectives as on a scale ranging from simple, concrete behaviour through complex, more abstract behaviour. The lowest-level cognitive objective would be the acquisition of knowledge. The words associated with each level are useful in STATING or FORMULATING and PRESENTING your objective at that cognitive level. Thus knowledge acquisition could be demonstrated if a student could engage in behaviours such as listing, naming, stating, defining, etc. A higher-level objective is to comprehend what is learned. Understanding or comprehension can be (stated by the professor or) demonstrated by the student who can engage in behaviours such as paraphrasing, extrapolating, explaining, distinguishing. (Refer below for the hierarchical set of cognitive objectives proposed by Bloom).

EVALUATION
evaluate, justify, critique, appraise

SYNTHESIS
design, order, develop, create, summarize, combine, propose

ANALYSIS
separate, recognize, test, differentiate, solve

APPLICATION
choose, classify, use, interpret, calculate, relate, demonstrate

COMPREHENSION
paraphrase, compute, extrapolate, describe, explain, distinguish

KNOWLEDGE
list, name, state, define, identify, match, recall
These objectives should not be selected haphazardly. Rather, Bloom postulates a hierarchy among them as illustrated. Thus it is necessary to know and understand before one can apply, analyze or synthesize, etc. It is important that students achieve success at the lower levels in order to attain the succeeding levels. Objectives can be written for any level of cognitive function.

When establishing your objectives, it is good practice to keep in mind that an objective has three components: it should identify and name the behaviour sought; it should also define the circumstances under which the behaviour is to occur; and finally, it should define the level of acceptable performance. For instance, compare the two following statements of possible course objectives:

♦ The student will be able to demonstrate a sound knowledge of basic research methods.
♦ Given the method and results of an experiment, the student will be able to formulate valid conclusions and specify the assumptions needed to make these conclusions.

The first is vague and general. What is "sound knowledge"? How will the student "demonstrate"? Which research methods are referred to? What cognitive level is implied?

The second objective is written in concrete, observable terms and states the conditions under which the behaviour is to occur. It is clear that the objective requires the higher-order conceptual cognitive functions of application, analysis, and synthesis.

Formulating clear objectives requires effort, but it will result in better teaching and learning. It is often helpful to discuss your course objectives with a colleague. Assistance in preparing and/or reviewing your course objectives is also available from the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies. Particular teaching methods are suited to achieving certain objectives better than others. For example, lectures are most effective for achieving learning at the lower end of the taxonomy-knowledge and comprehension, while discussion or other interactive teaching methods tend to be better for the achievement of higher-order objectives including application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Your choice of teaching method should reflect as much as possible the level of thinking and learning at which you want students to be engaged.

A common question is "How many objectives should I set for my course?" The experts do not agree on the ideal number, but a general guideline seems to be that the appropriate number of objectives depends on the subject matter and on the level of the course. Introductory courses, as well as advanced courses that have a very structured content, require detailed objectives and may need six to eight objectives per lecture hour. Courses that have open content, such as courses that require higher-order cognitive function, may need no more than six to eight objectives for the entire course. In the latter case, the stated objectives may not be an exhaustive list, but may be examples of the kinds of things students are expected to be able to do at the end of the course.

**Create a thematic structure for the course**

Identify the 3-7 major ideas, topics, or themes in the course. Place them in an appropriate sequence. If possible, these should build on one another and result in a culminating project that, integrates the ideas, topics, or themes.
Expressing Learning Outcomes
Sally Brown, Phil Race and Brenda Smith, 500 Tips for Quality Enhancement, 1997

For many lecturers in Further Education, syllabus content will already be expressed in competence-framework terms, including learning outcomes, performance criteria and range statements. However, many such frameworks have been written primarily for awarding bodies, bureaucrats and lecturers rather than in language that students themselves can understand and make use of. The following suggestions may help you to extend the benefits of expressing and clarifying learning outcomes to your students, and to the assessment schemes you devise to assess their achievements.

- Collect examples of ways that other people express learning outcomes. For example, look for learning outcomes close to your own field as expressed in other universities, and in Open University modules. You may often find that other people have already done much of the work in converting a list of topics into well-explained learning outcomes, which you can adapt or adopt in your own course.

- Work out exactly what you want students to be able to do by the end of a defined learning element. You may well have been trained to do this as part of the process of making lesson plans, and you may well be working with syllabus content that is already expressed in terms of learning outcomes or objectives. Nevertheless, it is often worth thinking again about the exact intentions, and working out how these connect together for different parts of students' learning.

- Express learning outcomes in terms of actions. Try to explain what lies behind phrases such as 'will be able to understand...' or 'will know....' The words you choose to describe learning outcomes should be such that students themselves are enabled to tell exactly what the intentions are.

- Don't write too many learning outcomes. One of the dangers of trying to express syllabus content in terms of learning outcomes is that it is dangerously easy for the some of the outcomes to be trivial ones, even when they are things that students are required to be able to do.

- Don't be too prescriptive. Rather than spell out learning outcomes in an attempt to describe everything that students should become able to do, it is worth keeping some of the outcomes more generic, and illustrating them with a 'for example' rider, rather than spelling out all the possibilities. This, allows you to bring in more 'for examples ....' as you think of them, as you work with students.

- Work out the associated evidence. Think about how students will be required to demonstrate their achievement of the learning outcomes in terms of what they will be able to use to show that they have succeeded.

- Don't overdo the evidence! There is wide agreement that students tend to be over-assessed, and that they are required to produce too much evidence to demonstrate each particular element of competence. It is better to choose the most appropriate kinds of evidence carefully, than to list at the possible kinds of evidence which may relate to each learning outcome.

- Work out performance criteria. Decide how students' actions and evidence can be judged and assessed. Formulate these criteria in words that can be understood by students.
themselves. rather than phrasing them in the sorts of academic language that are too often present already in published syllabus specifications or competence-based frameworks.

- Work out descriptions to help students see how much evidence, and what kinds of evidence they need. These are sometimes called 'range statements” and the intention is to help students know what they need to do in terms of extent and standards to meet performance criteria, and to demonstrate that they have achieved learning outcomes.

- Provide students with the whole picture. Put the student-centred language descriptions of learning outcomes. Performance criteria and range indicators into student handbooks, or turn them into a short self-contained leaflet to give to students at the beginning of the course. Where the contents Ire based on published specifications (such as those for General National Vocational Qualifications (GNVQ) and so on), include the original specifications as an Appendix, so that students can see where the details have been derived from. This leaflet or handbook component should serve students as a map enabling them to navigate their own way through the learning programme as they study.

- Ensure that students don't reel swamped by the enormity of the whole picture While it is important to provide the picture (as explained above), there is a danger that the picture can appear very daunting. Especially It the beginning of a course, Students need to be guided carefully through the picture in ways that allow them to feel confident that they will be able to succeed a step at a time.

- Where possible, provide alternatives. Rather than requiring students to demonstrate their achievement of each part of the competence framework separately, look for tasks ‘which embrace a number of different learning outcomes and performance criteria at the same time, so that students' work, and your assessment of it, will not go into overload.

- Select learning outcomes, performance criteria and so on, and relate them to individual class sessions. Relate them similarly to each student assignment, and each learning task. Students need to know how each thing they are doing fits into the overall picture of their course or module.

- Don't concentrate on learning outcomes to the exclusion of learning processes. The processes dimension gives the added value to learning outcomes. Paying increased attention to the processes increases the probability of the learning outcomes being achieved in ways that are flexible and transferable.

- Don’t be put off the learning outcomes approach by all the bad examples that are around. The fact that many published outcomes-based schemes are in existence, where the outcomes are badly phrased; or simplistic; ambiguous, does not mean that the approach is an ineffective one.

- Put the learning outcomes to use. Don't leave them fossilizing in the course validation documentation or the student handbook. Tell students about which outcomes they are working towards in each lecture tutorial, and assignment. The learning outcomes are devised for the benefit of students, and need to be made to work well as part of how they find out exactly what they should be trying to achieve. Make sure that students know when they have achieved learning outcomes, and can recognise them as things they have added to their range of skills, and can build on them. It is also useful to explain to employers about the use of learning outcomes, illustrating them with relevant examples, and listening to suggestions that employers may offer about additional things that could be included as learning outcomes.
Assessment & Evaluation

Assignment Design

Although we don’t often think of it this way, assignments and exams are the way that we find out if our students have met our goals for them. We tend to think of assignments and exams as demonstrating the depth and extent of student knowledge, but they actually reveal a great deal more.

Once again, start with a list of your learning goals and beneath each goal, list several different kinds of assignments or exam formats that would both offer your students a chance to demonstrate that they had achieved your goals for them (by using the skills you identified as vital to their learning process) and which would allow you to determine how well, in fact, the goals have been achieved.

Evaluating students' learning is difficult both for you and your students. You must design a test or exam that will measure student performance within the bounds of the objectives established at the beginning of the course. Students will prepare themselves according to those predetermined objectives and will try to anticipate your demand. Therefore, you will need valid and reliable information if you want to evaluate your students' performance accurately.

Measuring Goals and Objectives

Essentially, classroom measurement is aimed at evaluating how students are responding to the content of the course, how they understand the material, to what extent they can generalize the concepts, or other instructional objectives.

There are many methods you can choose from to evaluate your students' learning: short-answer tests, essay tests, multiple-choice tests, etc. The type of evaluation used should reflect the goals and objectives of the course. It is important to assess the suitability of each method for gathering specific kinds of information. You may want to consult an experienced colleague in your faculty or department, or the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies for more detailed information about the characteristics of the different evaluation methods.

Each evaluation method can be used for three assessment procedures that can be characterized according to time of use: pre-assessment, formative assessment and summative assessment (Allen and Rueter, 1990).

Types of Assessment

Pre-assessment

This is done before any instruction takes place and involves evaluating the students' existing knowledge on the different topics to be covered during the course. The purpose of this evaluation is to assess students' current knowledge or skills in order to discover areas that should receive the most attention.
Formative Assessment
This takes place during the course. It is used to assess a part of the course (a section or subsection), or after you have covered one of the objectives. Formative assessment allows you and your students to identify areas that might require additional work or to verify how well you have attained your objectives so far. Formative assessment is done for purposes of review and revision.

Summative Assessment
This takes place once you have covered all the material in the course. Your measurement should include different types of evaluation (see the following section for an explanation of the different types of instruments). This assessment enables you to judge the success of your instructional strategies once the course is completed and to evaluate the possible need for modification of the content, strategies or objectives related to your course.

The Four R’s of Effective Evaluation

1. Relevant - the material being tested is related to the course content
2. Reliable - expectations are clearly communicated; there is consistent marking and frequent feedback about performance
3. Recognizable - class activities prepare students for their evaluations
4. Realistic - the amount of information obtained is balanced by the amount of work required; don’t forget that students are taking three or four other courses

(Adapted from ‘The Four R’s of Effective Evaluation’, Marilla Svinicki, *The Teaching Professor*, Nov. 1993, p3.)

Assignment design can be used to promote academic integrity and circumvent opportunities for academic misconduct.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity refers to a Student’s acknowledgment of and respect for academic principles and behaviours that support the University’s mission.

Academic Dishonesty refers to a Student’s engagement (knowingly or otherwise) in behaviours that serve to deceive members of the University community in an effort to achieve academic benefit.

Academic Misconduct refers to any act or practice of behaviours by a Student or group of Students, deliberate or otherwise that has the potential to damage the learning environment and undermine the University’s mission.

It is the responsibility of every member of the University community (Students, Faculty and Staff) to act ethically and with integrity and support an environment, which values academic integrity in every aspect of life on campus.

Things to Consider:
- What factors in students’ lives contribute to cheating?
- What factors in the assignments you have chosen lend themselves to cheating? Could your assignments be re-phrased, re-timed, re-sequence?
- Can you build in more, or remove some, constraints?
- What other ways might you assess the particular knowledge, competency or skill set?
- Have your students been taught how to do the skills being assessed? Have they had opportunity for practice and feedback?
- Visit your school’s centre for teaching and learning!
## Example Assessment Techniques


