Teaching and Learning Handbook
for Faculty at Vancouver Island University

Prepared by the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning
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# Table of Contents

1 | **Who Are We As An Institution?** .................................................................................................................. 9  
   VIU is a Teaching-focused Institution—Our Profile .................................................................................. 9  
   What is a Special Purpose, Teaching University? ..................................................................................... 9  
   VIU’s Core Values ........................................................................................................................................... 10  
   VIU’s Core Objectives ................................................................................................................................... 10  
   Vancouver Island University’s Teaching and Learning Principles and Responsibilities ................. 12  
   VIU’s Graduate Attributes ............................................................................................................................. 14  
   Literacies ....................................................................................................................................................... 14  
   Intellectual and Practical Skills ..................................................................................................................... 15  
   Civic Engagement ....................................................................................................................................... 16  
   Support for Excellence in Learning and Teaching ..................................................................................... 17  
   The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning ............................................................................ 17  
   Recognition of Achievement in Teaching and Learning .......................................................................... 17  
   Provost Awards for Excellence in Teaching Design and Practice ......................................................... 18

2 | **Who Are Our Students?** .......................................................................................................................... 21  
   How Does Who Our Students Are Affect How We Teach? .................................................................. 21  
   Cognitive and Emotional Development ...................................................................................................... 21  
   The Perry Scheme ......................................................................................................................................... 22  
   Supporting Diversity in the Classroom ........................................................................................................ 23  
   Indigenous Students ..................................................................................................................................... 24  
   1st Generation Students ............................................................................................................................... 27  
   Mature and Returning Students .................................................................................................................. 28  
   International Students ................................................................................................................................. 28  
   Students with Disabilities ............................................................................................................................. 30  
   How to Identify and Respond to Concerns About Student Performance ............................................. 32
## Roles and Purposes of a Course Outline
- Checklist for Your Course Outline or Syllabus
- The Graphic Syllabus

## What Does The Research Say About Learning?
- Skills and Abilities of Deep and Shallow Approaches to Learning
- Seven Theory and Research-Based Principles of Learning
- Metacognition and Deep Learning: How Students Learn
- Ten Metacognitive Teaching Strategies to Help Students Learn How to Learn
- Practices that Foster Learning and Retention
- 10 High Impact Educational Practices

## What are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching?
- Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education
- What Less Effective Teachers Do Wrong
- Face-to-face (F2F) and Online Examples of Effective Teaching Characteristics

## How do I Choose the Right Teaching Strategies?
- Lecturing: Ten Things to Remember
- Encouraging Student Participation: Why It Pays to Sweat the Small Stuff
- Classroom Management: Finding the Balance Between Too Rigid and Too Flexible
- Classroom Management Tips for Regaining Control of the Classroom

## Why Integrate Technology into the Curriculum?
- Selecting the Appropriate Communication Tools for Your Online Course
- VIU’s Learning Technologies
- Semester Start-up Checklist for Courses supported by VIULearn
- Protecting the Privacy of Student Data
### Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>**11</td>
<td>How Do I Know I’m Doing Well?**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Course Evaluations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Getting Feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer/Colleague Feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Reflection and the Course Portfolio</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Portfolios</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**12</td>
<td>Processes and Procedures**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication and Availability</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Lists</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Office Hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbooks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancelling Class</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedures When Teaching Online</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assigning Grades</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Attendance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom of Information and Privacy of Protection (FIPPA)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Integrity/Misconduct</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Detecting and Preventing Plagiarism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIU’s Early Alert System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIU Calendar and Important Dates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**13</td>
<td>Useful Resources**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIU Services for Students and Faculty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and Articles about Teaching and Learning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tips for Sessional and New Instructors: A letter from an experienced faculty member</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hay ch qu’ sli’em siye’yu mukw mustimuxw.

In keeping with regional protocol, Vancouver Island University students, staff, faculty and administration would like to acknowledge and thank the Snuneymuxw First Nation, Tla’amin First Nation, Snaw-naw-as First Nation and the Cowichan Tribes for allowing students, staff, faculty and administration to teach, learn, live and share educational experiences on the traditional territories of these nations.
1 | Who Are We As An Institution?

VIU is a Teaching-focused Institution—Our Profile

Welcome to Vancouver Island University.

Known as for its reputation as a dynamic regional institution for both learning and applied research, Vancouver Island University (VIU) is committed to providing students with teaching excellence.

