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### ACUE Cumulative Reflections - Effective Teaching Practices

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## ACUE Cumulative Reflections - Effective Teaching Practices

### 2D: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice

The technique I have implemented is “providing online opportunities for interaction.” I have provided my students with discussion board prompts that relate to a real-world scenario/event and asked them to respond to them by drawing from the knowledge they gained from the course readings and tasks. I set a specific due date for these assignments. I modified the discussion board settings so that students are required to respond to the discussion prompt prior to reading their classmates’ responses. I also required students to respond to one of their classmates’ responses and provided specific guidelines / rubrics for these responses. And finally, as the instructor, I have read all of the discussion threads and provided students with my opinion and response to their responses.

I chose this activity because in an online environment, it is something like a “think, pair, share” activity. It allows for student to student interactions and also student to instructor interactions; something that is highly needed in an online class environment.

This activity has proven to be successful because I have observed how students share through their responses how they could relate to their classmates and why. Students also reflect on their peers’ responses and critique them as well. I find this to be very rewarding. One of the challenges of implementing such an activity in an online class that has more than 30 students is that it requires a great amount of time to read each post on the discussion thread and provide a personalized response to each thread. Nonetheless, it is a very rewarding experience because it is an opportunity for students and the instructor to relate to each other in an online environment. The online modules and resources recommended that for this activity, students respond to two classmates’ posts; and so given the challenge I have described above, I have modified the activity by requiring that students respond to only one of their classmates’ post.

## 2C:Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice

The technique from this module that I implemented in all of my online courses was the “Hold Virtual Group Office Hours” technique. I included the link to my personal Zoom video conferencing room provided through my University’s subscription on my syllabi. I explained to students that in addition to holding inperson office hours, I will be holding virtual office hours via Zoom. I also listed my availability via Zoom for office hours on the syllabi. I also sent a message to all my students explaining this to them and also how Zoom works since not all students may be familiar with Zoom. When I walk into my office, I make sure to log on to my Zoom account to ensure that I don’t miss any visiting students. The reason why I chose this activity is because I am currently teaching online courses to students in our satellite campus which is more than an hour away from the main campus. While my online students who attend the main campus still visit me in person at the office, those in the satellite campus do not necessarily have that accessibility and so I wanted to make sure that I am able to cater to their needs and make myself available to them at times that are convenient for them.

This technique has proven to be successful because I am able to meet with students from all of my online classes whether they attend the main or satellite campus. These virtual office hours have also proven to be convenient for students in my face to face courses who are not able to attend office hours in-person for one reason or another. One of the most rewarding experiences thus far was being able to meet with one of my online students to review her performance on two of her quizzes. Through the screen-sharing capability of Zoom, I made available to the student her quiz submissions and we were able to address all of her mistakes question by question. The student was very satisfied with what were able to accomplish in that online office hour session; and she thanked me for making this possible for her. One of the challenges that I anticipate with holding virtual online office hours via Zoom is the attendance of multiple students at the same time who may require an individualized discussion of their class grades, quizzes, etc...and that given student privacy rights, we would not be able to discuss them in the presence of their classmates.

One of the techniques presented in the module recommended ways in which instructors could engage with multiple students at the same time via virtual office hours. Nonetheless, given the above mentioned challenge of student privacy, I will need to modify the presented techniques as follows. I will include language in my syllabi and message to my classes stating that in the event that multiple students are present at the same time via Zoom and at least one of them requires an individualized response to a question related to her/his grade, I will meet with those students individually via Zoom’s break-out rooms....This will allow me to safeguard the privacy of

students through online office hours whenever needed, while other students await my return to the main conference room. If multiple students need to address their grades, then I will meet with them in the break-out rooms on a first-come, first-serve basis.

### **1E 3C Combined Reflection Practice & Reflect I – Instructional Practice**

I used an engagement trigger to start each class to maximize learning. The engagement triggers that I have used are real events/situations trending in our local communities/country or in the international sphere and which also happen to relate to the content of the class. I have decided to select this activity because it is an easy way to interact with students and connect with them as I get their opinion on everyday events that matter to them or that are trending among their social networks while at the same time discussing the class content.

To deliver an effective lecture, I have opted to use an online tool to interact with students and at the same time gain their feedback. I have opted to use Kahoot. While this tool may not be a social media platform, it is an easy way quickly gain insight into student knowledge and feedback on what they have learned and/or have questions on.

Students have responded very positively to my engagement triggers because they are able to discuss what is on their mind as members of their communities...something that they wouldn't necessarily get to share in their classes...while at the same time connecting them to the content covered in class. One of the challenges with these engagement triggers is curbing the time that students speak or the number of students that want to contribute to the conversation. This has proven to be very engaging, and a lot of class time can be easily lost on this.

As to using Kahoot to digitally interact with students with live feedback...this also something that has proven to be engaging for students and something that they look forward to doing. However, one of the challenges with this activity is that not all of them come to class with enough charge on their mobile devices to fully participate and not all of them are able to use their mobile data so we have to spend class time waiting for them to connect to the campus Wi-Fi.

