

Induction Day for New Teaching Staff (Faculty of Medicine)

Session 3: An Introduction to Learning and Teaching

Dr Rachel Thompson

Objectives:

- Learning styles and models
- Tips for lectures / tutorials
- Assessment
- Evaluation

1. Learning theories

➔ We are all learners – What is your own experience of the classroom as a learner and a teacher? Think of the good and bad experiences – make two lists and see if you can see patterns or categories emerging from these.

➔ How your experiences relate to the standard learning theories

Some basic learning theories:

- Student focused – the current approach, as opposed to teacher-centred/ didactic / rote-learning models of learning. Most theories these days are based on this as being the most effective, most productive although it can be more labour intensive as it depends on more smaller group teaching, more experiential (hands-on teaching = eg practicals).
- Responsibility and student activity are at the heart of this, compared to the teacher-controlled learning of yesteryear.
- Affective / Emotional aspects of learning
 - Important as it has both direct and indirect affects on learning – feeling scared or stupid, feeling wrong, facing challenging content etc
 - <http://www.learningandteaching.info/learning/motivanx.htm>
- Kolb learning cycle www.learningandteaching.info/learning/experience.htm
- VARK (visuo-spatial, auditory, reading, kinaesthetic) – these theories are more contested but can be useful in certain situations
 - www.vark-learn.com & www.learningandteaching.info/learning/multiple.htm = Pictures, Sounds, Hands-on, Reading /Writing

➔ How to use these ideas in the classroom? – diversity of students in a student centred model means that we need to take everyone's learning abilities, and strategies all into account

Learning activities can be:

1. Self-directed
2. Peer-assisted
3. Teacher-assisted

For more information see: <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/student-centred-teaching>

Types:

Large group activities

- give teachers an **opportunity to convey basic and necessary information to students**
- help students to gain a **big-picture understanding** of a course and make links between different components of it
- help students to see the **relevance and applications** of what they are learning
- help students **consolidate** their learning
- give students the **opportunity to meet and mix** with more peers.

Small group activities

- address **gaps** in students knowledge
- allow students to **discover and engage with a range of perspectives, ideas, and backgrounds**
- assist students in **clarifying their attitudes** to and ideas about the subject matter, as they test their own ideas and attitudes against those of others
- help students develop a sense of **academic rigour and a willingness to share ideas**
- provide opportunities for students to **receive feedback** on their learning
- encourage students towards **self-directed and independent** learning
- help students **develop skills** in critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, interpersonal relations, teamwork, team leadership, and lifelong learning skills, which are all highly valued by employers.
- More info from the UNSW L&T site: <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/small-group-teaching>

Group work

Can be more effective when a social activity and task-oriented

- Teamwork – peer learning, learning own and others' strengths and weaknesses
- Ideas for introducing and facilitating effective group work (From L&T@UNSW): <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/groupwork>

2. Some tips for giving lectures/ large group teaching:

- **Engagement** is the key here = attention span is naturally short = 20 minute cycle but lectures are usually 50 mins long
- **Content** – less the better – e.g. 10 mins per concept – so a 50 minute lecture = maximum of 4 major points or concepts plus time for intro, summary, ad lib. Don't script for 50 mins as always too much/ too long
- **Interaction** with students helps break up the monotony of a didactic lecture. E.g. every 15-20 mins, stop the lecture to ask a couple of set questions on the previous content for students to work thru and give answers etc. In a lecture series, always start with a revision of the last lecture's topics – can do this with a quick quiz or a couple of carefully chosen questions. This starts of the lecture with a bit of revision and refreshing of ideas / content which helps to set the scene of the current lecture and engaging the students.
- **Basic presentation skills:**
 - **Observe** If new to lecturing or a topic, sit in on another lecture on a similar topic, same discipline or more experienced lecturer - take notes of what works well and what you can also do. Ask the students what was the best and worst part of the lecture
 - **Visuals** PowerPoint presentations can be deadly... keep slides to minimum e.g. 4-6 bullet points max per slide; summarised; clear explanation - NOTE: MOST STUDENTS CAN'T LISTEN, READ, AND WRITE NOTES AT SAME TIME. Use pictures, diagrams or short clips = videos, audios. Draw on overheads or black or white board (if you can draw)
 - **Rhythm** of a lecture is important. Pause after an important point, count up to 10 when showing a diagram or table that you want them to take in BEFORE you talk about it or ask a question – e.g. "Take a look at this table – what is the key finding here?"
 - **Flow** of a lecture is also vital – outline at beginning and use pointers/ headings/ flow diagram to show where you are going as you go thru, bring it back at the end to the outline summary and show what they should have learned.
 - **Entertainment** You don't have to make them laugh unless you are a natural comedian! Be yourself or play a role that you are comfortable with
 - **Experience** Bring in your own experience – data, examples of your work or life, etc – make it relevant and appropriate level of learning but keep it at the right level and relevant to the curriculum - a whole hour on your PhD topic is not relevant to 1st yr med science students, etc
 - **Enthusiasm** engages