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Technique</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cases and open problems</td>
<td>Have potential for measuring application of knowledge, analysis, problem-solving and evaluative skills. Short cases are relatively easy to design and mark. Design of more complex cases and their marking schemes are more challenging to design and develop. Marking for grading and feedback are about as fast as essay marking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-based assessment</td>
<td>Can be used within Learning Management Systems (e.g. Sakai) to format multiple choice questions, mark and analyse results. Wider range of graphics and simulations can be used. Can be time consuming to create but marking very fast. Reliability is high but validity (match with outcomes) needs careful attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Direct Observation</td>
<td>Useful for immediate feedback, for developmental purposes and for estimating performance -providing a simple, structured system is used. The presence of the observer can change the performance so the method should be handled sensitively. Impressionistic observation can be useful if supported by constructive feedback. Can be used by a group of peers to provide feedback as well as assessment. Intensive, lengthy training is required for high reliability if detailed checklists are used. Reliability, validity and manageability are fairly high when structured observation is used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essays</td>
<td>A standard method. There are several types of essays that test different styles of writing types of thinking. Measures understanding, synthesis and evaluation, providing you ask the right questions. Relatively easy to set. Marking for grading based on impressionistic marking is fast. Marking for feedback can be time-consuming. Keep the criteria simple. Variations between assessors can be high - and so can variations of the Assessor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning logs/diaries</td>
<td>Wide variety of formats ranging from an unstructured account of each day to a structured form based on tasks. Some training in reflection recommended. Time-consuming for students. Requires a high level of trust between assessors and students. Measuring reliability is difficult. May have high validity if structure matches learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-practicals</td>
<td>A series of mini-practicals undertaken under timed conditions. Potential for sampling wide range of practical, analytical and interpretative skills. Initial design is time-consuming. Some if not all of the marking can be done on the spot so it is fast. Feedback to students is fast. Reliable but training of assessors is necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modified Essay Questions (MEQs)</td>
<td>A sequence of questions based on a case study. After students have answered one question, further information and a question are given. The procedure continues, usually for about one hour. Relatively easy to set. May be used in teaching or assessment for developmental or judgmental purposes. Can be computer- or paper-based. Can encourage reflection and analysis. Potentially high reliability, validity and manageability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Choice Questions (MCQs)</td>
<td>A standard method. Can sample a wide range of knowledge quickly. Has potential for measuring understanding, analysis, problem solving skills and evaluative skills. Wide variety of formats from true/false to reason assertion. More complex formats not recommended: they confuse students unnecessarily and they are time-consuming to design. More demanding MCQs require more time to set. Better ones are based on case studies or research papers. Easy to mark and analyse results. Useful for self-assessment and screening. Potentially high reliability, validity and manageability. Feedback to students is fast. Danger of testing only trivial knowledge. A team of assessors, working to the same learning outcomes, can brainstorm and produce several questions in an afternoon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orals</td>
<td>Tests communication, understanding, capacity to think quickly under pressure and knowledge of procedures. Feedback potential. Marking for grading can be fast but some standardisation of interview procedure is needed to ensure reliability and validity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs)</td>
<td>Initially used in medicine but can be used in business, legal practice, management, psychology, science courses and social work. Particularly useful for assessing quickly practical and communication skills. Fairly hard to design and organise, easy to score and provide feedback. Could be used in induction phase to estimate key practical skills. Group OSCEs useful for teaching, feedback and developmental purposes. OSCEs can be used towards the end of a course to provide feedback or to test performance against outcomes. Reliability, validity and manageability are potentially fairly high. Probably less labour intensive than other forms of marking but several assessors required at one time. Initially, they are time consuming to design - but worth the effort.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portfolios</td>
<td>Wide variety of types from a collection of assignments to reflection upon critical incidents. The latter are probably the most useful for developmental purposes. May be the basis for orals. Rich potential for developing reflective learning if students trained in these techniques. Require a high level of trust between assessors and students. Measuring reliability is difficult. May be high on validity if structure matches objectives of training.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poster sessions</td>
<td>Tests capacity to present findings and interpretations succinctly and attractively. Danger of focusing unduly on presentation methods can be avoided by the use of simple criteria. Feedback potential: from tutor, self and peers. Marking for grading is fast. Use of criteria reduces variability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>Tests preparation, understanding, knowledge, capacity to structure, information and oral communication skills. Feedback potential: from tutor, self and peers. Marking for grading based on simple criteria is fast and potentially reliable. Measures of ability to respond to questions and manage discussion could be included.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problems</td>
<td>A standard method. Has potential for measuring application, analysis and problem solving strategies. Complex problems and their marking schemes can be difficult to design. Marking for grading of easy problems is fast. Marking of complex problems can be slow. Marking for feedback can be slow. Variation between markers is fairly low when based on model answers or marking schemes. Allow for creative, valid solutions by bright students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects, Group Projects and Dissertations</td>
<td>Good all-roundability testing. Potential for sampling wide range of practical, analytical and interpretative skills. Wider application of knowledge, understanding and skills to real/simulated situations. Provides a measure of project and time management. Group projects can provide a measure of teamwork skills and leadership. Motivation &amp; teamwork can be high. Marking for grading can be time-consuming. Marking for feedback can be reduced through peer and self-assessment and presentations. Learning gains can be high particularly if reflective learning is part of the criteria. Tests methods and processes as well as end results. Variations between markers possible. Use of criteria reduces variability but variations of challenge of project or dissertation can affect reliability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questionnaires and report forms</td>
<td>A general method including a wide variety of types. Structured questionnaires get the information you want but semi or open-ended questionnaires may give you the information that you need. A mixture of structured and open-ended questions is recommended. Criterion reference grading recommended for judgmental purposes. Broad criteria are more reliable and valid than highly detailed criteria. Detailed criteria tempt users to react negatively or disdainfully.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflective Practice Assignments</td>
<td>Measures capacity to analyse and evaluate experience in the light of theories and research evidence. Relatively easy to set. Feedback potential from peers, self and tutors. Marking for feedback can be slow. Marking for grading is about the same for essays. Use of criteria reduces variability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reports on Practicals</td>
<td>A standard method. Have potential for measuring knowledge of experimental procedures, analysis and interpretation of results. Measure know how of practical skills but not the skills themselves. Marking for grading using impressions or simple structured forms is relatively fast. Marking for feedback with simple structured forms is faster than without them. Variations between markers, without structured forms, can be high. Method is often over-used. To reduce student workload and the assessment load, different foci of assessment for different experiments recommended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-assessed questions based on open learning (distance learning materials and computer-based approaches)</td>
<td>Strictly speaking, a method of learning not of assessment. But could be used more widely. Self-assessed questions could form an integral part of Open Learning. These could be based on checklists, MCQs, short answer questions, MEQs and other methods. Their primary purpose is to provide feedback and guidance to the users. They can be used to integrate open learning and work-based learning when students are on placement. Reliability and validity is probably moderately high and manageability is high, in the long term, but low initially.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short answer questions</td>
<td>A standard method. Has potential for measuring analysis, application of knowledge, problem-solving and evaluative skills. Easier to design than complex MCQs but still relatively slow. Marking to model answers is relatively fast compared with marking problems but not compared with MCQs. Marking for feedback can be relatively fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simulated interviews</td>
<td>Useful for assessing oral communication skills and for developing ways of giving and receiving feedback on performance. Video-recorded sessions take more time but are more useful for feedback and assessment. Peer and self-assessment can be used. Sensitive oral feedback on performance is advisable. Assessment by simple rating schedule or checklist is potentially reliable if assessors, including students, are trained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single Essay Examination</td>
<td>Three hours on prepared topic. Relatively easy to set but attention to criteria needed. Wider range of ability tested including capacity to draw on a wide range of knowledge, to synthesize and identify recurrent themes. Marking for feedback is relatively slow. Marking for grading is relatively fast providing the criteria are simple.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work based Assessment</td>
<td>Variety of methods possible including learning logs, portfolios, projects, structured reports from supervisors or mentors. Important to provide supervisors and mentors training in the use of criteria. Work experiences can be variable so reliability can be low. Validity, as usual, is dependent upon clear learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exam & Test Design

Before constructing the exam or test, it is a good practice to go over the objectives of the course and the kinds of information and skills emphasized in the course. The exam or test should reflect both the objectives and the content covered. At the beginning of the course, students should be made aware of the style(s) of exams they will be given and how often.

There are certain criteria you can use in constructing a "good" exam. These criteria can help you organize the exam so that you will be able to gather the information needed to evaluate your students based on your predetermined objectives. The criteria are the following:

- **validity**: does the test measure the objectives it is supposed to measure?
- **reliability**: does the test provide the same results each time it is used? Are the items on the test related to one another?
- **discriminatory**: will the test be able to discriminate between students who have mastered the material and those who have not?
- **triviality**: are the items being evaluated only tangentially related to the central points of the course content?

Keeping these criteria in mind, you may want to refer to the different domains of instructional objectives for elaborating your questions. Once you have written your questions, classify them by category in order to identify the level of thought generated by the questions. Sometimes a slight change might produce a question which will require from students a higher level of thought. A possible classification:

- **memory**
  recall or recognition of information

- **translation**
  deciphering symbols or technical language

- **interpretation**
  discerning relationships among facts, generalizations, definitions, values and skills

- **application**
  ability to generalize notions, concepts and theories in order to solve problems

- **analysis**
  breaking down a problem with conscious use of defined forms of thinking

- **synthesis**
  solving problems by deduction

- **evaluation**
  judging alternative answers or options according to standards
Tips and General Guidelines for Constructing an Exam

The following additional tips and general guidelines may help you in constructing an exam or test:

♦ Leave spaces between questions; the visual layout of an exam may confuse students.
♦ The amount of space you leave to answer an open question will be interpreted by students as the length of the answer you want.
♦ Determine acceptable answers to the exam before it is administered.
♦ Classify the questions according to what they require of the students.
♦ Short-answer questions help test information recall.
♦ Essay-type questions allow students to organize, evaluate and think.
♦ Multiple choice exams can measure recall and concept application.
♦ Completion questions test for recognition.
♦ Essay exams should be designed as a learning experience, not for evaluating endurance.
♦ At the end of each lecture, and each section, write out questions which you feel are appropriate. By the end of the course you will have all the questions you require.

Exam Checklist (Marincovich, 1987)

√ Do the questions reflect your goals for the course?
√ Do the questions reflect what the students can reasonably be expected to be prepared for?
√ Is the exam of reasonable length?
√ Are the directions and the format clear and well-organized? Is the weight for each question clearly stated?
√ Is an answer dependent upon being able to respond correctly to a prior question?
√ Does the exam begin with questions that will build rather than undermine student confidence?
√ Are the problems interesting?
√ Have you had a colleague read through the exam?
Types of Exams and Tests

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Exam</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Choice</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>thought to be objectively scored</td>
<td>requires careful planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>easily assesses specific knowledge</td>
<td>construction is time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ideal for large classes</td>
<td>disliked by many students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Answer</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>assesses knowledge of detail</td>
<td>scoring is time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>easy to construct</td>
<td>tends to test only recall of specific facts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>allows students to express their thoughts exactly</td>
<td>not suitable for testing complex learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ideal for large classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>True / False</strong></td>
<td>easy to construct</td>
<td>cannot access understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>high probability of correct answers by chance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Essay Exams</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>can evaluate students’ ability to think critically and objectively</td>
<td>difficult to grade reliably</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ideal for measuring higher level analysis, synthesis or evaluation</td>
<td>preserving student anonymity is difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>perceived by students as fairer</td>
<td>scoring is time consuming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>allows students to go beyond memorization of details</td>
<td>unreliable grading resulting from professor’s bias and fatigue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>provides good feedback to students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Administering Exams

Part of your duty as a professor is to supervise the tests or exams in your course or to advise a proctor of her/his responsibility. The following are tips and guidelines that may help you during an examination.

♦ Arrive early; be in the room before the students.
♦ Have all the necessary material ready (make sure you have enough copies of the test or exam for all the students).
♦ An attendance sheet with students’ names and student numbers should be signed by each student present for the examination.
♦ Make sure that the number of examination booklets distributed is the same as those returned.
♦ If you have a large number of students, you may want extra proctors present during the examination; contact the secretariat or administrative officer of your unit for the procedures to obtain assistance.
Grading

Assigning a Grade

Before you assign a grade, you need to develop your grading system.

- It should reflect the full range of learning goals and activities.
  (Remember: you do NOT have to grade everything.)
- The relative weight of each item on the course grade should reflect the relative importance of that activity.

Assigning a grade is for some professors the most difficult task related to their teaching responsibility, since a certain amount of subjectivity is always part of the grading process. Because marks are very important to students, it is important to make a constant effort to be fair, honest and reasonable when assigning a grade. Marks should be a source of motivation and productivity for students.

There are certain practices that you may consider adopting in order to facilitate the task of assessing your students. These practices will also benefit your students.

- Incorporate your evaluation procedures into the course outline.
- Discuss the evaluation methods with your assistant or colleagues.
- Decide on policies for missed or failed midterms and late assignments.

- Keep accurate records of your students' performance during the semester.
- Clearly state the extenuating circumstances under which a student will be allowed to rewrite an alternate exam if s/he misses one.

Marks can be a source of motivation and reinforcement for your students. The following tips may help you in your task serving as a guide for marking your students' papers or essay exams.

- Write comments judiciously and legibly in the margins or append a note.
- Offer enough information so students can do better the next time.
- Mark papers on content, organization and style.
- Mark all papers one question at a time.
- Budget your time equitably when correcting papers
- If you know whose copy you are marking, guard against any bias.

When grading assignments it is important to communicate how you will be determining a student’s grade before the assignment is handed out. This will reduce ambiguity in your expectations of excellence. There are two types of grading techniques: Norm-referenced and Criterion-referenced.

Norm Referenced grading is commonly referred to “grading on the curve”. It is the process of determining a students’ grade relative to the performance their peers. Criterion referenced grading requires the establishment of guidelines or criteria for assessment. All grading has an element of subjectivity and ideally, both types of grading systems are used together to maximize validity, reliability and objectivity. For an example criterion-referenced assessment tool, see the following criterion-based rubric for essays.
## Rubric Selection - Paper 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criterion</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B+</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>Refer/Fail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Presentation &amp; Style</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Presentation of Assignment</td>
<td>Shows a polished and imaginative approach to the topic</td>
<td>Carefully and logically organized</td>
<td>Shows organization &amp; coherence</td>
<td>Shows some attempt to organize in a logical manner</td>
<td>Disorganized/Incoherent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clarity of expression (incl. Accuracy, spelling, grammar, punctuation)</td>
<td>Fluent writing style appropriate to document. Grammar and spelling accurate</td>
<td>Language fluent. Grammar and spelling accurate</td>
<td>Language mainly fluent. Grammar and spelling mainly accurate</td>
<td>Meaning apparent, but language not always fluent. Grammar &amp;/or spelling contain errors</td>
<td>Meaning unclear &amp; grammar &amp;/or spelling contain frequent error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Conforming to instruction/clarity of objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Conforming with instructions (e.g. word length)</td>
<td>Work has been submitted within time boundaries and within prescribed parameters</td>
<td>Work has been submitted within time boundaries and within prescribed parameters</td>
<td>Work has been submitted within time boundaries and within prescribed parameters</td>
<td>Deviates slightly from the required parameters</td>
<td>Work has been submitted late with no allowable reason, or deviates significantly from the required parameters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Attention to purpose</td>
<td>He addressed the purpose of the assignment comprehensively and imaginatively</td>
<td>He addressed the purpose of the assignment coherently &amp; with some attempt to demonstrate imagination</td>
<td>He addressed the main purpose of the assignment</td>
<td>Some of the work is focused on the aims &amp; themes of the assignment</td>
<td>Fails to address the task set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Referencing</td>
<td>Referencing is consistently accurate</td>
<td>Reference is mainly accurate</td>
<td>Reference is mainly accurate</td>
<td>Some attempt at referencing</td>
<td>Referencing is absent/unsystematic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content &amp; knowledge</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Content &amp; Range</td>
<td>Comprehensive/detailed knowledge of topic with areas of specialization and depth and awareness of provisional nature of knowledge</td>
<td>Reasonable knowledge of topic &amp; an awareness of a variety of ideas-contexts/frame-works</td>
<td>Has given a factual &amp; or conceptual knowledge base and appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Evidence of limited knowledge of topic &amp; some use of appropriate terminology</td>
<td>Lacks evidence of knowledge relevant to the topic &amp;/or significantly misuses terminology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Use of literature/evidence of reading</td>
<td>Has developed and justified using own ideas based on a wide range of sources which have been thoroughly analyzed, applied and discussed</td>
<td>Able to critically appraise the literature and theory gained from a variety of sources, developing own ideas in the process</td>
<td>Clear evidence &amp; application of readings relevant to the subject; uses indicative texts identified</td>
<td>Literature is presented uncritically, in a purely descriptive way &amp; indicates limitations of understanding</td>
<td>Either no evidence of literature being consulted or irrelevant to the assignment set</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Knowledge of theory</td>
<td>Assignment demonstrates integration and innovation in the selection and handling of theory</td>
<td>Insightful &amp; appropriate selection of theory in key areas</td>
<td>Most key theories are included in the work in an appropriate straightforward manner</td>
<td>Selection of theory is appropriate but some aspects have been missed or misconstructed.</td>
<td>Inaccurate or inappropriate choice of theory</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Grades can be used as effective tools for feedback and correction. The following two examples show how to use codes and keys to communicate performance.

