# Magna2 MinuteMentor

## What Are 5 FAQ's About Faculty Roles in the Flipped Class?

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### Self-Assessment Worksheet: Developing Your Teaching and Facilitation Skills in the Flipped Classroom

As you think about your changing role in the flipped classroom, consider your current teaching style, your strengths, and your challenges. Use this worksheet to prompt critical reflection and to plan for future professional development experiences to enhance your success and your students' experience.

Statements to Consider:	Mostly True	Usually True	Sometimes True	Not Often True
I ask a variety of questions.				
I am confident in my ability to manage the classroom.				
It's okay when the topic shifts away fro the learning outcomes.	om 🗆			
I am comfortable letting go of some of structure in my classroom.	the 🛛			
I am comfortable working one-on-one an individual student within the classro environment.				
I am comfortable not knowing all of th answers.	e 🗆			
I am confident with my lecturing skills.				
I have time to design learning activities	s. 🗆			
I am willing to take risks in the classroo	om. 🗆			
I thrive in environments that are dynamic	mic. 🛛			
I recover from mistakes quickly.				
I am an effective communicator.				
l am adaptable.				
I am a good listener.				
I delegate effectively.				
I need to have control in the classroon	n. 🗆			
I am willing to learn.				

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### Focus on your Learners by Involving them in the Process



### **Be Actively Passive**

Barbi Honeycutt, Ph.D., Founder, Flip It Consulting

### "You want your students to be active; you've got to be a little passive."

--Professor Timothy Bresnahan, Stanford University

This quote was posted in a recent article published in the Tomorrow's Professor listserve. When I read it, I immediately thought about how well it applies to flipped learning environments. Flipped learning environments are dynamic, interactive, and engaging. If you were to observe one, you'd see students actively engaged in solving problems, talking with each other, working through a task, or creating a product. You'd see the instructor walking around the room, mingling with the students, providing assistance, and asking questions. Sure, the instructor might take a moment or two to gather everyone's attention and provide an explanation or reinforce a concept, but then the energy would immediately "flip" back to the students.

At its core, a flipped environment is all about what the students do in the space shared with the instructor. The flip occurs because the focus of that space is on what the students are doing, not on what the instructor is doing. If we relate this idea to the quote above, you could say the instructor is being more passive while the students are being more active. Although, I'd like to add that the instructor is being what I'd call "actively passive" because it takes a great deal of energy, attention and awareness to step to the side and support students' learning in this type of environment.



Learning to be an "actively passive" instructor means building a different set of skills to ensure the flipped learning environment is successful. It's not about delivering the most organized, most well-prepared, most structured lecture. It's not about knowing all of the answers or never making mistakes. As you try flipping your lesson, here are 3 recommendations to consider so you can create a successful experience for both you and for your students:

**1. Embrace messy.** A flipped classroom is "messy" which means students are often working through problems or confronting situations where there might not be a clear answer or a perfect approach. If you need structure and control, and if you need to know exactly what to expect at every moment in your lesson plan, then this will probably be the most difficult challenge for you to tackle.

On the flip side (pun intended!), this might also be the most challenging task for your students to tackle as well. Some students do not appreciate the "gray" area in the learning process. They get frustrated easily. They want to know the answers. They want to memorize the definition. They want to know if the choice is true or false, A or B, correct or incorrect. This is certainly a teachable moment and one that you can model for your students. You have to push yourself to let go and explore the unknown. Note that this does not mean you let go of control of the classroom. You still plan and organize, but you allow time and provide structure for students to practice, make mistakes, try again, and make connections about the course material.

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To practice embracing the mess, try starting your class with a provocative quote, fact, or statistic. Then allow time for students to quickly write down their thoughts, discuss them with a neighbor and explore other perspectives as a whole class. Try not to judge, critique or edit their responses. You don't know what they will say or which way the conversation will go, so try to listen, record a few notes, and hold your comments until the end of the discussion. (Notice that you're practicing being "actively passive" with this exercise!). As you become more comfortable with the students leading the discussion, you can add more of these types of activities into your class. Start small and practice with a "low stakes" activity. Have patience with yourself and with your students as you learn become more comfortable with the unknown.