- **Expectations** Never let on that this is a boring subject as some students are looking for any excuse not to listen, not to learn... *Aim your own expectations high and consequently, their expectations will be high.*
- **Crowd Control** – There are several ways to deal with this depending on the size of the room/ lecture audience, your relationship with the audience and your assertiveness level
 - Yellow card/ red card / then out
 - Just stop talking completely until the students quieten down
 - Ask the noisiest student to come up and take the class = eg explain the theory to the class
 - Take a hooter or bell with you if you are using interactive sections in a large lecture – to get students attention back to you quickly
- **More info from the UNSW L&T site:** <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/lectures>

3. Tutoring tips - Large groups (small groups are dealt with separately):

- **Structure** the class – give the aims and objectives when you start, activities with set, achievable objectives
- **Performance** The “on stage” effect – remember that you have an audience in the larger groups
- **Visuals**
 - Creating diagrams on a board (whiteboard, chalkboard, overheads) – interactively with student may be more engaging than pre-prepared PPT slides. Shows your flow of thinking, teases out the facts and processes into a visual recording for the students
 - Pictures / diagrams = to stimulate emotions especially if a ‘boring’ ‘stuffy’ subject = these stimulate a visceral effect
- **Engagement** To engage the quiet students – repeat offers of interaction, ask them to prepare a question for the next class or do a task to present back, ask them a simple question to get them speaking and to gain confidence
- **More info from the UNSW L&T site:** <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/large-group-teaching>

General thoughts

- Teaching is a “Conversation” with students
- **Authenticity and credibility**
- **Reflection / Evaluation:** take time to reflect at the end of a teaching session (see below)
- **Expectations** – are key to achievements – both yours and your students

4. Assessment setting and marking:

What do you need to know?

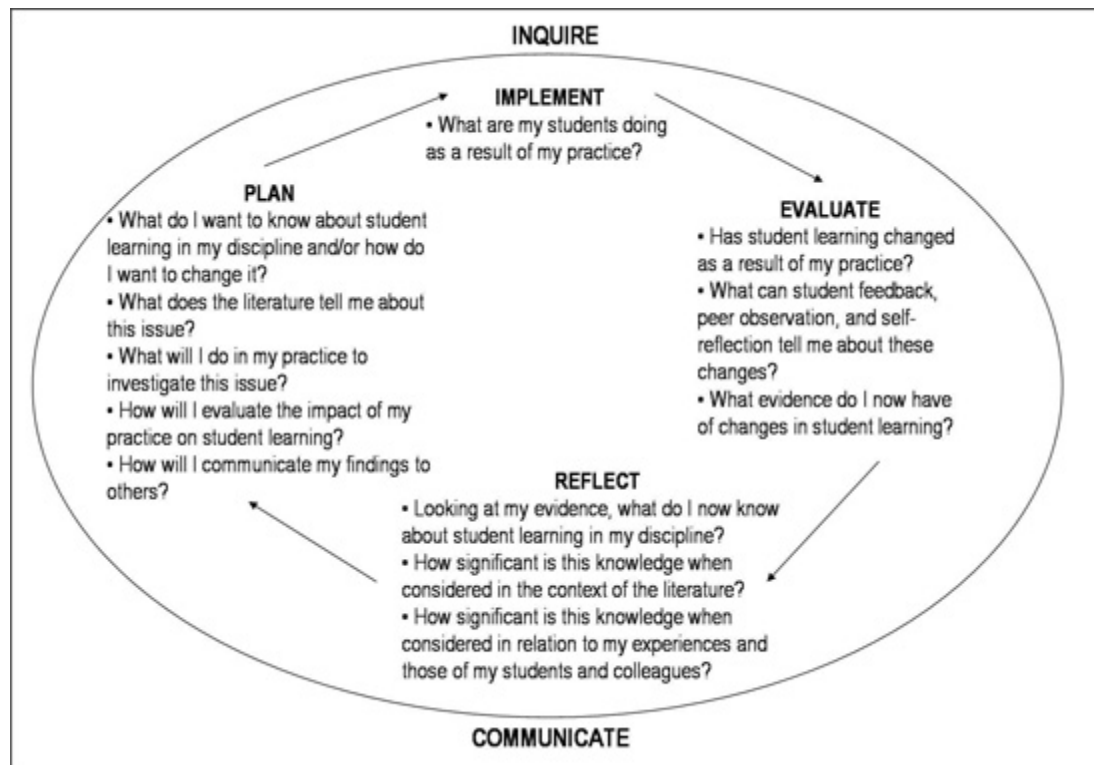
Note that are very useful training mornings and calibration workshops are held towards the end of each course for Phase 1 facilitators re marking assignments and projects. Other course convenors may also run similar training or calibration sessions.