I will refine the practices described above by reminding students to come to class with their mobile devices charged and connected to the campus Wi-Fi. As to the number of students wanting to speak during my engagement trigger activities, I will have students discuss with each other in groups so that they could all have a chance to share their thoughts and experiences and I will wrap-up the activity by asking for group volunteers to share what was discussed.

### **3D3E Combined Practice & Reflect I – Instructional Practice**

The activities that I chose to implement from Module 3D - **Planning Effective Class**

**Discussions include:**

- 1) Provide guidance to help students develop questioning skills for productive online discussions;
- 2) Develop a grading policy or discussion forum rubric with clear criteria; and
- 3) Assign a self-grading activity

To implement these techniques, I developed an online discussion rubric with clear criteria and embedded it within each discussion board forum. Students are able to see this rubric as they respond to the prompt and can tailor their response to include what I'm expecting from them. I also provided students with an online resource on how to develop their questioning skills for productive online discussions as they respond to their peers; given that it is an assignment requirement to respond to at least one of their peers. I asked students to submit a self-grading reflection based on their interaction in the discussion forum.

The activities that I chose to implement from Module 3E - **Facilitating Engaging Class**

**Discussions**

**include:**

- 1) Use prompting to support and enhance participation
- 2) Provide online feedback strategically

**3D:** Developing and integrating the grading rubric into the online discussion forums was a great success as evidenced in the quality of the responses. In addition, it was great for me as an instructor because it facilitated the grading, reinforcing an objective process. Students implemented a lot of the techniques they learned to pose questions to their classmates. The challenge that I had was related to the self-grading reflection which added a substantial amount of work to read.

**3E:** Using prompting to support and enhance participation was a great success. I found that it was more successful when I provided quotes or opening videos featuring current events that related to students' lives. The student response to this was great.

I was able to use the "They Say, You Say" tool provided in this course to monitor and respond to the online discussions. I felt that this tool helped me maintain the class discussion momentum

and led to productive discussions. In the future, I am thinking of redesigning the student self-grading reflection to include more of a student reflection survey to be integrated within each discussion forum.

### **2A: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice**

For my online course, I recorded and posted a short welcome video in a designated area of the course LMS. I did this because I wanted my students to get to know a little about my professional and personal background. I also created a little icebreaker activity in which I asked students to record a Flipgrid video introducing themselves and answering some prompt questions related to their expectations of the course and the reason why they enrolled in it. From here, I asked students to view a few of their classmate's video recordings and to respond to them.

The instructor and student introduction activities were a huge success. Students commented that the interaction with their classmates in an online environment motivated them to continue in the class. They also commented on what they share in common and how they enjoyed meeting me and they look forward to learning more in the class.

Since my online class has 30+ students, in the future, I will limit the required video responses to 5 classmates. Anything else would be optional.

### **2E: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice**

There are several techniques that are implemented from this module. For instance, I scaffolded the class project into 4 stages to ensure that the 1) assignments and activities prepare students to meet the objectives of the project, 2) to provide opportunities to use feedback to improve performance; all while 3) creating online rubrics that students could use to examine their own performance prior to submitting each stage of the project. I scaffolded the project into 4 stages using the above techniques because from past experience, I found that students waited until the last day to begin working on their project and when they did, they were not prepared to deliver quality work for several reasons.

The implementations of these techniques have been a great success in my opinion for several reasons. To begin, the scaffolding of the class project has made it less intimidating to students to complete, and for me as the instructor to grade. I can provide specific feedback to students on each stage and see them improve in the following stage until we reach a polished product by the last stage...which makes it much easier for me to grade. Students have enjoyed following the

rubrics as they know exactly what grade they will earn on each stage depending on how they follow the rubric. Furthermore, students have submitted each distinct stage by its due date, facilitating the final submission of the project for them.

I will modify one of the techniques from this module “provide opportunities to use feedback to improve performance” by allowing students to receive direct feedback on their work from their peers. I just have to decide which of my class activities to incorporate peer feedback on.

### **2B: Practice & Reflect I - Self Reflection**

The self-assessment is connected to my own professional goals. On a quest for continuous quality improvement, I wanted to objectively assess my behaviors, which is why I decided to complete the assessment.

By completing this assessment I learned that I am always on time to class and I am always well prepared. However, I realized that I often end class on time, meaning that I have to work on not going past the designated class time even if it is for one minute. I also realized that I often address student interruptions promptly – here I’m referring to the use of cellphones.

I noticed that if I dismiss class late even if it is by just one minute, I lose the student's focus in class...so it is as if the extra time was not worth it at all. Often, students are in a rush to reach another classroom across campus and so getting to their next destination on campus is their only point of focus. Also, when students notice their classmates using their cell phones they become frustrated.

To address these challenges, I will make sure set-up a reminder 5 minutes before class ends to wrap up any lectures and encourage students to ask any questions they may have ....Leaving us with enough time to conclude class on time. If at the end there are further questions, those who are able to stay after class to ask me and those who need to head out could do so...Knowing that they could always reach me through various means. The only time that I do not immediately address the use of cellphones in class is during student presentations and/or role play skits. I do not want to interrupt the presenting students, and by the time that they’re done presenting and me providing feedback to them, I tend to forget to address the use of cellphones. However, moving forward, I will devise a quiet signal that if presented, students in the audience will know that they

need to stop using their cell phone and that I am aware of it...ready to follow the accorded consequences. I need to practice this signal so that it does not disrupt student presentations.