### CODES for grading seminar(s), paper and portfolio

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper and Portfolio</th>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+ 90 &amp; above;</td>
<td>A+</td>
<td>outstanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ 80-88;</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>excellent/very good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S 70-78;</td>
<td>B-B+</td>
<td>satisfactory/good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q 60-68;</td>
<td>C-C+</td>
<td>adequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O opinion only</td>
<td>D-D+</td>
<td>serious problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#$^ 50-58;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X Doomed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Other abbreviations you may see**
- awk: awkward construction of sentence
- g: grammar error
- sp: spelling error
- ss: sentence structure
- doc: documentation - needs a reference
- w/e: word choice

### Seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Codes</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100; A+</td>
<td>2 points 2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-88; A</td>
<td>1 point 1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-78; B-B+</td>
<td>½ point 0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-68; C-C+</td>
<td>¼ point 0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opinion only D-D+</td>
<td>possible 1/10 point 0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#$^ 50-58;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X Doomed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **BAD** - blocking, anti-inclusive (i.e. racist, sexist, homophobic, ablist, classist) dominating -0.5 - up to -1.0
- **L** - demonstrating leadership +0.5 up to +1.0
- **E† or ‡** - engaged or not engaged
CONTENT

- Has a focus, theme or topic and makes this clear
- Evidence of thoughtful consideration of topic and related sources
- Demonstrates understanding of assignment and understanding of concepts
- Provides personal background and interest
- Has included a possible theory for analysis
- Has followed guidelines for draft #1
  a) Outline of plan for the paper
  b) Reasoning (personal and political)
  c) Show resources with reasoning
  d) Resources are relevant
  e) Literal level of analysis
  f) Interpretive level of analysis

ORGANIZATION & STRUCTURE

- Has introduction and conclusion
- Some development of topic
- Uses sources strategically
- Shows some logical progression
- Maintains focus
- Show coherence (i.e. components of paper fit together)

FORMAT, STYLE, WRITING SKILLS

- Sentence, structure and paragraph structure
- Flow and transition
- Punctuation
- Spelling
- Grammar/usage
- Vocabulary
- Word choice
- Documentation (in body of text)
- References
- Appearance

KEY

†- excellent
V- good
S- satisfactory
Q- adequate
US- unsatisfactory
Ø- problems
X- serious problems!
?- confusing
N/A- not applicable
Y/N- present(Y)
- absent(N) or missing

SUMMARY

Content
/50

Organization & Structure
/30

Format, Style, Writing Skills
/20

Overall
/100
Grades

Evaluation of a student's performance in a course will be determined by employing such indices as examinations, seminar and classroom participation, papers, lab and studio activities, peer evaluation and any other normal class assignments. For each course, the grading scheme will reflect a reasonable diversity of these methods as is appropriate to the subject matter. (Different methods of evaluation for students with special needs are available. Contact the Services for Students with disABILITIES Office.)

When peer evaluation is used, that component cannot count for more than 25 percent of the final grade. Students' grades are reviewed at the end of each session and they are informed of their academic standing.

A review of all undergraduate student performance will take place following the Fall/Winter Session, the Spring Session and the Summer Session prior to the release of grades. The following grades are awarded for undergraduate courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90, 92, 95, 98, 100</td>
<td>Reserved for students where work is of outstanding quality that provides clear evidence of a rare talent for the subject and of an original and/or incisive mind.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>80, 82, 85, 88</td>
<td>Awarded for excellent, accurate work in which evidence of a certain flair for and comprehension of the subject is clearly perceptible.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>70, 72, 75, 78</td>
<td>Indicates competent work that shows a sound grasp of the course goals without being distinguished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60, 62, 65, 68</td>
<td>Represents work of adequate quality which suffers from incompleteness or inaccuracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50, 52, 55, 58</td>
<td>Given where the minimum requirements of a course are barely satisfied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>45 or lower</td>
<td>Means that minimum requirements have not been met and no credit has been given for the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AG</td>
<td>Aegrotat standing</td>
<td>Aegrotat standing is the granting of credit for a course(s), based on the course work already completed, when no further assessment - for example, a deferred examination - is considered feasible because of illness or other extenuating circumstances beyond the student's control. Students may only be granted Aegrotat Standing with the approval of the Dean of the Faculty offering the course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Deferred examination</td>
<td>If a student is unable to write a formally scheduled examination, or having begun the exam, is unable to complete it, for reasons of ill-health, with supporting documentation, a Deferred Examination will be granted. Requests made on the basis of compassionate grounds or on the grounds of extenuating circumstances will be judged on a case by case basis. (See &quot;Examinations&quot; section for more information.) Deferred exams for Fall Term courses will be written no later than the subsequent July 31; for Fall/Winter Session courses, no later than the subsequent August 31; for Spring and Summer Session courses, no later than the subsequent December 31.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>Used for co-op work terms, internship options and non-credit courses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>Used for co-op work terms, internship options and non-credit courses.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“Official” final grades may be released only by the Office of the Registrar.
## GRADE EXPECTATIONS: "The Outstanding and the Average"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>&quot;A&quot; Students</th>
<th>&quot;C&quot; Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attendance</strong></td>
<td>Virtually perfect attendance. Their commitment to the class resembles that of the teacher.</td>
<td>Miss class frequently. They put other priorities ahead of academic work. In some cases, their health or constant fatigue renders them physically unable to keep up with the demands of high-level performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Preparation</strong></td>
<td>Prepared for class. They always read the assignment. Their attention to detail is such that they occasionally catch the teacher in a mistake.</td>
<td>Prepare their assignments consistently but in a perfunctory manner. Their work may be sloppy or careless. At times, it is incomplete or late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Curiosity</strong></td>
<td>Show interest in the class and in the subject. They look up or dig out what they do not understand. They often ask interesting questions or make thoughtful comments.</td>
<td>Rarely show curiosity. They are passive. Their interest in course material is limited to only what is needed to pass the examination*.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retention</strong></td>
<td>Have retentive minds. They are able to connect past learning with the present. They bring a background with them to class.</td>
<td>Do not review lecture material unless they are preparing for an examination. They tend to see each lecture as independent and unrelated to preceding material*.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitude</strong></td>
<td>Have a winning attitude. They have both the determination and the self-discipline necessary for success. They show initiative. They do things they have not been told to do.</td>
<td>Are not visibly committed to the class. They participate without enthusiasm. Their body language often expresses boredom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Talent</strong></td>
<td>Have something special. It may be exceptional intelligence and insight. It may be unusual creativity, organizational skills, commitment—or a combination thereof. These gifts are evident to the teacher and usually to the other students as well.</td>
<td>Vary enormously in talent. Some have exceptional ability but show undeniable signs of poor self-management or bad attitudes. Others are diligent but simply average in academic ability.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td>Make high grades on tests—usually the highest in the class. Their work is a pleasure to grade.</td>
<td>Obtain mediocre or inconsistent results on tests. They have some concept of what is going on but clearly have not mastered the material.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*From: Williams, J.H., 'Clarifying Grade Expectations', *The Teaching Professor, 7*(7), 1993, pp 1-2*
Course outlines

The major goal of a course outline is to organize, in a coherent fashion, the content of a course. The exercise of developing a course outline allows you to order all the elements and information related to the course in the actual sequence in which it will be given to the students. The outline is actually a digest of the objectives of the course and the means proposed to achieve them. The outline should be regarded as a contract between you and your students and should thus be followed as rigidly as possible. It presents the engagement that you propose regarding the content of the course and states your strategies for delivering the content.

Students also require time learning about the purpose of a course outline, its contractual nature and its importance in guiding learning. Some instructors might include questions about the course outline on the tests or exam. It is an integral part of the course and should be valued as guiding document. This means instructors must spend time discussing with students the various components of the outline and the ways in which they are integrated.

Some instructors opt to circulate an abbreviated version at the beginning of class, moving to the fuller, more detailed version as the course begins to develop. Concept maps can also be helpful in graphically portraying the key content areas of a course and the associated objectives and evaluative pieces.

Course Outlines

“At the beginning of each course, students will be advised in writing of the proposed manner in which evaluation will be carried out in each course. A student is expected to attend all lectures, discussion groups, seminars and laboratory periods of the courses in which they are registered. Instructors must inform their students about the relationship between attendance and their course grades early in each session. This should be indicated on the course outline and on the Composition of Grade Sheet, which shall be deposited with the appropriate Dean no later than the last date for course change. Instructors shall include in course outlines, the date for withdrawal without academic penalty and the date by which they may expect to receive notification of 15 percent of their final grade.

At the same time, students shall be advised in writing of the assignments required of them in each course and the due dates of such assignments.

Any penalties to be levied for late submission of an assignment must be transmitted to students in writing well before the due date of the assignment. To obtain standing in a course a student must complete the necessary term work, tests and final examination, where the latter is required, to the satisfaction of the Department/Centre. Details concerning how this will affect the final grade must be communicated to the student before the last date for deposition of grading schemes.

Students should be informed that the rounding of their roughly computed score to arrive at a final grade which complies with the 0, 2, 5, 8 marking scheme shall be at the instructor's discretion. Marks may be rounded either up or down between any pair, and need not necessarily be rounded to the closest number ending in 0, 2, 5 or 8.”
Checklist of Effective Course Design Components

(to be included on course outline)

I: Instructor Information: besides name & contact information, how about…

- Teaching philosophy? (your approach to course instruction)
- Your availability?
  - Can students e-mail you on the weekend and expect a reply?
  - Do you want students to use WebCT e-mail or Brock e-mail?
  - How often is e-mail checked and what is a reasonable return rate?
- Team teaching?
  - Who are your TAs/course support people and where are they located? Ie. course coordinators/library support specialists/administrative assistants?
  - What are the TA’s roles and responsibilities? E.g. “The teaching assistants and I adopt a team-based approach to supporting and assessing your learning. Please consult with your TA regarding questions relating to course assignments, grading etc…”
- What is your commitment to the students in your course?
- What do you expect students to commit to you?
  - Will you include student codes of conduct or share with students expectations surrounding confidentiality (with other student information; expectations regarding professionalism and establishing positive and risk-free learning environments)

II. Course Information:

- What is the course calendar description? (what did you originally promise to deliver?)
- Course goals/objectives
  - What do you want to accomplish? What do you want students to learn?
  - What will students be able to do upon completion of the course?
- Topics, sequencing and themes
  - What are the essential topics? LESS IS MORE…
  - In what order will they be encountered? List dates, etc…
  - How are they linked or connected?
- What is the relationship between this course and others in the program? Why are there prerequisites or co-requisites and what is the connection?

III. Course Materials:

- What are the students responsible for in terms of readings, texts, films, etc?
  - What is required reading and which ones are recommended?
  - Are there supplementary resources or resources on reserve?
  - Have you allowed sufficient time for all students to access reserve materials?
IV. Instructional Strategies:
- What is your instructional approach in lectures and seminars?
  - Is there an expectation that students will be participatory in the lecture setting?
  - What active learning techniques will be used? Eg. “Students will be required to engage in debate and participatory exercises designed to…”
  - What is the format for seminars/labs?
- Technology:
  - e.g. Do you use Isaak/Sakai and to what purpose? Is there an expectation for participation?

V: Assessment and Evaluation:
- Student assessment:
  - How will you know when the teaching and learning goals have been accomplished?
  - Do the assessment activities respond to the original goals? Ie. Are you testing what you are teaching?
  - Are the tests for evaluation purposes only or also for teaching?
  - Are the assignments equally distributed in terms of timing and weight distribution?
  - Are the assignments equally distributed according to type of evaluation and levels of knowledge/analysis/application?
  - When are the exams held and what format will they take?
  - What materials will be allowed in exams?
- Clear criteria:
  - Do the students know how they will be evaluated for each piece of work?
  - How will course participation be assessed?
  - What is the relation between participation and attendance?
  - What are the timelines/deadlines/penalties submission and for returning assessed work to the students?
- Course/Instructor assessment/evaluation (student feedback):
  - Will students have an opportunity to provide feedback on the course before the end of the course? (formative?)
  - Will you provide an opportunity to share this feedback with the class and discuss how changes may be made?

www.brocku.ca/ctlet
For some example wording that informs students about Brock policies to include on your course outline, visit the CTLET Website – Resource – Teaching & Learning Guide.
Instruction & Learning Activities

Having established your goal and your objectives, and developed the content of your course, you should be ready to deliver the course. The following section will present some tips and strategies that might prove helpful in that task.

General Guidelines for Effective Teaching

Since teaching is a very personal activity, it is helpful to think about your personal communication strengths and your private vision of yourself as an instructor. Exchanging views on teaching and on different classroom strategies with other professors might provide you with a wealth of ideas to improve your effectiveness as a professor. The following are some general principles that should guide your thinking (Diamond, et al., 1988).

1. Organize each class carefully
   ♦ Outline the lesson content
   ♦ Distinguish clearly between main and subsidiary ideas, and plan to spend more class time on the former.
   ♦ Point out the key ideas, definitions, concepts, principles in a lesson.
   ♦ Signal transitions between parts of a lesson.
   ♦ Summarize after each section of a lecture.
   ♦ Periodically review main ideas and facts.
   ♦ Begin each lecture by connecting with the essence of the past lecture to maintain a unifying thread throughout the course coverage.

2. Develop a healthy classroom climate
   ♦ Establish a positive rapport with your students. Although learning/teaching can be difficult at times, classes should not be grim places.
   ♦ Use the time before class to talk to your students; learn who they are. Be five minutes early!
   ♦ Develop patience and empathize when your students have difficulty.
   ♦ Help students develop confidence to ask questions and offer their ideas in class, assuring them that perfection is not expected during the learning process. At the same time, gently correct wrong responses. Above all, nobody should ridicule an answer.
   ♦ Rather than preach to the class or individuals who do poorly on quizzes, exams or papers, explore with them how they can do better next time.
   ♦ Avoid arguing in class with students about exam questions; instead, arrange to see them after the class. Announce this at the start of the year. Tell your students you will discuss exam questions only within 48 hours after you have returned the exam.
   ♦ Be upbeat and encouraging. Smile during class; you will neither lose control nor lessen the seriousness of what you are teaching.
   ♦ Appear human - even idiosyncratic, if that is what you are.
3. Adopt a concerned and professional approach
   ♦ Before the drop date, make an effort to meet with students who are not doing well in the class. Encourage them to make informed decisions about their future in the course.
   ♦ Admit it when you don't know the answer to a question, rather than bluffing or brushing aside the question. Model the idea that learning is an ongoing quest for all of us and determine that either you or the students will research the issue before next class. Ask them to come back the next class for the answer. And be prepared.
   ♦ Early in the semester, while there is still time to fine tune your teaching style, request and use informed student feedback about the course.
   ♦ Ask students to leave their suggestions slips (with no names on the slips) at the end of any class to maintain continual improvement of your teaching of the course.