- **Assessment as learning:** <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/assessment-learning>
- **Alignment** is key to your teaching being effective and useful to the student: <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/approaches-assessment-design>
- **Standards based assessment is key:** <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/standards-based-assessment>. For instance, graduate capabilities are used throughout the medical program courses: [http://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/Med3802Web.nsf/resources/GraduateCapabilities/\\$file/GraduateCapabilities.pdf](http://medprogram.med.unsw.edu.au/Med3802Web.nsf/resources/GraduateCapabilities/$file/GraduateCapabilities.pdf)
- **Assessment Types:** MCQs; Short answer questions; Essay questions; Practical tests and examinations; Online tests – formative and summative; and clinical assessments such as Mini-CEX, OSCEs and viva exams.
- **Written submissions:** Individual and /or group: assignments/ projects/ practical reports
- **Formative or summative:** Feedback can and should be given for both – constructive, timely and meaningful: <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/feedback>
- **Reducing the risk of plagiarism, detecting plagiarism:** <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/reducing-plagiarism>
<http://www.lc.unsw.edu.au/plagiarism/index.html>
- **Self-reflection or self-evaluation** section - this is an effective learning tool for your students
- **Marking:** Set criteria /answers and marks for these, create a guide for other markers and have a calibration session if need be, feedback constructively to the students

5. Teaching evaluation:

L&T@UNSW has a comprehensive web page on this: <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/evaluating-teaching>

- **Self-reflection** – critical reflection is essential for us to learn as teachers



- **Peer observation:** can be really valuable – especially early on in your career.
- **Mentoring:** find a guide - someone to mentor you as you learn - either a peer or a colleague with more experience (or both).
- **Clinical teaching evaluation** (Phase 1 /2/3) – If you teach students in the clinical schools and would like feedback on your teaching for a particular group of students = this is possible in a survey form. Contact: Helen Scicluna, PEIG, Tel: (02) 9385 1766, Email: h.scicluna@unsw.edu.au, Website: <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/medweb.nsf/page/Program+Evaluation+and+Improvement>
- **Evaluative moments:** For small groups of students taken over a few weeks you can use a short moment at the end of each class to discuss the objectives and / or give out a couple of post-its for students to write down the good and the bad issues at the end of each class
- **Brookfield’s Critical Incidents Questionnaire** A one page evaluation that you can adapt as you need. See Appendix for the standard questionnaire and an adapted one
- **CATEI Evaluation** This is a mandatory evaluation for all courses and all teachers. Form A = course, Form B = Large group teaching e.g. lecturing, Form C = personal - tutor / teacher. See the Faculty website on this and also the UNSW CATEI site via MyUNSW: <http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/medweb.nsf/page/Course%20and%20Teaching%20Evaluation%20and%20Improvement>

- **More formal evaluations** can be done but ethics approval may be required; ethics approval needed if anything more than plain teaching or course evaluation (discuss with your head of school or Rachel Thompson).