**2.** Ask *effective* **questions.** A flipped class is active. Students are always engaged in a task or working on a problem, and your role is to support that learning process. When you're serving as the "guide on the side" then it's essential for you to learn to ask questions that generate a response. Many instructors ask "dead end" questions, meaning the questions have a "yes or no" response which doesn't stimulate critical thinking or analysis. You also want to avoid asking, "Are there any questions?" because most of the time, this creates the awkward silence where you and your students are looking around, feeling anxious, and wondering when this is going to be over.



To practice asking effective questions, you can begin by designing small tasks and pre-planning questions related to the task. As you plan your lesson, look for moments where you can ask students questions rather than telling them all of the answers. But, these questions should be worded carefully. Use a tool such as Bloom's Taxonomy to carefully organize and scaffold tasks and questions. Start with a lower level task such as, "In small groups, list and describe the main characters in the story." Then ask a question about the task

such as, "Joe, which of the characters resonates with you and why?" This strategy engages your students and gives them time to prepare to answer the question properly. Notice how your role during class is to provide structure for the task and to ask the questions, but not to provide the answers. Notice again how you are being "actively passive" with your approach to engaging your students in the flipped classroom.

**3. Be quiet.** Students in a flipped class should be thinking, analyzing and creating. As they work, your role is to let the learning happen. This means being there for your students, providing resources, and organizing the structure, but it also means stepping back and letting students work through the learning process without too much input from you. For many instructors, silence in the classroom is awkward and they want to fill up the time by talking more, lecturing more, or sharing more examples. But sometimes students need quiet time to think, to process or to review what they've just learned.

To practice becoming comfortable with silence in your classroom, try giving students time to reflect and write about something they recently learned or read. At the end of class, post a question or prompt and ask students to write for five minutes, for example. You can also practice quiet time by asking a question and waiting for at least 30 seconds (time yourself) before you say anything. This will give students time to formulate their thoughts so they can answer your questions intelligently in front of their peers. It's awkward at first, but part of a successfully flipped learning environment is learning how to give the students the space, time, and resources they need. And they often need more quiet time to think carefully and sort out their ideas before presenting them to you or others.

#### **Final Thoughts:**

Learning to be "actively passive" is probably one of the most challenging aspects of flipping any learning environment. Instructors are used to having all of the attention on them as they stand at the front of the room and lecture to the audience. It's challenging to re-frame this role, and it can be a little scary to let go of what is known and comfortable. But when you do, a whole new world opens up to both you and your students.

Resource:

Tomorrow's Professor listserve available online: <u>http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/postings.php</u>



Dr. Barbi Honeycutt is the Founder of Flip It Consulting in Raleigh, NC. She facilitates workshops, designs resources, and develops professional development programs to teach educators, trainers and instructors how to engaginge learning environments with the FLIP! The FLIP means to "Focus on your Learners by Involving them in the Process." Dr. Honeycutt is also a scholar and educator at NC State University where she serves as the Director of Graduate Professional Development and Teaching Programs and as an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Leadership, Policy and Adult and Higher Education in the College of Education.

**Reflection / Discussion Questions:** 

**1.** Describe what is meant by the phrase "actively passive" in relation to the flipped classroom.

2. The author shares three recommendations for shifting to an "actively passive" role in the classroom. Which one will be the most challenging for you as an instructor? Why?

3. Create a professional development strategy. How will you continue to build your skills and become more comfortable in the "actively passive" role?

4. Work with a partner. Observe each other's class and collect data on what happens when you switch to the "actively passive" role. What do students do? How does the learning environment change? What are areas for improvement?