4. Use resources
   ♦ Drop into the CTLET (Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies) and/or attend a faculty workshop. The Centre is always ready to discuss teaching issues and to assist faculty or TAs in any other way. All consultations are in strict confidence. For further information on the services offered by the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies, see the section under Professional Development.
   ♦ Use your peers for ideas and suggestions. You’re not alone in this endeavour. Think about visiting the classroom of a colleague and sharing what works and what doesn’t. A number of Brock faculty also welcome visitors to their classrooms. Call the CTLET for a list of faculty who would be happy to have you visit their class.

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Developing an Effective Teaching Attitude
(taken from S. Randy Haley, “Advice for Establishing an Effective Teaching Attitude”, The Teaching Professor, February 1992, p1)

1. **Negotiate a contract with your students that is clear and explicit.** Tell them what you expect of them and make sure your own behaviour is consistent with the contract.

2. **Avoid the “quick solution syndrome”.** Encourage students to grapple with problems and complexities and develop their own answers.

3. **Don’t do for students what they can and should do for themselves.** Don’t rush to answer your own questions.

4. **Expect a great deal.** Respect students as intellectually competent.

5. **Help students develop their own potential.** Try not to want to create clones of yourself. Encourage students to arrive at their own understanding of the course material and be prepared for the unexpected “right” answer.

6. **Use humour.** Humour eases tensions. Laugh at yourself and students will laugh with you, too.

7. **Show passion for your discipline and for teaching.** “Anything will give up its secrets if you love it enough” (George Washington Carver).
The Seven Principles

The Seven Principles for Good Practice In Undergraduate Education


1. **Good Practice encourages student-faculty contact.**
   Frequent student-faculty contact in and out of classes is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement. Faculty concern helps students get through rough times and keep on working. Knowing a few faculty members well enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.

2. **Good practice encourages cooperation among students.**
   Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort than a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions improves thinking and deepens understanding.

3. **Good practice encourages active learning.**
   Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.

4. **Good practice gives prompt feedback.**
   Knowing what you know and don't know focuses learning. Students need appropriate feedback on performance to benefit from courses. In getting started, students need help in assessing existing knowledge and competence. In classes, students need frequent opportunities to perform and receive suggestions for improvement. At various points during college, and at the end, students need chances to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.

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The Seven Principles of Universal Instructional Design
Teaching Support Services, Guelph University 2003

**Instructional materials and activities should:**

1. Be accessible and fair.
2. Be straightforward and consistent.
3. Provide flexibility in use, participation and presentation.
4. Be explicitly presented and readily perceived.
5. Provide a supportive learning environment.
6. Minimize unnecessary physical effort or requirements.
7. Ensure a learning space that accommodates both students and instructional methods.
5. **Good practice emphasizes time on task.**

Time plus energy equals learning. There is no substitute for time on task. Learning to use one's time well is critical for students and professionals alike. Students need help in learning effective time management. Allocating realistic amounts of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty. How an institution defines time expectations for students, faculty, administrators, and other professional staff can establish the basis for high performance for all.

6. **Good practice communicates high expectations.**

Expect more and you will get it. High expectations and important for everyone--for the poorly prepared, for those unwilling to exert themselves, and for the bright and well motivated. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations of themselves and make extra efforts.

7. **Good practice respects diverse talents and ways of learning.**

There are many roads to learning. People bring different talents and styles of learning to college. Brilliant students in the seminar room may be all thumbs in the lab or art studio. Students rich in hands-on experience may not do so well with theory. Students need the opportunity to show their talents and learn in ways that work for them. Then they can be pushed to learning in ways that do not come so easily.

### Teaching Tips

The following tips resulted from asking the 1989 3M Teaching Fellows: “What two tips for teaching would you give a colleague?” The tips are from 10 different professors, representing five provinces, nine universities, seven faculties and 10 different departments. They were compiled and submitted by Professor Jim Fenwick, Department of Biology, University of Ottawa, OCUFA and 3M Teaching award winner (originally published in INFO).

- Be ready to deal with ill-prepared students. Be willing to take them from where you found them. If some of them do not have all the course prerequisites, don't just proceed as though they are prepared for your course. Try to see things from the students' perspective.
- Be early for class and leave late. The time before and after class can become the most intensive period of interaction with the students.
- Use a variety of devices and changes of pace to create interest and to keep things moving. Various studies seem to indicate that student attention is lowest about 20 minutes into the lecture. This is a good time to change pace or, if you like, even to be a bit irrelevant for a minute or two. You won't lose much and the students will benefit!
- If you can manage it, don't be afraid to use a bit of humor, especially just before a difficult point or heavy message. Humor may help break a long, intense session and alleviate the students' tension.
- Don't try to impress the students. They know you are intelligent and more knowledgeable than they. Prove it by getting your message across in a simple and coherent fashion.
- Try to make things relevant. Relate every day events to academic theories you are demonstrating. Bring personal experiences -yours or the students' -into the lecture.
Use analogies whenever possible, especially if they bring things into a more human perspective.

Be able to explain why a student should be learning something. Be certain that your students know what the examples you use refer to. All too often, they learn the examples without ever putting them into perspective.

Get students to uncover answers and concepts on their own, whenever possible.

At the start of each lecture, list the objectives for that lecture. This will provide the students with a framework for that lecture and will force you to focus your presentation.

Be enthusiastic!

Give your students something permanent. The student's immediate goal is to learn the material necessary to pass the course. Your goal should be to prepare them to apply what they have learned today to solving future and unanticipated problems.

Encourage your students to do a bit of role-playing.

If you have a tendency to lecture too quickly, bring a small rubber ball to class and squeeze it gently with your hand. As your hand tires, you will automatically slow down.

It is not "spoon-feeding" to let your students know what is expected of them. University students are adults; treat them as such.

Familiarize yourself with all physical aspects of the lecture hall before you use it.

Learn to "read" your class. Each class has its own personality and, just as we alter the way we handle different people, we must change the way we teach different classes. Not recognizing the ever-changing characteristics of the student population will ensure failure in the classroom.

What do students seek in a good university professor?

Undergraduates at Simon Fraser University, Université Laval and the University of Queensland, Australia have identified some characteristics they would like to see in a professor. The following is a summary of their wish list (See Pedagogical INFO, 1990, Vol.11, (3)).

- guidelines for the course are detailed in the first lecture
- the professor is approachable and friendly
- the professor shares some information on his or her own educational background, experiences, research, and interest
- the professor is confident and knowledgeable about the material, showing enthusiasm for the subject and able to present it effectively
- the professor has a sense of humor
- the professor shows genuine interest in teaching and in students; teaching does not appear to be an unpleasant accompaniment to research; it is a job taken seriously and respectfully
- the professor presents material in a different way from the textbook
- the professor gives and accepts suggestions and constructive criticism in a positive manner
- the professor marks and returns assignments and exams promptly
- the professor knows how to convey the desire to learn
Teaching Methods & Strategies

For many professors, teaching consists only of lectures, assignments given to students, and a final exam. But there are other teaching strategies which can be incorporated with and within the lecture format in order to stimulate, motivate and foster student learning. The more teaching strategies you have at your disposal, the more flexible you are in your content delivery. In order to identify the strategies that are suitable for your course and that will meet your instructional objectives, you may ask yourself the following questions:

♦ When should I lecture, and when would holding a discussion work better?
♦ When should I show students how to do something, and when should I encourage them to try it themselves?
♦ When should I respond to a student question (give information) and when should I encourage other students to respond (give student the opportunity to practice skills)?
♦ If I see someone make a mistake in lab, should I correct the mistake, or should I let the student discover it?
♦ When should I review important concepts orally, and when should I use handouts?
♦ If I need to show students a lot of formulas or graphs, should I derive or draw them during class, or prepare handouts/overhead transparencies and discuss them?
♦ When should I rely on my own expertise, and when should I seek outside sources (films, slide/tape programs, guest speakers, etc.)?
♦ How might I use quotes from others? This is a simple and fast way of bringing "another" voice into the lecture hall.
♦ When should I use web resources such as Sakai to augment my course and accept course discussions?

It is important that you consider the overall structure of the course as well as the physical constraints and time limits that might influence the delivery of the content, before deciding on teaching strategies. Two of the most popular strategies, lecturing and group discussion, will be presented here in their general format since there are many variations on lecturing and discussion. Other strategies such as case methods, instructional games, role playing, small groups, small groups in larger classes, tutoring, panel discussion, debate discussion and experience discussion will be briefly presented.

Lecturing

Lecturing may still be the most common form of teaching; but before adopting this method exclusively, you may want to stop and consider whether the material you want to get across and your objectives are best served by the lecturing format. If you are primarily interested in delivering a great deal of information or demonstrating an analytical process, then a lecture is probably the most efficient technique. If, however, you are mainly concerned with teaching problem-solving, developing critical thinking or having students weigh values or react affectively to your subject area, then you may want to try such methods as lecture discussion, small group interactions, role plays or simulations. These types of active learning strategies are known to foster higher-level cognitive objectives as well as affective objectives.

Lecturing has its advantages and its disadvantages. Being clear about these may help to decide how and when to use the lecture format and when to use other strategies (Acitelli, 1989).
Advantages:

♦ a good method for delivering a great deal of information to large numbers
♦ provides an opportunity to convey the professor's enthusiasm for the material and may stimulate students' interest; such interest will tend to elevate students' learning
♦ allows you to present unpublished papers or articles
♦ can complement and clarify readings
♦ communicates to many students at the same time
♦ can serve as a role model; how you think, talk, act often influences students' behaviour
♦ emphasizes learning by listening

Disadvantages:

♦ does not provide you with immediate feedback on how well students have learned
♦ places students in a passive role which can often be counterproductive to learning
♦ student concentration decreases with the length of the lecture
♦ does not consider the students' different learning pace, style and level of understanding
♦ does not provide as many opportunities for higher-level learning (application, analysis, synthesis)
♦ requires that professors have or learn effective writing, speaking and modeling skills

The way you structure a lecture can make all the difference in whether students retain the material. Whereas you may have thought about your material for a long while, the audience is probably hearing about it for the first time. They only get a once-through, and their attention is divided between thinking about what you say and deciding what to write down. Therefore it is crucial, first, that you try not to say too much at once and, second, that you indicate - by emphasis, repetition, and summaries - the major points and how they connect.

Suggestions for Successful Lecturing

A good lecturer spends the majority of the hour aiding students' understanding and memory by the use of examples, questions, analogies, and restatements.

Tell them what you're going to tell them; tell them; then tell them what you've told them.

It is important that you guide your students through the lectures by stating your goals at the beginning, by indicating your progress during the lecture and, finally, by providing them with a summary of the whole process of the lecture.
1) Preparing Your Lecture:
- fit your lecture to your students' level
- it is generally impossible to cover all the material; selecting a topic will focus your lecture and allow you to make changes
- prepare an outline for each lecture
- organize your material logically
- identify metaphoric examples
- be able to present both sides of issues; this fosters critical thinking

2) Presentation:
- make sure that all students hear you clearly
- be aware of mannerisms such as "ah" and "you know"
- provide an introduction and follow through with an outline (present your themes or objectives for that particular lecture)
- present your points in different ways
- give time for your students to think and write; silence can be beautiful; you do not have to be talking all the time
- organize and time your pauses; create dramatic effects through emphasis, suddenness, etc.

3) Maintaining Motivation and Interest:
- vary your inflection, gestures, position and the pace of your lecture
- communicate your enthusiasm for the material
- break the monotony of the lecture with visual aids, with humor, a debate, a problem-solving situation, etc.

4) Fostering Interaction and Feedback:
- be aware of the nonverbal clues from students
- ask your audience questions
- reinforce students' answers; make positive comments when they are warranted
These tips are designed to optimize the learning potential of lectures, in particular with reference to teaching and learning processes, and to remind you of the way in which large-group sessions can pay real dividends to students.

1. Make the most of opportunities when you have the whole group together. There are useful benefits of whole-group shared experiences, especially for setting the scene in a new subject, and talking students through known problem areas. Use these sessions to develop whole-group cohesion, as well as to give briefings, provide introductions, introduce keynote speakers, and hold practical demonstrations.

2. Make sure that lectures are not just 'transmit-receive' occasions. Little is learnt by students just writing down what the lecturer says, or copying down information from screens or boards. There are more efficient ways of providing students with the information they need for their learning, including the use of handout materials, textbooks and other learning resource materials.

3. Be punctual, even if some of your students are late. Chat to the nearest students while people are settling in. Ask them, 'How's the course going for you so far?' for example. Ask them, 'What's your favourite topic so far?' or, 'What are the trickiest bits so far?'

4. When you are ready to start, capture students' attention. It is often easier to do this by dimming the lights and showing your first overhead, than by trying to quiet down the pre-lecture chatter by talking loudly. Do your best to ignore latecomers. Respect the courtesy of punctuality of those already present, and talk to them.

5. Make good use of your specific intended learning outcomes for each lecture. Find out how many students think they can already achieve some of these - and adjust your approach accordingly. Explaining the outcomes at the start of the session, or including them in handout materials given out to students, can help them to know exactly what they should be getting out of the lecture, serving as an agenda against which they can track their individual progress during the minutes which follow.

6. Help students place the lecture in context. Refer back to previous material (ideally which a short summary of the previous lectures at the beginning) and give them forewarning of how this will relate to material they will cover later.

7. Use handout material to spare students from copying down a lot of information. It is better to spend time discussing and elaborating on information that students can already read for themselves.

8. Face the class when using an overhead projector, or computer-aided presentations on-screen in the lecture room. Practice in a lecture room using your transparencies or slides as an agenda, and talking to each point listed on them. By placing a pen on a transparency you can draw attention to the particular point on which you are elaborating, maintaining vital eye contact with your students.
9. Work out some questions which the session will address. Showing these questions as an overhead at the beginning of the session is a way of helping students to see the nature and scope of the specific learning outcomes they should be able to address progressively as the session proceeds.

10. Give your students some practice at note-making (rather than just note-taking). Students learn very little from just copying out bits of what they see or hear, and may need quite a lot of help towards summarizing, prioritizing, and making their notes their own individual learning tools.

