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Effective Teaching Practices Reflections

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The Association of College and University Educators' (ACUE) course in Effective Teaching Practices helps faculty learn and implement techniques to improve student learning outcomes and engagement in their courses. I've put together three important lessons that have helped me in my large lecture courses. These techniques increased the positive performance of both my students and faculty in the classroom. All faculty can improve their courses by incorporating the techniques described in this reflection and by learning from the experiences I described while implementing the ACUE techniques.

Motivating Your Students

In order to enhance student motivation, we discussed techniques in the ACUE course faculty can use to:

1. **"Inspire students about your topic**

- Discuss or create a video describing your interest and background in the discipline

2. **Support student success**

- Vary and offer rationale for assessment types
- Vary and offer rationale for presentation methods
- Incentivize assignment completion
- Teach students to set goals they are likely to achieve
- Set reasonable, high expectations
- Provide opportunities to students to curate course media
- Provide online opportunities for interaction
- Send motivational messages"[1]

My classroom incorporation of the techniques suggested by ACUE:

Criteria	Meets	
Selection of technique	Technique is from the module and new to you	-Incentivize assignment completion -Teach Students to set goals they are likely to achieve

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[1] ACUE Effective Teaching https://acue.instructure.com/courses/613/pages/2d-learning-objectives?module_item_id=169359

Support for the choice	Explains how the technique is connected to your concerns, challenges, or goals for the class or your professional goals	Class participation is always a problem. Through the course materials, I decided to start awarding points for participation in class. If a student is particularly active or asks a great question or makes an interesting observation, I award the student bonus points- in front of the whole class. I think that is also motivator for the student who is awarded, as well as the rest of the class, so they know participation is rewarded.
Successes and/or challenges encountered	Describes and provides an explanation for either successes or challenges encountered	Doing this with 300 students is tough. You would think all the students would participate to gain those extra points, but they do not. But you can tell that some students who would not normally participate, or even pay attention, were more active in class.
Impact of your use of the technique on student learning and/or engagement	Describes observed evidence of student learning and/or engagement	Students who sit in the front of my class usually are more active, as all lecturers and students know from experience. What I noticed with the new incentive system is that the students who normally sit in the back to "blend in" are more active and will offer their opinions when incentivized.
Plans for refinement	Specifies how you will use and/or adjust this technique or other techniques from the module	I want to streamline the process. Right now, I write down people's name who contribute. I don't want to award too many points to the same people to throw off grading system. I think I have to put a max on points earned through participation.

Planning an Effective Class Session

In this section, we worked on planning an effective class session. The techniques ACUE discussed were:

1. **"Start each class to maximize learning**
   - Ensure accurate information is presented first
   - Use an *engagement trigger*
   - Design start-of-class work
2. **Segment class with active learning techniques**
   - Strategically integrate active learning techniques
   - Design mini-lessons for each complex idea or topic
   - Use the "I do, we do, you do" model
3. **Close strong**
   - Facilitate a student-led summary
   - Connect class session learning to real-world examples
   - Connect class session learning to course outcomes
   - Use a One-Sentence Summary
   - Use a Fill-in-the-Blank Summary
4. **Structure online modules to maximize learning**
   - Provide a module roadmap
   - Balance and vary the different types of activities
   - Establish a weekly rhythm for participation
   - Sequence module content to scaffold learning
   - Close module with practice or summarizing activities"[2]

My classroom incorporation of the techniques suggested by ACUE:

Criteria	Meets	
Selection of technique	Technique is from the module and new to you	• Ensure that the most important or engaging idea is presented first • Use an *engagement trigger* • Facilitate a student-led summary

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[2] ACUE Effective Teaching Practices https://acue.instructure.com/courses/613/pages/1e-learning-objectives?module_item_id=169295

Support for the choice	Explains how the technique is connected to your concerns, challenges, or goals for the class or your professional goals	I started out class with a video from the Office tv show. It was a three min clip. I usually tap on the microphone to get the students to calm down, but instead I just started playing the video right away. It instantly caught their attention and away we went with the lesson!
Successes and/or challenges encountered	Describes and provides an explanation for either successes or challenges encountered	Staring with the video also had the benefit of allowing the late arriving students to have a buffer and not interrupt the class- that was something I had not thought about. Right after the video finished, I launched into a lecture on the Presidency and the students were engaged from the start. I don't know if I want to play a comedy clip each class, so I'll have to find a different video attention grabber.
Impact of your use of the technique on student learning and/or engagement	Describes observed evidence of student learning and/or engagement	I was also able to engage the students in a student led summary. Rather than have me repeat what I said, I had them sum up the material. That way, I could tell if they understood the concepts we went over during class. I found it very useful.
Plans for refinement	Specifies how you will use and/or adjust this technique or other techniques from the module	I'll try to find videos that are entertaining but more in line and connected with subject matter. In addition, I will continue to try to have the students sum up the lecture and the end to help increase their involvement in the course lectures.

Delivering an Effective Lecture

ACUE explained to faculty that the following are essential techniques or delivering an effective lecture:

1. **"Ensure the lecture approach supports your learning objectives**

- Provide an overview
- Model thinking approaches
- Explain difficult concepts
- Pique students' interest

2. **Develop well-organized and effectively paced lectures**

- Keep to one major topic
- Chunk information
- Provide skeletal notes
- Begin with an effective opening
- End with an effective closing
- Plan your visuals and examples
- Plan and record video micro lectures

3. **Keep students engaged**

- Pause strategically
- Change your physical position
- Be intentional with your voice and movements

4. **Facilitate student involvement**

- Utilize social media
- Seek student feedback"[3]

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[3] ACUE Effective Teaching Practices https://acue.instructure.com/courses/613/pages/3c-learning-objectives?module_item_id=169488

My classroom incorporation of the techniques suggested by ACUE:

Criteria	Meets	
Selection of technique	Technique is from the module and new to you	• Pause strategically • Change your physical position • Be intentional with your voice and movements • Provide an overview • Keep to one major topic
Support for the choice	Explains how the technique is connected to your concerns, challenges, or goals for the class or your professional goals	The techniques that had to do with actually delivering the lecture were useful. Moving around and changing your voice helps keep the students focused.
Successes and/or challenges encountered	Describes and provides an explanation for either successes or challenges encountered	The overview was a good idea. I usually do this in class, but I emphasized it this time. It is useful, but also becomes repetitive. However, this is a good thing as students will not grasp material the first time they hear it. I have to focus on giving an overview that reemphasizes the material, but in a different way.
Impact of your use of the technique on student learning and/or engagement	Describes observed evidence of student learning and/or engagement	I think my students responded well to the changes. The overview of the lecture I gave at the start was helpful because they knew where I was going, rather than be surprised. They should not have been as they should have read the material, but many do not unfortunately.
Plans for refinement	Specifies how you will use and/or adjust this technique or other techniques from the module	I was unable to this time, but I would like to use twitter during the lecture. I think this is a good way of simply getting student responses. Hopefully, it will work in a timely and efficient manner.