### **2F: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice**

The technique that I implemented from this module was “Offer choice when appropriate (group projects, assignments, assessments).” I implemented this technique because I realize that it is important to acknowledge students’ background interests and experiences and to situate the learning in the lives of students. I implemented this technique by modifying the term project that I have assigned for the past few quarters. Prior to this modification, the project was a community interview governed by specific guidelines and objectives. Nonetheless, this time around, for the class project, I gave students the option of completing the community interview, or a small research assignment that involved students’ personal career goals while still being related to the objectives of the course. I designed both project options to be worth the same amount of points and to require the same amount of time and effort.

This proved to be a successful modification to the course. Half of the students in the class chose to complete the community interview while the other half chose to complete the small research assignment. Through my communication with the students, I found that they were excited to complete the project that they chose and this was reflected in the extra amount of work that they voluntarily did for the assignment.

I will implement this technique in all of my courses. I will also go back and clarify a few submission guideline points as a result of a few common questions from students.

### **3A-3B: Combined Reflection Assignment - Active Learning in Small Groups & Large Classes**

**For small group classes,** I have implemented two techniques from these combined modules: “Use Think-Pair-Share for discussion and thought” and “Leverage technology to encourage thoughtful participation.” I decided to implement these activities because I realize that it is crucial to actively engage students in class...I know that this



is a way that helps students effectively retain the content information. I implemented the Think-Pair Share activity during the Concept Application Phase of the Active Learning Cycle. I've also leveraged technology to encourage thoughtful participation by having the class play a "Quizlet Live" game that requires students to use their cell phones to join their randomly assigned groups and answer predetermined questions about a topic in the fastest time possible as they race against other groups in class. I have also implemented this activity during the Concept Application Phase of the Active Learning Cycle.

**For large group classes,** I have implemented two techniques from these combined modules: "Use Think-Pair-Share for discussion and thought" and "Leverage technology to encourage thoughtful participation." I decided to implement these activities because I realize that it is crucial to actively engage students in class...I know that this is a way that helps students effectively retain the content information. I implemented the Think-Pair Share activity during the Concept Application Phase of the Active Learning Cycle. I've also leveraged technology to encourage thoughtful participation by having the class play a "Quizlet Live" game that requires students to use their cell phones to join their randomly assigned groups and answer predetermined questions about a topic in the fastest time possible as they race against other groups in class. I have also implemented this activity during the Concept Application Phase of the Active Learning Cycle.

Students have truly enjoyed the Think-Pair-Share activities. I've found that it helps everyone stay on task and provides the opportunity for everyone to be an active contributing student in the conversation. Walking around the class and visiting with each group has been very rewarding. Students have also enjoyed the competitive nature of the Quizlet Live games testing their knowledge of the concepts covered in class. For this activity, students get-up to find their group-mates and remain standing as they complete the activity as they race against the other groups. They always ask for an additional round in which case I mix-up the groups once again. They love it.

For classes with more than 100 students, I will have to explore and adopt a new technology piece/game because the Quizlet Live game requires group work and there usually isn't enough room in the lecture hall for large clusters of standing student groups.

#### **4C: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice**

The technique that I implemented from the module is:

Provide organizational cues and focus questions for online lectures.

I implemented this technique because in a phase to phase class with the instructor present, students face a challenge in drafting effective notes, and so I realize that in an online environment, the challenge is even greater when the professor is not in a live meeting with students where they could pause for questions and clarifications. To implement this technique, I reinforced the importance of the module learning objectives and provided students with tips on how to read them and use them prior to starting the module work, while they are completing the module work, and once they complete the module work but prior to completing the module's summative assessment. I also provided focus questions that related to the content presented.

The implemented techniques were successful because I noticed an improvement in student quiz scores. Students themselves acknowledged that the newly introduced study techniques helped them focus on what is important from the modules and thus perform better on the quizzes. Students also liked the focus questions presenting real-life examples.

In the future, I would like to use the focus questions in the discussion board and allow students to engage with each other as they respond to them. I'm thinking of making this an extra credit assignment that complements the already established discussion threads pertaining to the modules. This will help me reinforce what was learned in the previous module, it being that instructors must properly acknowledge the link between additional effort/work and improved course outcomes.

#### **4B: Practice & Reflect I - Instructional Practice**

The technique from the module that I implemented in my course is "deepen learning online through multimedia timeline activities." I chose this activity for a few reasons: 1) It helps students retain the information covered in class; 2) I implemented as a group activity in an online class, thus facilitating student-student interaction as they navigate the online course. I had students develop the interactive timeline using a PowerPoint. This activity proved to be successful as students reported that it helped them to better conceptualize the concepts covered in class and that through it, they had the opportunity to actively work with and get to know their classmates.