11. Get students learning by doing. Just about all students get bored listening for a full hour, so break the session up with small tasks such as problems for students to work out themselves, applying what you have told them, reading extracts from their handout material, or discussing a question or issue with the students nearest to them. Even in a crowded, tiered lecture theatre, students can be given things to do independently for a few minutes at a time, followed by a suitable debriefing, so that they can compare views and find out whether they were on the right track.

12. Variety is the spice of lectures. Make sure that you building into large-group lectures a variety of activities for students, which might include writing, listening, looking, making notes, copying diagrams, undertaking small discussion tasks, asking questions, answering questions, giving feedback to you, solving problems, doing calculations, putting things in order of importance and so on.

13. Ask the students how you are doing. From time to time ask, 'How many of you can hear me clearly enough? ', 'Am I going too fast? ', 'Is this making sense to you? ' Listen to the answers and try to respond accordingly.

14. Use lectures to start students learning from each other. Getting students to work in small groups in a lecture environment can allow them to discuss and debate the relative merits of different options in multiple-choice tasks, or put things in order of importance, or brain-storm possible solutions to problems. After they have engaged with each other on such tasks, the lecturer can draw conclusions from some of the groups, and give expert-witness feedback when needed.

15. Use lectures to help students make sense of things they have already learnt. It is valuable to make full use of the times when all students are together to give them things to do, to allow them to check out whether they can still do the things they covered in previous sessions.

16. Use lectures to help shape students' attitudes. The elements of tone of voice, facial expression, body language and so on can be used by lecturers to bring greater clarity and direction to the attitude-forming shared experiences which help students set their own scene for a topic or theme in a subject.

17. Genuinely solicit students' questions. Do not ask, 'Any questions? ' as you are picking up your papers at the end of a class. Treat students' questions with courtesy even if they seem very basic to you. Repeat the question so all students can hear, and then answer in a way that does not make the questioner feel stupid.
18. Do not waffle when stuck. Do not try to bluff your way out of it when you do not know the answers to some of the questions students may ask. Tell the questioners that you will find out the answers to their questions before your next lecture with them - they will respect you more for this than for trying to invent an answer.

19. Use some lecture time to draw feedback from students. Large group sessions can be used to provide a useful barometer of how their learning is going. Students can be asked to write on slips of paper (or post-its) questions that they would like you to address at a future session.

20. Use whole-class time to explain carefully the briefings for assessment tasks. It is essential that all students have a full, shared knowledge of exactly what is expected of them in such tasks, so that no one is disadvantaged by any differentials in their understanding of the performance criteria or assessment schemes associated with the tasks.

21. Show students how the assessor’s mind works. This can be done by devising class sessions around the analysis of how past examples of students’ work were assessed, as well as by going through in detail the way in which assessment criteria were applied to work that the class members themselves have done.

22. Record yourself on video every now and then. Review the video to help you see your own strengths and weaknesses, and look for ways to improve your performance. Your keenest critic is likely to be yourself, so do not try to resolve every little habit or mannerism at once; just tackle the ones that you think are most important, little by little. It may also be useful for a group of colleagues together to look at each other's videos, and offer each other constructive comments. This is excellent practice for inspection or other quality assessment procedures.

23. Use all opportunities to observe other people's lectures. You can do this not only in your own department, but also at external conferences and seminars. Watching other people helps you to learn both from what others do well, that you might wish to emulate, and from awful sessions where you resolve never to do anything similar in your own classes.

24. Put energy and effort into making your lectures interesting and stimulating. A well-paced lecture which has visual impact and in which ideas are clearly communicated can be a motivating shared experience for students. Become comfortable using overhead projectors and audio-visual equipment in imaginative ways.

25. Watch the body language of your audience. You will soon learn to recognize the symptoms of 'eyes glazing over’ when students are becoming passive recipients rather than active participants. That may signal the time for one of your prepared anecdotes, or better, for a task for students to tackle.

26. Do not tolerate poor behaviour. You do not have to put up with students talking, eating or fooling around in your lectures. Ask them firmly but courteously to desist, and as a last resort, ask them to leave. If they do not do so, you should leave yourself for a short period to give them a cooling-down period.

27. Do not feel you have got to keep going for the full hour. Sometimes you will have said all you need to say, and still have ten or fifteen minutes in hand. Do not feel you have to waffle on. It may come as a surprise to you, but your students may be quite pleased to finish early occasionally.
28. Do not feel that you have to get through all of your material. Even very experienced lecturers, when preparing a new lecture, often overestimate what they can cover in an hour. It is better to cover part of your material well, than to try to rush through all of it. You can adjust future sessions to balance out the content.

29. Use large-group sessions to identify and answer students' questions. This can be much more effective, and fairer, than just attempting to answer their questions individually and privately. When one student asks a question in a large-group session, there are often many other students who only then realize that they too need to hear the answer.

30. Help the shy or retiring students to have equal opportunity to contribute. Asking students in large groups to write questions, or ideas, on post-its helps to ensure that the contributions you receive are not just from those students who are not afraid to ask in public. It can be comforting for students to preserve their anonymity in asking questions, as they are often afraid that their questions may be regarded as silly or trivial.

31. Come to a timely conclusion. A large-group session must not just fizzle out, but should come to a definite and robust ending. It is also important not to overrun. It is better to come to a good stopping place a few minutes early, than to end up rushing through something important right at the end of the session.
Discussions

Getting students to organize and integrate the ideas and concepts they have learned from readings and lectures is the central goal of a discussion. A good discussion requires participants to engage in the higher cognitive functions. In a lecture, the students are passive receivers of information; in a discussion they should be active participants in an intellectual endeavor. This central goal and the student behaviour expected should be stated at the beginning of the discussion session. The success of a discussion session relies on the quality of the professor/student relationship and requires an honest and open interaction between students and professor. The benefits of a discussion are the promotion of independent thinking, student motivation and student participation.

The dynamics of a good discussion require the leader to follow a disciplined procedure until students become comfortable enough with the discussion format for the leader to improvise. To attain the objectives of the discussion session, students should have the data necessary for the discussion, the leader should have planned a series of questions related to the content of the course, and the leader should respond to students' answers in such a way as to encourage participation. This last point is most crucial, since your response will probably influence both the student offering the comment and those observing the interaction. There are other considerations to be aware of when using the discussion format:

♦ allow students to react to each other's responses
♦ after posing a question and before calling on a respondent, wait a few seconds so all the students can formulate a response
♦ don't require students to raise their hands before speaking if the class is small
♦ never belittle student questions
♦ never belittle student responses
♦ don't get sidetracked by individual students: when students wish to plead special interests, they should be invited to stay after class or stop by during office hours
♦ don't lapse into lecture; this is one of the single greatest obstacles to student participation
♦ when you have a large class, it is best to separate students into small groups: after the students have considered the questions in small groups, it is easier to obtain full participation during a whole-class discussion.

The use of discussion requires that you develop good communication skills. It also requires that you sense the mood and climate of the class. To be effective, discussion should be used for an intended purpose, not simply because it provides a voice for the students. The use of discussion should also be weighed against certain constraints such as time, number of objectives to attain, and physical space. For instance, discussion is not an effective means for transmitting information. It can be very effective for fostering application and exercising critical thinking and communication skills. The time factor is the most imposing constraint on discussion. Trying to provide "air time" for all the students and covering the course content may prove difficult.

A balance between lecturing and discussion often serves best, since this meets the needs of both the dependent and independent students and, at the same time, facilitates both knowledge acquisition and comprehension, as well as fostering the higher cognitive objectives.
Discussions
“There are many political, emotional “eggshell” issues that must be discussed in classrooms. One way to ensure that every student’s voice is heard is to have students respond in writing to a “jump start vehicle”, such as a song, video clip, picture, etc. Let them write down their reactions for a few minutes, but do not have them put their names on their papers. Collect them, “accidentally” drop them on the floor, and randomly pass them out. Have the students read the papers they’ve received. Emotions, ideas and voices are heard through the mouths of others. Also this strategy ignites further discussions.”


Group Discussions
Description: Opportunity to pool and test ideas, experience and knowledge.
When Used: Any time greater group participation is desired.
Procedure: Requires pre-planned outline. Facilitator encourages and guides participation.
Limitations: Practical only with no more than 20 participants. Becomes disorganized without careful planning of material to be covered and skillful direction from the facilitator.

Buzz Groups
Description: Allows total participation by group members through small subgroups of participants, followed by discussion among the entire group.
When Used: Use in conjunction with other group methods when participation from every group member is desired.
Procedure: Prepare one or two questions on the topic to give to each group. Divide the members into small subgroups of four to six individuals. A leader is chosen in each subgroup to record and report pertinent ideas to the whole group.
Limitations: Thought must be given to the purpose and organization of the groups.
Panels
Description: A discussion in conversational form among a selected group of persons with a leader, in front of an audience that joins in later.
When Used: As a technique to stimulate interest and thinking, to provoke better discussion.
Procedure: The leader plans with the four to eight panel members. The panel discusses informally without set speeches. The leader opens the discussion to the larger group, and summarizes.
Limitations: The discussion can get off-track. The personality of the speaker can overshadow the content of the discussion. A vocal speaker can monopolize the program.

Symposia
Description: A discussion in which a topic is broken into various parts. Each part is presented by an expert or well-informed person in a brief, concise speech.
When Used: When you want to transmit specific information.
Procedure: The facilitator meets with three or four group members and plans an outline. The participants are introduced and give reports. The group questions the speakers. At the end of the discussion, the facilitator summarizes the main issues.
Limitations: Speakers and groups can get off track. The personality of the speakers can overshadow the content. A very vocal speaker can monopolize the conversation.

Debates
Description: A pro-and-con discussion of a controversial issue. The objective is to convince the audience rather than display skill in attacking the opponent.
When Used: When discussing a controversial issue on which there are fairly definite opinions on both sides to bring these differences out in the open in a friendly manner.
Procedure: The group is divided into sides of pro and con. Each speaker should be limited to a predetermined time followed by rebuttal, if desired.
Limitations: Members may not be objective about the subject.
Experience Discussions

Description: A small or large group discussion following a report on the main point of a book, article, or life experience.

When Used: To present a new point of view or an issue, to stimulate thought and discussion.

Procedure: Participants plan how the review is to be presented, then have an open discussion on pertinent issues and points of view as experienced.

Limitations: Inability of some participants to relate to others and motivate thinking.

Concentric Circles

Description: A small circle of group members forms within a large circle. The inner circle discusses a topic while the role of the outer circle is to listen. The discussion is then reversed.

When Used: As a technique to stimulate interest and to provoke good discussion. It is especially good to get more response from a group that is slow in participating.

Procedure: The facilitator and planning group develop questions to be discussed by the concentric circle, then the larger circle.

Limitations: Much thought and preparation needed in preparing questions for discussion. A room with sufficient space and movable chairs is needed.

Reaction Sheet

Description: A method of reacting to ideas that are controversial, are new, really "hit home."

When Used: As a way to get the group to react. It can be combined with other discussion methods.

Procedure: Participants prepare a topic and reaction sheets. They then explain and distribute the reaction sheets with instructions to write as they listen, watch, or read. A group discussion follows.

Limitations: Topic needs to be somewhat controversial.
Phillips 66

Description: A spontaneous method where six people express their opinions for six minutes.

When Used: To add spice and variety to methods of presentation.

Procedure: Participants first define the topic of discussion. The facilitator selects six people and allows them six minutes for discussion. A group discussion follows.

Limitations: The group and topics of discussion must be used somewhat flexibly.

Role Playing

Description: The spontaneous acting-out of a situation or incident by selected individuals.

When Used: As a basis for developing clearer insights into people's feelings, and the forces in a situation that facilitate or block good human relations.

Procedure: The facilitator or group chooses an appropriate situation or problem. The group defines the roles and general characteristics of each player, then enacts the scene. The facilitator observes and discusses specific behaviours, underlying forces or emotional reactions.

Limitations: Requires skilled facilitation, so actors play roles seriously, without self-consciousness.

Picture Making

Description: A way of bringing out ideas or principles on a topic by means of simple illustrations made by group members on a blackboard or large chart paper.

When Used: As a technique to stimulate interest, thinking, and participation. Very good for flowcharts and models.

Procedure: The facilitator and planning-group members select general principles or questions which would be suitable to illustrate. Facilitator divides the group into four or five subgroups. Each subgroup is given a statement or problem to illustrate. After completing the picture making, each group shows and explains its picture. This is followed by a discussion.

Limitations: The facilitator must clearly state the value of picture-making and supply adequate materials.
Brainstorming

Description: Technique of creative thinking in which group members think about a problem or topic and express their ideas.

When Used: To get new ideas and release individual potential in thinking about ideas.

Procedure: The facilitator and members of the planning group select suitable problems or questions on the topic selected by the entire group. The leader explains to the group the meaning of brainstorming and the following rules: critical judgments are ruled out; criticism is to be applied late; a large quantity of ideas is wanted; the more ideas generated, the better the chance of obtaining good ones; free wheeling is welcomed; the wilder the idea the better, since it is easier to tame them down than to pump them up; and hitchhiking is legitimate, if you can improve someone else’s idea. A recorder lists the ideas. As a follow-up, a copy of the list of ideas is distributed to group members before the next meeting in order to generate more structured discussions.

Limitations: Practical with no more than 20 persons. Becomes disorganized without careful planning of material to be covered and skillful direction from discussion leader.

Media and Audio-visual Material

Description: Media and audio-visual material is employed as a means of presenting information.

When Used: When information from various sources is available for group presentation. Students can also be asked to bring relevant newspaper clippings to class over a period of time which discuss or study a topic.

Procedure: The facilitator views the material in advance for appropriateness and to devise questions for participants. Specific methods include: television programs, song lyrics, videotapes, audiotapes, pictures, slides, films, film strips, three-dimensional models, posters, demonstration objects, overhead transparencies, multi-media presentations using computers, photos, board displays and diagrams, flip chart papers. The class views the presentation and follows with discussion, role-play, etc.

Limitations: The facilitator must spend time reviewing the material prior to class presentation. Special equipment is often needed and must be arranged prior to class time.
**Guest Speakers**

**Description:** A way of bringing new ideas and people into the classroom.

**When Used:** When someone other than the facilitator is an expert in a field and is available for guest appearances.

**Procedure:** The class leader and guest speaker discuss the topic to be covered and details of the class time, how the topic fits into the course, etc. The guest speaker may appear virtually, through videoconferencing or on Sakai discussions.

**Limitations:** Guest speakers are often difficult to fit into the class schedule and often require travel expenses be paid.

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**Team Teaching**

**Description:** A way of bringing new ideas and people into the classroom. Similar to guest speakers, but the speaker is involved in the class for more than one session.