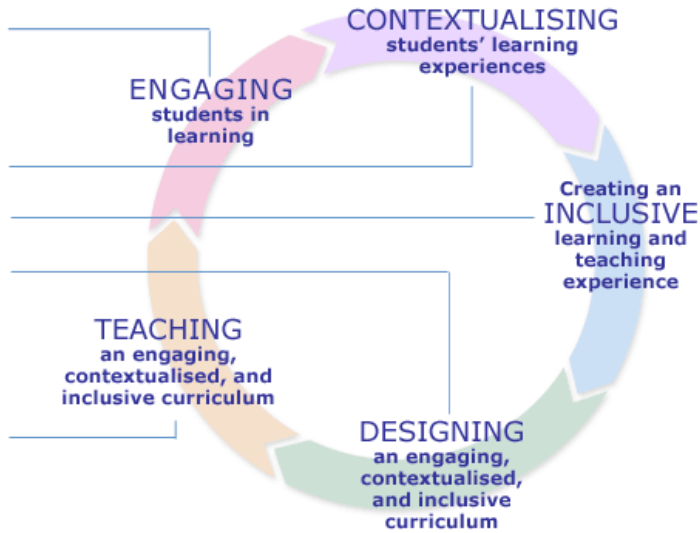
6. Summary:

- Learning styles and models
- Tips for lectures / tutorials
- Assessment
- Evaluation
- **Support –**
 - **Within department**
 - **Within school**
 - **MedEd group**
 - **Library, Resources, Websites**
 - **FULT training** –a free 5 day intensive course available for all current UNSW staff
http://learningandteaching.unsw.edu.au/content/LT/teaching_support/FULT_teaching.cfm?ss=2

Resources:

Useful web links

- www.lc.unsw.edu.au The Learning Centre = useful resources for students on writing and studying skills plus useful section on writing and plagiarism
- <http://teaching.unsw.edu.au/> A very useful site (that is still under development) for teaching in the “Building Capabilities” section = some specific direct links given below
- <http://www.guidelinesonlearning.unsw.edu.au/> “UNSW guidelines on learning that inform Teaching at UNSW”. An online site that has guidelines (following the 5 effective teaching practices in the figure below) with a toolkit to help you to assess if your teaching is up to scratch, plus resources that give examples of good practice or help with the underlying theory. Also available in a printable copy. Note: a lot of the resource links are out of date but are findable thru simple searching.



- www.vark-learn.com – Site on the learning styles theory of: visuo-spatial, auditory, reading, kinaesthetic
- www.learningandteaching.info/learning/index.htm - Site on learning theories maintained by James Atherton (A retired UK teacher and National Teaching Fellow of the Education Academy)

Books

- Berg, Bruce. L. (2007). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston, NY, etc; Pearson International Edition. Note: new edition (2009) published by Allyn and Bacon.
- Biggs, John and Tang, Catherine. (2007). *Teaching for Quality Learning at University*. (3rd ed). Open University Press. Review by Institute of Teaching and Learning at USyd: <http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/synergy/article.cfm?articleID=333>
- Ramsden, Paul. (1992). *Learning to Teach in Higher Education*. London and New York; Routledge. Review by *ultiBASE*: <http://ultibase.rmit.edu.au/Articles/june97/learn1.htm>.
- Fry, Heather. (eds. Ketteridge, Steve, Marshall, Stephanie). (2008). [A Handbook for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education: Enhancing Academic Practice](#). (3rd Ed). Taylor & Francis, Inc. A good overview from the UK of Higher Education teaching as an academic. The link given is to Google Books.

Other downloadable resources available from the faculty resource page for this training

<http://www.med.unsw.edu.au/medweb.nsf/page/Resources+for+Teaching+Staff>:

- Kite handout = Learning Style Inventory = for working out your Kolb Kite
- Kite handout 2 = Learning through Experience = the explanation of the theory behind the Kolb kite
- Handout on Difficult Students

Appendix –

Brookfield's Critical Incident Questionnaire

(Stephen Brookfield. (1995). *Becoming a Critically Reflective Teacher*. Jossey-Bass)

This can be adapted (see next page) for various evaluation tasks but is based on getting first impressions from students on the best/ worst issues in a class and what they think can be done to improve on it.

1. At what moment in class this week did you feel most engaged with what was happening?

2. At what moment in class this week did you feel most distanced from what was happening?

3. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most affirming or helpful?

4. What action that anyone (teacher or student) took in class this week did you find most puzzling or confusing?

5. What about the class this week surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurs to you).