### Strategies to Address the Top 5 Frequently Asked Questions Faculty Ask About Their Role in the Flipped Classroom

### Question 1: How does my role change?

Strategy:

- 1. Assign a small group task to your students. This could be a problem to solve, a worksheet to fill in, an article to analyze, or reflection questions to discuss.
- 2. Visit each group. Walk around the room and try to stop by each group.
- 3. Listen! Try not to interact with the group members. This will challenge you to learn to take a step back, be quiet, and practice being "actively passive" in your classroom.
- 4. Write 1 idea from each group. Take a notebook or tablet around the room and document at least one idea from each group of students. Not only does this keep you busy so you can practice not talking, but it also gives you data to integrate into future class discussions and/or assignments.
- 5. Try not to talk for 5 minutes. Again, challenge yourself to take on the 'passive' role in the classroom. Five minutes may seem like a long time, but if you're visiting each group, this time will probably go by quickly.

### Question 2: Do I have to flip everything?

Strategy:

- 1. What strategies give you the best results? When you try new teaching and learning strategies, which ones make you feel excited and energetic? Which ones do your students seem to enjoy and benefit from the most? Ask a colleague to observe your class to see how a strategy is working and then report the observations back to you. This is an easy way to get a different opinion, especially since you cannot see everything happening in your class.
- 2. Do more of the strategies you enjoy and that your students learn from. You don't have to flip everything to be effective and engaging. That's how you and your students burn out.
- 3. What strategies take too much time/energy? If a strategy drains your energy or zaps your enthusiasm, it might be best not to use that one. You don't have to force yourself into using strategies that don't align with your authentic teaching self.
- 4. Do less of the strategies that aren't working for you, your teaching style, or your students. Give a strategy a try more than once. But, if you find it just doesn't work, then find a way to switch it up or try a completely different strategy.

### Question 3: How do I know what to flip?

Strategy: Look for flippable moments. Look for confusion, look for the fundamentals, and look for boredom (or all three!). When you find a flippable moment, try several approaches and tools. You might create a worksheet and combine it with a small group activity. You could develop a review game to ensure the

fundamentals are mastered. You could integrate a case study and bring in a guest speaker to provide an alternative point of view and connection to the world outside of the classroom. You could assign students to create their own videos to describe the material or develop a project around it. The ideas are endless – it all starts with identifying what is worthy of the time, energy, and resources to justify the flipped approach in your class. Part of your role as the expert in this flipped environment is to identify the topics that benefit from flipped strategies. And if students are getting it without flipped strategies, then there's no need to flip it.

### Question 4: Do I have to record my own videos?

Videos of content exist online. TED talks, YouTube, Khan Academy, etc. all offer videos free of charge to educators. Integrate these into your classes if they are relevant. However, you may need to record your own videos to address specific terminology or techniques specific to your course.

The real question isn't about videos though. Videos are one way to flip, but you can flip in many ways. The real question is, "What can students do to achieve the lower level learning outcomes before class?" This may be a reading, but you still need to give students something structured to DO with the reading. Other ideas include:

- Designing flashcards
- Playing a matching game
- Curating content
- Memorization drills
- Pre-class quiz
- Fill in the blank worksheets

#### **Question 5: What about student resistance?**

Start flipping on the first day of class. This doesn't mean assigning pre-class work (although it could). It means implementing flipped, or active learning strategies, during class to encourage talking, discussion, problem solving, and analysis right from the start. Set expectations by demonstrating, modeling, and practicing the very first time you meet your students. Flip the syllabus. Solve an example problem together. Critique a writing assignment in groups. Create a 'rules for our classroom' list with your students. Try a clicker question. Engage students early and often in the beginning. And remember to support them through the stages of grief. Be supportive, listen, and offer encouragement. Foster risk taking. Recognize student contributions. Start strong and you can let go as the semester progresses. By then your students will already know what to do and how to do it.

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This is an ongoing list of journal articles, books, blogs, and videos about flipped classrooms, inverted instruction, backwards design, active learning, student-centered learning, learner-centered learning, effective learning environments, retention, and assessment:

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