**When Used:** When two or more facilitators can effectively combine their interests and areas of expertise, and share the class time and work.

**Procedure:** The facilitators decide who covers each topic and when sessions will be conducted. Each is responsible for a section; sections are taught independently except for discussion on how sections flow together.

**Limitations:** Requires a coordinated effort by the team members or it may be very disjointed.

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**Socratic Method**

**Description:** A dialogue in which the leader asks leading questions of the group.

**When Used:** To vary the routine of a regular class and when class participation is desired.

**Procedure:** The facilitator prepares a topic for discussion, then leads the class through it by asking leading questions.

**Limitations:** The facilitator carries the responsibility for the progress of the discussion, and must be well-prepared with questions.
Demonstrations

Description: A visual way of presenting information to a group; often supplements a written presentation or lecture.

When Used: When a topic or idea will have more direct impact if presented visually.

Procedure: The facilitator either prepares the demonstration or asks a guest to do so.

Limitations: All group members must be able to see the demonstration clearly. It must be rehearsed to work smoothly on the presentation day.

Case Studies

Description: An actual account of a particular incident and/or problem is presented to the class. How the matter was resolved is included.

When Used: When a specific example is the best means of illustrating a topic. This method is often used to supplement traditional lecture approaches to a topic. Can be used to synthesize ideas and apply theory to practical problems.

Procedure: The facilitator documents a case study, altering actual names and places if required. The case study is presented to the class and is generally followed by a discussion.

Limitations: Case studies require additional work by the facilitator to ensure that they are straightforward and appropriate examples of what is being presented.

Committee Work and Reports

Description: Students work in small groups to develop interpersonal and organizational skills, and take a more active role in learning. This provides practice in presenting ideas to a group.

When Used: When a topic can be broken into small components that can be handled by different groups. It allows students to be more active in the learning process.

Procedure: The facilitator organizes the topic in components, group’s students into small units, then gives groups instructions on how to approach their task, where to seek information, and/or how to carry out their activities. The units are given a period of time in which to complete their reports, which are then presented to the whole class, followed by discussion.

Limitations: Interpersonal conflicts can occur when personalities clash or some members do most of the work.
Online Discussion
Description: Opportunity to pool and test ideas, experience and knowledge.
When Used: As a supplement or instead of a face-to-face discussion.
Procedure: Requires access to online discussion area, see Section on Educational Technologies and requesting a course in Sakai
Limitations: Guidelines should be established early as to what the requirements for participation are. If expectations are for a certain level of response, then modeling and examples should be provided. If it is not tied to assessment, some students won’t bother to participate.

Two other alternative methods are:

Instruction Games and Simulations
Simulations or instruction games involve students in some kind of competition or achievement behaviour in relation to a specific objective. By placing the student in a learning situation, this strategy enables the student to contextualize the problem or situation in order to identify different solutions or alternatives. The advantage of such a strategy is that students are actively involved in the learning process and must react to the information instead of passively receiving the content of the course.

Tutoring
A tutor guides a student, usually individually, in a particular subject or for a certain purpose. This allows interaction with students who in large settings are uncomfortable about asking questions and seeking clarifications. Independent studies entail use of this teaching method.

Motivating Students
There is a strong link between student motivation and learning. Students learn material that they find interesting and challenging. Since learning is an ongoing process and since the student is constantly in a learning situation, motivation plays a central role in the amount of time students will invest in their learning.

Your task is to facilitate learning in the classroom; this is partly accomplished by motivating students to learn. Yet you cannot make students be motivated. All you can do is increase the probability that the students will move themselves in the direction of the course goals.

The challenge is to create a learning environment in which students become independent in their learning instead of relying on external reward. This entails providing opportunities for students to move from extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation. This process can be facilitated by fostering critical thinking, by providing a positive feeling tone, by heightening interest, by increasing the level of success and by providing immediate feedback. These elements are all related to previously mentioned aspects of teaching.

Part of the "art" of teaching involves guiding and encouraging students to be independent and self-motivated, helping them explore their own strengths, and facilitating their personal and intellectual growth.
How can you take an active role in motivating student learning?

The following tips may help:

- Begin with the student; use the students' interests in your examples.
- Establish the relevance of the course; discuss the ways in which you find the course interesting.
- Involve the students in the choice of what will be studied, where possible; provide a variety of readings they can choose from.
- Arrange learning tasks at levels appropriate to the abilities of your students.
- Reward your students by providing immediate and specific feedback.
- Offer opportunities for students to experience the thrill of discovering; increase their curiosity in the field. Curiosity fosters learning.
- Use teacher-student interactions: involve the students; place them in an active learning situation.

Creating a Supportive Learning Environment

Students who feel comfortable in the classroom setting and who have some positive rapport with the professor are more likely to have an enriching learning experience. Students often surpass normal course expectations if they feel very positive about the learning climate. In the long run, professors will foster more learning by devoting time, especially during the first few classes, to creating a supportive environment. The following suggestions may be helpful in establishing the kind of environment that will facilitate students' learning and make your experience as a professor more comfortable as well.

- Learn students' names.
- Provide non-verbal encouragement.
- Avoid being judgmental of students.
- Relate to students on a personal level.
- Provide specific positive reinforcement.
- Treat your students as adults.
- Make yourself available. Post your office hours, and announce ahead of time any changes.
- Never humiliate a student.
- Be as positive as possible.
- Try to understand the cause of inattentive behaviours.
Getting Feedback from Students

Best Practices for the Evaluation of Teaching

Administration Process

- While the specific processes used may vary somewhat from one academic unit to the next, best practice suggests the following general processes be used:

- Course evaluations should be administered for all courses as per the Collective Agreement (1 July 2006 to 30 June 2008), Article 16.03 (f).

- A third party (another faculty member, instructor, administrative assistant or graduate student within the department) who has no contact with the course being evaluated should distribute and collect the evaluation forms.

- Where appropriate, i.e. in courses with substantial online content, evaluation forms should be available for submission online.

- Purpose and process of course evaluation should be clearly articulated especially to students at the time of administration.

- An unbiased third party should summarize reports before they are given to a faculty member. This obviously has resource implications for the department.

- Faculty members are informed of who has access to evaluation data and for what purpose.

- Any individual who has access to evaluation data formally acknowledges that ownership belongs to the faculty member and an agreement of confidentiality is established.

- All course evaluation data are returned to the faculty member as one form of documentation of teaching.

- Academic departments should examine the process and content of course evaluation forms on a regular basis.

- Academic departments should make use of the resources available from the CTLET regarding formative and summative evaluation of teaching and courses.

Clarity and Accountability

This process and a copy of the departmental form should be posted on the departmental website.

Formative Evaluation of Teaching

In a 2006 survey, almost 60% of faculty reported they use the evaluation of teaching forms to improve their course and teaching. In order for feedback on teaching to be effective for those students
providing feedback, it should be provided while the instructor is still able to modify teaching, i.e. mid-way through course.

Instead of relying on the end of term evaluations to make formative change in your teaching and course, there are options for instructors to get feedback from students before the end of the course.

There are a variety of example feedback forms that you can copy and distribute to your students at a mid-point during your course. These forms including the useful and robust Teaching Behaviours Inventory, developed by Harry G. Murray is available at the CTLET office in TH253A.

One Minute Papers


DESCRIPTION: One-Minute Papers, a technique also known as the Half-Sheet Response, provide a quick and extremely simple way to collect written feedback on student reactions. The teacher stops class a few minutes early and poses one or two questions to which students are asked to react. The students write their reactions on half-sheets of paper (hence the second name), or index cards, the teacher has handed out.

PURPOSE: One-Minute Papers elicit timely and limited student feedback on one or two specific questions about the course in general or a specific class session. That feedback will help teachers decide if midcourse corrections or changes are needed and, if so, what kinds to make.

SUGGESTIONS FOR USE: One-Minute Papers are probably most useful in large lecture or lecture/ discussion courses, although the technique can be easily adapted to other settings. The questions that teachers pose may concern class procedures, content, materials, activities and assignments, or any other specific element that the teacher wants to examine. One-Minute Papers work best at the end or the beginning-of a class session. It is a productive warm-up or wrap-up activity.

EXAMPLE: After the first three weeks of the semester, a chemistry teacher has the feeling that the students in her undergraduate chemistry class—a lecture and lab class with 150 students—may not be getting all that they should from her lectures. Ten minutes before the end of the class period, she quickly passes out 3-by-5 index cards to the class. She then asks them to write a very brief answer on the cards to the following two questions: 1. What was the most important thing you learned in today's class? 2. What question or questions that you have from today's class remain unanswered?

PROCEDURE:

1. Write down one or two questions about the course content, activities or materials to which you'd like your students to respond. Are they questions that the students can answer quickly and briefly? To what extent are you willing to act on the students' responses? If you decide your question is appropriate and if you are willing to respond to the One-Minute Papers, plan to set aside five to ten minutes of your next class to use the technique.
2. During the first or last few minutes of the class session, hand out index cards or ask students to take out a half-sheet of paper.

3. Unless there is a very good reason to know who wrote what, direct students to leave their names off the paper or card.

4. Write one or, at the most, two questions on the chalkboard ask students to respond to them frankly and concisely—in single words, short phrases, or very short sentences, as appropriate.

**Summative Evaluation of Teaching:**
Approximately 50% of Brock faculty reported that evaluation of teaching forms are used at the departmental level for the purpose of promotion and tenure. Any robust analysis of a complex topic like teaching university courses should include a multi-dimensional approach. It is recommended that faculty supplement their documentation of teaching with additional forms of summative evaluation of teaching for P&T. For example, student focus groups or peer evaluations.

**Working with Teaching Assistants**
(or seminar leaders/lab demonstrators)

The concept of "mentoring" was first used in industry, where young apprentices were assigned an experienced worker to train them on the job. A similar concept applies to TAs. Faculty working with TAs should be aware of the important role they play in the professional development of their TAs, and should make an effort to provide the necessary assistance and guidance.

Few outstanding teachers are born. TAs are to be considered students of university teaching. Since they are learning about teaching while being a TA, a teaching assistantship is very much like an apprenticeship. Because Brock uses both undergraduate and graduate students as seminar leaders in some departments, good mentoring is extremely important.

When assuming a teaching assistantship for the very first time, TAs may have experiences very similar to those of new faculty. For this reason, TAs should be given, from the beginning, clear information about what is expected of them.

It is recommended that Teaching Assistant and supervisor meet on a regular basis to discuss issues such as

- the TAs experiences in the classroom
- how to assist students in meeting the outcomes of the course
- the criteria used for evaluation and grading, if applicable
- the content to be covered in the course
- how to deal with problematic students
- resources available to TAs
**Begin your Semester Discussing Responsibilities**

Just as different faculty have different ideas about what a TA’s responsibilities should be, students are just as likely be confused about what they’re suppose to be doing. You can save a lot of time and trouble by clarifying your expectations and those of your TA right at the beginning of the semester. Beforehand make a checklist of the kinds of tasks that the course will require of both of you and include some general items about time commitments, class attendance, office hours, appropriate relationships with students, and so on. Then sit down with your TA and go over your respective responsibilities to the course, to the students and to each other. By doing this early in the semester, you’ll be opening lines of communication that will stand you in good stead later.

The teaching assistant is a wonderful bridge between student and instructor in two different ways. The individual serving as the TA serves as a bridge between the students in a class and the faculty member who is the instructor - sometimes an awkward position. In another way the teaching assistantship itself is the activity that brings the individual student from the student role to the instructor role - sometimes an awkward transition. Whichever way you want to think about it, the bridge should be built thoughtfully and reflectively if it is to stand up to the stresses it is bound to experience.


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**TA Certificate**

TAs should be encouraged by their supervisors to attend workshops offered by their department and/or the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies. The Centre offers a workshop program for TAs: completion of 8 workshops throughout the academic year earns the TA a certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. Completion of 16 workshop credits and a statement of teaching philosophy earns an Advanced certificate. Workshops offered by the Centre include topics such as rights and responsibilities of TAs, leading effective seminars, being an effective lab demonstrator, facilitating discussion, evaluating and grading exams, motivating students, and working with international students.

A TA Guide to Teaching at Brock is also available through the Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies. The guide gives tips on leading seminars and labs and provides a list of suggestions and strategies for dealing with problematic situations.

The Centre also offers an intensive three day Instructional Skills Workshop (ISW) which provides opportunities for TAs to practice and develop their instructional skills in a small group setting. TAs receive verbal, written and video feedback on their teaching.

Despite the importance of the centralized TA workshop program offered by the Centre, it needs to be emphasized that the training of TAs should also be the responsibility of the department, and thereby, of the individual faculty member. The Centre will also work with departments and faculty to devise specific workshop sessions for their TAs.
Graduate Student Supervision

Traditionally, faculty development efforts have focused on the improvement of undergraduate teaching. In recent years, the supervision of graduate students has received more attention. Since graduate students are recognized as the potential professoriate of tomorrow, graduate schools have a major responsibility in ensuring the best possible graduate student experience.

Graduate students differ in a variety of aspects from undergraduate students. As a rule, they are:

♦ more self-directed in their learning
♦ more knowledgeable in their subject area
♦ older and more mature, or simply more "adult"

Graduate school, however, offers many challenges to these students. While developmental psychologists tell us that people grow and mature as a result of being challenged, challenges may also be experienced as overwhelming, and may in fact be the reason for "stuckness" rather than for development.

Graduate school offers students the unique opportunity to conduct a piece of research from beginning to end under the guidance of an experienced researcher. All too often, however, graduate students are expected to work entirely on their own. Meetings with their supervisor are rare and short. While this does not constitute a problem for some graduate students, neglected student supervision may cause feelings of isolation and disorientation for others.

Graduate students may also be more reluctant to admit their confusion than are undergraduates. When working with graduate students, it is therefore important to remember that these people have already acquired considerable expertise in their area and are generally more self-directed and goal-oriented (otherwise they would not pursue the graduate degree). Graduate student supervisors should be sensitive to the graduate student's current situation.

The following recommendations are made:

♦ make yourself available for consultation
♦ provide support and challenge
♦ share your expertise
♦ acknowledge the student's expertise
♦ become a skillful questioner; do not tell them what to do, but open up new ways of thinking

Graduate students should also be encouraged to follow a "collegial approach" with their peers. Regular discussion groups in which they can inform each other about the current state of their research, or the encouragement of joint research projects, are promising ways to enrich the graduate student experience.
Graduate Teaching Assistant Practicum

The Graduate Teaching Assistant Practicum is a self-directed program of professional development in university teaching. The practicum consists of a number of components that together reflect growth as a facilitator of student learning. The practicum is documented within a teaching dossier.

