

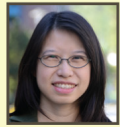
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Centre for Teaching and Learning



Reflecting on your Teaching

Good teachers are always thinking about what they are doing and how effective they are, even if they are not conscious of the fact. Good teachers monitor the level of understanding, check that the material is at the correct degree of difficulty, and make judgments about the engagement of their classes. As they do this they make adjustments immediately. This “Tools for Excellence” brochure suggests some mindful ways of reflecting on one’s practice and some informal action research projects that are easily undertaken.

Ticket out the Door

Five minutes before the end of class distribute a small slip of paper.

Ticket out the Door

What I like about this course is _____
A question I have is _____

Stress that the slips should be completed anonymously, then stand at the door and collect the slips. It is good to refer to the responses at the beginning of the next class. The students will feel that their contribution is appreciated and the instructor will be able to make changes quickly.

The questions can be changed;
'What needs to be improved?'
'What do you want more of?'
'Do you have any suggestions?'
'What else do you need before term ends?'

The Informal Questionnaire

Again this would be administered during the last 10 minutes of a class. This is a chance to ask about the difficulty of the material, how useful is the text, how appropriate are the assignments, how meaningful are the small group discussions that are held, what about the effectiveness of the TA's? It is important to ask questions to which it is possible to respond. It is suggested that the professor leave the room while these are completed and have a student collect the answers. Again this is an anonymous questionnaire.

The Closing Summary

Request students to work in pairs and write a short closing summary of the lecture. Suggest that they include the (*four?*) main concepts covered. Stress that the answers will not be for marks.

Your TA's Respond

Encourage feedback from the TA's. By encouraging frankness and stressing that this request is the result of a sincere attempt to improve; TA's can provide insightful comments.

Examine the Output

The systematic examination of any student created objects, portfolios, assignments, or writings designed to demonstrate learning. Check that the learning outcomes for the course are reflected in the student output. Are students meeting the objectives? If not, why not?

Peer Observation

Peer observation can provide opportunities for instructors to view each other's teaching in order to observe different teaching styles. This provides opportunities for critical reflection. For a more detailed description of peer coaching see The Centre's brochure, "Peer Coaching".

The Journal

Beginning instructors may find it particularly helpful to keep a regular journal. At the end of each class record what you feel good about, what did not go as planned, how appropriate was the pacing, what class discussions took place, what other activities went well or not so well. Over a short time span the instructor will have gathered useful data, observed patterns and will be able to reflect and adjust future instruction.

Self Observation

Have an experienced media technician, focus on an area of instruction to provide footage that will greatly assist in-depth reflective practice. This technique is particularly useful in providing data relative to class response, participation and time on task. *The Centre for Teaching and Learning can facilitate the video taping of your session.*



SoTL

The scholarship of teaching and learning involves exploring teaching and learning in your own context in a similar manner to how you would approach research in your field of specialization. It often involves reflecting on your own practice, seeking out resources to enhance what you are doing, implementing these enhancements, assessing the outcomes, and disseminating this knowledge to others. *The Centre for Teaching and Learning can assist you with a SoTL project leading to a publication or conference presentation.*

Only with a regular and frequent exchange of feedback can we keep re-calibrating our understandings of what has been learned and what still needs to be learned. Reflection is a metacognitive strategy that allows critical examination of our experiences, actions and decisions during the practice of pedagogy.

Centre for Teaching and Learning

The Centre for Teaching and Learning at UBC's Okanagan campus promotes and supports excellence in teaching and learning. The Centre provides campus-wide support for all models of teaching and learning, including online learning.

It is our Mission:

"To lead, support and promote teaching and learning excellence, innovation and scholarship at the UBC Okanagan campus."