Each graduate student participating in the program is to compile a teaching dossier that provides evidence of participation, reflection and assessment in each selected practicum component. The dossier will include a statement of teaching philosophy and a contextual narrative or framework that describes the practicum pieces. The dossiers submitted to the CTLET are assessed for breadth and depth. Although assessment is a necessary part of the practicum process, the CTLET will work with each and every student to ensure a successful practicum wherever possible.

Workshops are offered each term on issues of interest to graduate student teaching assistants. Each workshop attended can be applied to meet the requirements of the GTA Practicum or the TA Certificate in Teaching and Learning.

For more information, contact Jill Grose at ext. 4392
Teaching With Technology

Educational Technologies at Brock University

The CTLET continually works to develop the necessary expertise to guide the faculty, staff, and students at Brock University toward the effective use of technology for teaching and learning. A large part of supporting educational technologies centers on the use of Sakai for course delivery. If you would like assistance with your Sakai courses or with others aspects of educational technologies, feel free to contact CTLET at ext 3933.

Web Services

All Brock University faculty and staff are entitled to an e-mail account. To get your e-mail account, ask your department's Administrative Assistant for a Computer Account Application which must be filled out completely, and signed by the Dean and Chair / Director of your department. The completed application should be sent to User Services, ITS. Please note that you do not have to sign this form, and thus the process can begin without you setting foot on campus.

Once processed, you will receive a copy of the Computer Account Application, which will include the username and password for your account. It is imperative that you keep this form in a secure place. If there is ever a need to reset your password, you will need to refer back to your Computer Account Application for your default password.

From the Brock home page =>Web Services menu, change your password

When you reset your password, ensure that is minimum 8 characters and has a combination of 3 of the 4 options:
- upper case letters
- lower case letters
- numbers
- special characters (!@#$%)

Once you have changed your password, go to my.brocku.ca and activate your account.

What is Sakai/Isaak?

Brock University uses a Learning Management System (LMS) named Isaak. Isaak is based on the open source Sakai LMS. Isaak is web-based and offers a secure learning environment that permits scalable interactive communication. Since it is browser-based, and platform independent, students can log in from anywhere anytime. The flexibility of the course design tools available to faculty makes this environment appealing to the technical novice and to the experienced developer of online courses.

Sakai/Isaak permits authenticated access only, i.e. it is CAMPUS ID and Password protected and by default only grants access to students enrolled in a specific course. Each course site can be used for distributing files, links and sending announcements. Additional tools can be added at any time for common tasks course for information dissemination, synchronous and asynchronous communication among students and the instructor (threaded discussion, course only mail, calendar and time management tools, and other collaboration tools such as blogs and wikis) as well as accepting assignments and returning grades in a secure, accountable and private manner.
**How else can Sakai/Isaak enhance my course?**

Many students are not comfortable speaking in a seminar in front of their peers. This is frequently true for students whose first language is not English. The asynchronous threaded discussion area provides a forum for students who prefer to prepare a more reflective response to questions. The discussion forum celebrates l’esprit d’escalier – students now have the opportunity to contribute that good idea that only occurred to them after the class was over. Experience has shown that providing this access to class discussion convinces students that learning transcends a timetable slot and a classroom location. The discussion board can also be used to help with class management and serve as a place for course questions to be asked and answered by anyone; potentially saving the instructor and TAs a lot of repetitive E-Mail messages.

In addition to presentation of web materials, **Sakai/Isaak** also offers instruments for formative and summative evaluation. Multiple choice, true/false, and short answer testing may be set for auto-correction, with students receiving their grades within seconds of submitting their answers. Testing may be set to record the first grade, the last grade, the highest grade, or an average of all scores for that test, depending on the learning outcome the instructor wishes to achieve.

Good teaching is often impeded by the need for good course management. Course management can be enhanced through creative use of tools within **Sakai/Isaak**. Documents can be made available to students at all times. Glossaries, FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and collections of web resources can easily be shared. Simple tools like ‘Message’ become considerably more powerful when a decision is made to limit all course communications to **Sakai/Isaak** and a reasonable response time is agreed upon. Strategies like this allow instructors to reserve their @BrockU.ca address for other purposes and contain course communications to **Sakai/Isaak**.

**How can I get my course into Sakai/Isaak?**

Instructors can request a course space in Isaak, Brock University's Sakai-based system, by going to https://lms.brocku.ca/ and selecting "Instructors: Click here to request a site". You can then enter your CAMPUS ID and password to log-in then choose "Request a Course" to begin the process of selecting which course you are responsible for and how you would like to configure it.

**How can I get training in Sakai/Isaak?**

Call the CTLET at Ext.3933 for an appointment for a one-on-one training session or watch for our late summer and fall workshops. Alternately, you may schedule a departmental training session, either as a presentation in your department or as a hands-on session in one of CTLET’s teaching spaces. Finally, don’t forget to look for Faculty Development seminars in educational technology for topics related to the LMS.

For the latest information on **Sakai/Isaak** at Brock University, visit the CTLET website at www.brocku.ca/ctlet.
**Wikis**

A wiki is a collaborative website which can be directly edited by anyone with access to it. Wiki's are great repositories for collaborative information and offer effective and simple tools to track revisions and who made contributions.

This configuration of the Wiki server allows members of the Brock University community to request the creation of their own wiki to collaboratively create a web site, choosing their own title, URL and types of access. The system administrator can then automatically create the wikis with a few clicks ensuring that it is not a burdensome resource to support.

Wiki is Hawaiian for quick and our server, located at kumu.brocku.ca "Kumu" takes its name from the Hawaiian word for teacher or starting place.

The server and its ability to create wikis for instructors on demand should provide a teaching and collaborative tool that will benefit instructors, researchers and students at Brock and their partners. Wikis are great tools for organizing information and publishing it. Using nothing more than an internet connection and a web browser individuals can add their knowledge and refine others in projects that might entail; documentation or the creation of a reference, policy drafting, visioning, organization, a repository for group projects, creating portfolios, developing an on-line "text book" and more. More ideas for using a Wiki in your teaching can be found at http://kumu.brocku.ca/help/Wikis_In_Education

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For more ideas for using a wiki in your teaching and to request your own wiki for teaching or research purposes, visit the CTLET website - Resources - Teaching & Learning Guide.
Phrase-Matching Software / Turnitin.com

Turnitin.com is a tool to promote integrity in student submissions. Through advanced plagiarism detection tools and exceptional reporting tools turnitin.com can deter students from committing academic misconduct and assure an equal playing field for your students.

Through turnitin.com students can make electronic submissions to you that are given an authoritative timestamp and receipt for them. Once students have electronically submitted their work you can evaluate each assignment and return it with feedback. However, few tools match a pen and paper for providing correcting and evaluating written work and you may also want to ask students to submit a printed copy.

Turnitin.com also has a student collaboration tool for peer review. Giving students access to others’ writing often helps students understand what university writing should look like and increase the depth of their understanding of course concepts.

Phrase Matching Software

According to the Faculty Handbook

Instructors may take advantage of a number of different phrase matching software programs to assist them in the detection of plagiarism (e.g., Turnitin.com) during the course of evaluating essays, assignments, and other work that is required for a given course. However, if an instructor has decided to employ such systems, students must be informed in writing at the beginning of the course (see FHB III: 10.1.3 H.).

It will be assumed that students who remain in the course, having been informed of the use of such systems, will have agreed to their use. However, circumstances may arise whereby a student must continue in a course despite their principled objection to participate in the use of such systems. In those cases, the instructor must provide such students with a reasonable offline alternative to using the system such as, but not limited to:

i) Require a short reflection paper on research methodology;
ii) Require a draft bibliography prior to submission of the final work;
iii) Require the cover page and first cited page of each reference source to be photocopied and submitted with the final paper; and/or
iv) Require the submission of specified rough notes and drafts.

The exception to the use of offline alternatives shall include courses where academic work is compared using a database that resides on the premises of Brock University and is used to measure the similarity of academic work within a specific course or program for the purposes of plagiarism detection (e.g., Computer Science).

Instructors are responsible for taking steps to detect plagiarism in all course work that is submitted by students.

www.brocku.ca/ctlet

To request a Turnitin.com account, visit the CTLET website- Resources- Teaching & Learning Guide.
YOUR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN TEACHING

Resources Available at the CTLET
(Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies)

Programs

Faculty Development Sessions
Each year a variety of workshops are offered to meet the needs and interests of faculty members and teaching assistants. These workshops explore issues related to teaching in higher education such as developing a teaching dossier, leading effective seminars, or teaching large classes. We encourage all new faculty as well as mid-career and established senior faculty to attend workshops related to academic responsibilities at Brock. Meeting colleagues from other disciplines is essential to establishing a learning community that can assist you in balancing the demands of your professional and personal life. Our sessions coincide with concerns associated with specific times in the semester (e.g., grading protocols before mid-term assignments; assessment considerations before exam creation, and so forth). New faculty will also have opportunities for discipline-specific facilitation.

Instructional Skills Workshops
The Instructional Skills Workshop is a 25-year-old, peer-based, experiential instructional development program and is one of the most successful approaches to pedagogy in post-secondary institutions across North America and other parts of the world. Held over three days, the ISW is designed to enhance the effectiveness of both new and experienced educators. The CTLET offers the ISW to both faculty and TAs.

Teaching Assistant Workshop Series and Certificate Program
The Centre offers a series of workshops throughout the year specifically designed for teaching assistants, seminar leaders, lab demonstrators and interested university staff. Past topics have included leading effective seminars, motivating students, rights and responsibilities of TAs, cross-cultural awareness and using multimedia for instructional delivery. The workshops are offered monthly and are free of charge. Participants in the Workshop Series can earn credit towards either the Basic or the Advanced TA Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. It is also possible to earn credits by attending training workshops hosted by individual departments in conjunction with the Centre.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Practicum
The Centre offers a Graduate Teaching Assistant Practicum which is a self-directed program of professional development in university teaching.

Educational Technologies Series
This series offers workshops in technologically assisted instruction, such as using Sakai as an adjunct tool in course delivery.
Events

**Tribute to Teaching**
This event is held in December each year and celebrates the contributions and successes of the University’s teaching award winners. New faculty are invited to attend.

**Best Practices Day**
Best Practices in Teaching and Learning is a full day professional development event open to all interested individuals across the institution. Held in May each year, this day is organized around themes related to teaching in higher education. Previous themes include Inquiry-based learning, curriculum reform across disciplines and degree level expectations. A call for proposals is circulated in March.

**TA Day**
A full day orientation and training for teaching assistants, seminar leaders and lab demonstrators, this event is held the second Saturday of September annually. Please encourage all your TAs to attend.

Resources

**Publications**
The CTLET independently produces a bi-monthly newsletter that contains tips on teaching and announcements of upcoming events. The Centre also distributes both a Faculty and TA Guide to Teaching and Learning, to all participants of the Faculty, TA and Sessional/Contract Orientations. These Teaching and Learning Guides are also available on line at www.brocku.ca.
Web Page

The Centre’s web page contains links to other sites devoted to higher education and adult learning. It also has information about programs and workshops offered to teaching assistants and faculty. Visit the site at www.brocku.ca/ctlet.

Podcasts

The University Teaching Podcast is the CTLET’s podcast that features presentations given at various events centred on teaching. Delivering these presentations via podcast has given them a new audience, reach and currency. The CTLET has also become the de facto podcasting resource on campus and has consulted with a number of parts of the university that are interested in podcasting.

Brock is in the process of creating our iTunes U presence and will soon be distributing audio and video podcasts to teachers, learners and the public via iTunesU.

Resources Topics related to Teaching & Learning available at the CTLET

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Liaison

Advisory Groups
CTLET has the privilege of being advised by a number of groups with various pedagogic and scholarly specialties. These include:

Teaching Council, comprised of representatives from each Faculty, meets monthly to advise, consult and discuss teaching related issues of impact across the institution.

Educational Technologies Advisory Group (ETAG) meets once a month and has broad representation and excellent consultation across ITS, Registrars Office, online course delivery (FOE, FMS, FOH). Several successful projects include the development of a UPC protocol for online courses, more streamlined processes for support of online courses, and broader consultation on issues relating to grade entry and identity management.

The Best Practices Recognition Advisory Group (BRAG) meets twice each term and focuses on communication and liaison regarding Academic Integrity, International Students, Students with Disabilities, and Human Rights and Equity. This group also oversees the Best Practices awards.

The Room Modernization Committee is a campus-wide committee and has representation from broader constituencies of staff and students. The group meets on a monthly basis and addresses issues of liaison, communication, faculty development and the learning culture at Brock University.

The Graduate Student Professional Development Committee examines ways in which graduate students can be best supported across the institution.

Visit the CTLET web site www.brocku.ca/ctlet to find out about your faculty advisory group representative.

Senate Committees
CTLET sits ex officio on the Senate Committee on Teaching and Learning and consults with the Senate Committees on Graduate Studies, Undergraduate Student Affairs, Undergraduate Program Committee and Information Technology and Infrastructure. The Centre liaises with the Teaching and Learning Committee in the adjudication of the Brock Distinguished Teaching Award.
Services

Online Course Development

The CTLET consults on on-line courses development and the re-development of existing courses for the web. Building on our ISW workshops, Designing Course Outline workshops, and our existing Gold and Platinum levels of Sakai support, the CTLET can help instructors design and develop courses for on-line delivery.

Evaluation of Teaching

The Centre assists faculty in soliciting feedback from students about teaching. Centre staff will also assist with the design of a student rating form tailored to specific instructional situations. Faculty members are asked to provide some basic information about the nature of their courses, the methods they use, and whether the purpose is to receive student feedback for instructional development purposes or for promotion and tenure applications. Based on this information, the Centre and the faculty member decide on an appropriate set of rating items. The Centre can assist in the analysis and interpretation of the data and the representation of these data are in a teaching dossier.

Consultation

The Centre works with faculty members on an individual basis, providing confidential consultation to support the development of teaching expertise. On request, the Centre will conduct observations and provide feedback on your classroom teaching. The Centre also works with departments and programs on issues related to teaching improvement.

Grants

Teaching and Learning Enhancement Fund

Funds are available to faculty who wish to apply for grants for innovative teaching projects and initiatives. Emphasis is placed on projects that have a direct impact on teaching at Brock. Funds are also available for professional development activities such as participation in the STLHE (Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education) conference.

www.brocku.ca/ctlet
Check out the CTLET Website for more details.
Brock Teaching Awards

**Brock University Award for Distinguished Teaching**
Sponsor: Vice President, Academic
Eligibility: All faculty
Number of awards: 1
Award: certificate and monetary award
Contact: Chair, Senate Committee on Teaching and Research

**Brock University Faculty Award of Excellence**
Sponsor: Dean of each Faculty
Eligibility: All faculty
Number of awards: 1 per Faculty
Award: certificate and monetary award
Contact: Administrative Assistant to the Dean

**Chancellor’s Chairs for Teaching Excellence**
Sponsor: Vice President, Academic
Eligibility: All tenured or tenure tracked faculty
Number of awards: up to six awards available
Award: plaque and monetary award of $5000/year for 3 years
Contact: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies

**Best Practices Award**
Sponsor: CTLET
Eligibility: All members of the Brock community
Number of awards: up to six award available
Award: certificate
Contact: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies

**Clark Thomson Award for Excellence in Sessional Teaching**
Sponsor: CTLET
Eligibility: All instructors on contracts or limited term appointments who teach undergraduate classes on a part time basis
Number of Awards: 1
Award: certificate and sponsorship for STLHE conference
Contact: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies

**Don Ursino Award for Excellence in the Teaching of Large Classes**
Sponsor: CTLET
Eligibility: Any instructor teaching a large class
Number of Awards: 1
Award: certificate and monetary award
Contact: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies

**Award for Excellence in Teaching for Early Career Faculty**
Sponsor: CTLET
Eligibility: All tenure-track faculty faculty in their first 5 years of service
Number of Awards: 1
Award: certificate and monetary award
Contact: Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies
TA Awards

Sponsor: The Centre for Teaching, Learning and Educational Technologies/Dean of Graduate Studies
Eligibility: All teaching assistants (includes course instructors, lecturers, lab demonstrators, seminar leaders, markers)
Number of awards: 3
Award: certificate and monetary award ($300.00 - $500.00)
Contact: Jill Grose, ext 4392

The Senior TA Award ($500.00) is presented to an individual TA in recognition of an outstanding contribution to teaching and learning at Brock. Eligible candidates must have at least three years of experience as TAs. The TA is nominated by two individuals: a faculty member, another TA or a student.

The TA Award ($300.00) is presented to an individual TA who shows promise in the field of teaching. Individuals eligible to receive this award are TAs, seminar leaders and lab demonstrators who have fewer than three years of experience as TAs but who have demonstrated a commitment to assisting others in reaching their educational goals.

The Graduate TA Award ($400) is presented to a graduate TA who has made a major contribution to teaching and learning at Brock. This award is sponsored by the Dean of Graduate Studies.

www.brocku.ca/ctlet
Check out the Awards and Grants section of the CTLET Website to see all the award winners from Brock University.
Developing a Teaching Dossier

For both new and experienced faculty, developing a teaching dossier is essential to your professional development as an instructor in higher education. In addition to the practical aspect of maintaining a comprehensive account of your teaching career, a teaching dossier also allows you to reflect on your personal growth as a teacher and articulate a theory of practice.

What is a teaching dossier?

A teaching dossier is an on-going collection of evidence about:

(1) teaching activities and their effectiveness (What do I do and how well do I do it?)
(2) faculty development (How am I developing as an instructor?)
(3) one’s theory of practice (Why do I do what I do?)

Why have one?

♦ teaching award nominations
♦ leave fellowships
♦ teaching development grants
♦ merit competitions
♦ job applications/transfers
♦ tenure and promotion submissions

What a dossier demonstrates:

♦ clear commitment to teaching
♦ accessibility to and rapport with students
♦ expertise in communicating the subject matter, appropriate use of techniques
♦ demonstrated innovation in teaching and willingness to take improvement risks
♦ objectivity and skill in handling tough teaching assignments/situations

(1) Evidence of teaching activities and their effectiveness can include:

♦ course outlines
♦ copies of assignments and tests
♦ records of graduate student supervision
♦ graduate student committees served on
♦ records of being an external examiner for theses and dissertations
♦ formative student evaluations
♦ responses to formative evaluations (what was changed)
♦ anecdotal student comments, letters, journals
♦ summative student evaluations
♦ commentary on summative student evaluations
- peer review or comment on course materials
- summaries of peer observations on teaching
- reviews from professional associations, employers, business letters or comments from former students
- documentation of involvement in curriculum or program development

(2) Faculty development activities can include

- attending faculty development workshops
- participation in a peer consultation program
- attending or giving papers at a conference on teaching
- conducting action research on one’s teaching
- working normally with a colleague to implement innovative strategies
- introducing technological or other new ideas into a course
- serving on an instructional development committee
- applying for grants to introduce new ideas into a course or program
- serving on committees related to teaching
- subscribing to educational journals
- membership in associations such as STLHE (the Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education)

(3) A statement of theory of practice can include responses to questions such as

- what are the goals of higher education?
- what are my goals as a teacher in higher education?
- what are my basic values and assumptions about teaching?
- how do I describe my role as an educator?
- how do I see the roles of students?
- what constraints and obstacles do I face as an educator?
- why do I do what I do?

The CTLET can also provide consultation on the development of your teaching dossier.

*The following essay provides a detailed look at preparing a statement of “theory of practice” or “philosophy of teaching” to be included in your teaching dossier.*
When asked to write a statement on their philosophy of teaching, many college teachers react in the same way as professionals, athletes, or artists might if asked to articulate their goals and how to achieve them: "Why should I spend time writing this down? Why can't I just do it?" For action-oriented individuals, the request to write down one's philosophy is not only mildly irritating, but causes some anxiety about where to begin. Just what is meant by a philosophy of teaching statement anyway?

In the current academic climate it is likely that most faculty will be asked for such a statement at some point during their careers. The emphasis on portfolios for personnel decision making, new commitment by institutions to the teaching mission, and the tight academic job market have stimulated more requests of college teachers to articulate their philosophies. At many colleges and universities the philosophy of teaching statement is becoming a regular part of the dossier for promotion and tenure and the faculty candidate application package. Such statements are often requested of nominees for teaching awards or applicants for funds for innovative educational projects.

Besides fulfilling requirements, statements of teaching philosophy can be used to stimulate reflection on teaching. The act of taking time to consider one's goals, actions, and vision provides an opportunity for development that can be personally and professionally enriching. Reviewing and revising former statements of teaching philosophy can help teachers to reflect on their growth and renew their dedication to the goals and values that they hold.

The Format of the Statement

One of the hallmarks of a philosophy of teaching statement is its individuality. However, some general format guidelines can be suggested:

- Most philosophy of teaching statements are brief, one or two pages long at most. For some purposes, an extended description is appropriate, but length should suit the context.
- Most statements avoid technical terms and favour language and concepts that can be broadly appreciated. If the statement is for specialists, a more technical approach can be used. A general rule is that the statement should be written with the audience in mind.
- Narrative, first-person approaches are generally appropriate. In some fields, a more creative approach, such as a poem, might be appropriate and valued; but in most, a straightforward, well-organized statement is preferred.
- The statement should be reflective and personal. What brings a teaching philosophy to life is the extent to which it creates a vivid portrait of a person who is intentional about teaching practices and committed to career.

Components of the Statement

The main components of philosophy of teaching statements are descriptions of how the teachers think learning occurs, how they think they can intervene in this process, what chief goals they have for students, and what actions they take to implement their intentions.
Conceptualization of learning. Interestingly, most college teachers agree that one of their main functions is to facilitate student learning; yet most draw a blank when asked how learning occurs. This is likely due to the fact that their ideas about this are intuitive and based on experiential learning, rather than on a consciously articulated theory. Most have not studied the literature on college student learning and development nor learned a vocabulary to describe their thinking. The task of articulating a conceptualization of learning is therefore difficult.

Many college teachers have approached the work of describing how they think student learning occurs through the use of metaphor. Drawing comparisons with known entities can stimulate thinking, whether or not the metaphor is actually used in the statement. For example, when asked to provide a metaphor, one teacher described student learning in terms of an amoeba. He detailed how the organism relates to its environment in terms of permeable membranes, movement, and the richness of the environment, translating these into the teaching-learning context by drawing comparisons with how students reach out and acquire knowledge and how teachers can provide a rich environment. Grasha (1996) has done extensive exploration of the metaphors that college students and teachers use to describe teaching and learning. An earlier classic that also contains an exploration of metaphors of teaching and learning is Israel Scheffier's *The Language of Education* (1960). Reinsmith (1994) applies the idea of archetypes to teaching. Such works might be consulted for ideas.

A more direct approach is for teachers to describe what they think occurs during a learning episode, based on their observation and experience or based on current literature on teaching and learning. Some useful sources that summarize current notions of learning in a very accessible way are contained in Svinicki (1991), Weinstein & Meyer (1991), and Bruning (1994). Teachers can also summarize what they have observed in their own practice about the different learning styles that students display, the different tempos they exhibit, the way they react to failure, and the like. Such descriptions can display the richness of experience and the teacher's sensitivity to student learning.

Conceptualization of teaching. Ideas on how teachers can facilitate the learning process follow from the model of student learning that has been described. If metaphors have been used, the teacher role can be an extension of the metaphor. For example, if student learning has been described as the information processing done by a computer, is the teacher the computer technician, the software, the database? If more direct descriptions of student learning have been articulated, what is the role of the teacher with respect to motivation? To content? To feedback and assessment? To challenge and support? How can the teacher respond to different learning styles, help students who are frustrated, accommodate different abilities?

Goals for students. Describing the teacher role entails detailing how the teacher can help students learn, not only a given body of content, but also process skills, such as critical thinking, writing, and problem solving. It also includes one's thoughts on lifelong learning - how teachers can help students to value and nurture their intellectual curiosity, live ethical lives, and have productive careers. For most teachers, it is easier to begin with content goals, such as wanting students to understand certain aerodynamic design principles or the treatment of hypertension. The related process goals, such as engineering problem solving or medical diagnostic skills, might be described next. Finally, career and lifelong goals, such as team work, ethics, and social commitment, can be detailed.

Implementation of the philosophy. An extremely important part of a philosophy of teaching statement is the description of how one's concepts about teaching and learning and goals for students are translated into action. For most readers, this part of the statement is the most revealing and the most memorable. It is also generally more pleasurable and less challenging to write. Here, college teachers describe how they conduct classes, mentor students, develop instructional resources, or grade performance. They provide details on what instructional strategies they use on a day-to-day basis. It is
in this section that teachers can display their creativity, enthusiasm, and wisdom. They can describe how their No Fault Test System or video taping technique for promoting group leadership skills implements their notions of how teachers can facilitate learning. They can portray what they want a student to experience in the classes they teach, the labs they oversee, the independent projects they supervise. They can describe their own energy level, the qualities they try to exhibit as a model and coach, the climate they try to establish in the settings in which they teach.

**Personal growth plan.** For some purposes, including a section on one's personal growth as a teacher is also important in a statement of teaching philosophy. This reflective component can illustrate how one has grown in teaching over the years, what challenges exist at the present, and what long-term goals are projected. In writing this section, it helps to think about how one's concepts as well as actions have changed over time. It might be stimulating to look at old syllabi or instructional resources one has created, asking about implicit assumptions behind these products. Dialogue with colleagues, comparison of practices with goals, and examination of student or peer feedback on teaching might help with the task of enumerating present questions, puzzles, and challenges. From these, a vision of the teacher one wants to become will emerge. Describing that teacher can be a very effective way to conclude a philosophy of teaching statement.

**Examples of Statements.** By far, the best philosophy of teaching statement examples for most college teachers are those of peers who teach in similar settings or disciplines. Since statements tend to be tailored to specific contexts, peer examples are thus highly appropriate models. Dialogue with colleagues on these statements can help to stimulate ideas for one's own statement as well.

Other examples are contained in several recent books on teaching portfolios, such as Seldin (1993) and O'Neil & Wright (1993). Reflective books on effective college teaching often contain extensive descriptions of teaching philosophies, such as the chapter on "Developing a Personal Vision of Teaching" in Brookfield's The Skillful Teacher (1990) and "Three Teaching Principles" in Louis Schmier's Random Thoughts (1995).

**Developing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement References**


**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

*Top 10 New Faculty “Need-to-Know”s*

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<td><strong>ET &amp; AV</strong> – who to call, when to call.</td>
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<td>Know what your $ limits are for phone, fax, photocopying, printing, postage, marking/grading.</td>
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<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td>Check out your <strong>teaching space</strong> before you teach there (&amp; see #7!).</td>
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<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td>Check out your <strong>course resources</strong> (reserve readings, course texts, LMS, course packs) before the first class (then see #7 or #6, if necessary).</td>
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<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td>Your <strong>students</strong> are at least as scared as you are.....and working just as hard to look cool, sophisticated, and confident.</td>
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<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Boundaries</strong> – set them; keep them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1</strong></td>
<td>If you <strong>mess up, ’fess up</strong> (ie., own your mistakes).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Bonus** – you **teach who you are; be reflective.**
# Campus Building Codes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Building Name</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Building Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>Alphie’s Trough</td>
<td>PLZ</td>
<td>Plaza Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CJD</td>
<td>Brock Research and Innovation</td>
<td>RBC</td>
<td>Rosalind Blauer Centre for Child Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLS</td>
<td>Concordia Lutheran Seminary</td>
<td>RH</td>
<td>Rodman Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CUB</td>
<td>Central Utilities Building</td>
<td>AS/ST H</td>
<td>South Academic Block</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEC</td>
<td>Decew Residence</td>
<td>SB-A</td>
<td>Shaver Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DHO WSE</td>
<td>David S. Howse Theatre</td>
<td>SB-B</td>
<td>Shaver House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>East Academic</td>
<td>SBH</td>
<td>Scotiabank Hall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EAR P</td>
<td>Alan Earp Building</td>
<td>SC</td>
<td>Student - Alumni Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GLN</td>
<td>573 Glenridge Ave</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Theal House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HAM</td>
<td>Hamilton Campus</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>Arthur Schmon Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HH</td>
<td>Harrison Hall</td>
<td>TA</td>
<td>Taro Hall, C3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOS</td>
<td>Shaver Hospital</td>
<td>TH</td>
<td>Thistle Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IH</td>
<td>Inniskillin Hall</td>
<td>VAL</td>
<td>Vallee Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KC</td>
<td>Kenmore Centre</td>
<td>VIL</td>
<td>Village Residence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOW</td>
<td>Arnie Lowenberger Residence</td>
<td>WC</td>
<td>Walker Complex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC (Blocks A-J)</td>
<td>MacKenzie Chown Complex</td>
<td>WH</td>
<td>Robert S.K. Welch Hall</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[www.brocku.ca/facilitiesmgmt/MB-CAMPUS-MAP](http://www.brocku.ca/facilitiesmgmt/MB-CAMPUS-MAP)
Academic Policies and Procedures

www.brocku.ca/ctlet
Links to policies and procedures available from the CTLET website-
Resources-Teaching & Learning Guide

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