With nearly 18,000 full and part-time learners, VIU values a diverse range of training and education, and provides a rich variety of educational opportunities including trades, undergraduate, graduate, vocational and basic literacy programs.

What is a Special Purpose, Teaching University?

According to the University Act, Vancouver Island University is “a special purpose, teaching university that serves a geographic area or region of the province.” It provides “adult basic education, career, technical, trade and academic programs leading to certificates, diplomas and baccalaureate and masters degrees.” Further, it provides “so far as and to the extent that its resources from time to time permit... applied research and scholarly activities to support the programs of the special purpose, teaching university” (10: 47.1) This means that while faculty members’ primary role is high quality teaching, creative and scholarly activities will also be a vibrant element of faculty members’ professional lives.
VIU’s Core Values

Outlined in the Academic Plan, and directly related to enhancing a culture of teaching and learning at VIU, the following core values shape the practices of VIU faculty and staff:

**Learning:** we support student success, access to education, appropriate use of technology, development of literacies, communication and exchange of ideas across disciplines and locations, exploration and application of new thought and pursuit of lifelong learning

**Discovery:** through the pursuit of free enquiry we promote an enduring learning community

**Engagement:** we value ongoing cooperation with our partners in education, with communities in our region and with colleagues throughout the world

**Achievement:** we believe in the potential of our learners and are committed to promoting the excellence and success of our students, faculty, staff and alumni

**Diversity:** we value human diversity in all its dimensions and are committed to maintaining learning and working environments which are equitable, diverse and inclusive

**Celebration:** we celebrate the achievements of our students, faculty, staff, alumni and the communities we serve

**Sustainability:** we support a healthy sustainable environment through progressive operational practices and promotion of environmental awareness

VIU’s Core Objectives

The following five areas frame the core objectives of the institution as it is described in the Academic Plan.

**Student learning, engagement and success**
- Promote student leadership and the application of intellectual and practical skills to ensure the success of our students
- Encourage the development of literacies and communication skills in all of our instructional programs
- Enhance experiential learning opportunities and involvement in scholarship and community-based learning
• Provide effective student services that support programs, build the campus community and improve the quality of life of students

**Academic community**

• Maintain teaching as our priority in support of student learning and institutional identity
• Attract and retain faculty with expertise that supports the institutional vision
• Develop an appropriate identity and standards for members of our diverse academic community
• Enhance academic support services in order to empower faculty

**Program quality**

• Maintain our commitment to academic, applied, developmental, experiential and professional programs that provide multiple educational opportunities
• Continue to explore the development of high-quality programs, including graduate programs, that address identified needs
• Support programs with operationally sustainable services, technologies and facilities
• Promote a culture of program assessment and continuous improvement

**Community engagement**

• Sustain collaborative relationships with communities and educational partners in order to ensure optimal responses to regional cultural, economic, environmental and social needs
• Enhance collaborative relationships with Aboriginal communities in order to develop opportunities for, and to promote the success of, Aboriginal students
• Develop innovative multi-disciplinary programs that address the issues facing the region
• Promote awareness of global cultures, issues and conditions and the role played by the region nationally and internationally

**Institutional effectiveness**

• Promote a culture of respect, transparency and accountability
• Provide visionary administrative leadership that creates a valued institution
• Support faculty, staff and student involvement in University leadership and governance
• Build relationships with local, national and international organizations, alumni and friends that contribute to the reputation and success of the University
Vancouver Island University’s Teaching and Learning Principles and Responsibilities

**Principle 1: Student Development**
The overriding responsibility of faculty is to contribute to the affective, physical, and cognitive development of the student, at least in the context of the faculty’s own area of expertise, and to avoid actions such as exploitation and discrimination that detract from student development.

**Principle 2: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**
VIU values human diversity in all its dimensions and promotes an equitable university that is inclusive and representative of our diverse communities.

**Principle 3: Content Competence**
Faculty maintain a high level of subject-matter knowledge and ensure that course content is current, accurate, and representative.

**Principle 4: Pedagogical Competence**
Pedagogically competent faculty communicate the objectives of the course to students, are aware of alternative teaching and learning strategies, and select teaching and learning methods that, according to research evidence (including personal or self-reflective research), are effective in helping students achieve the course objectives.

**Principle 5: Dealing With Sensitive Topics**
Topics that students are likely to find sensitive or discomfiting are dealt with in an open, honest, and respectful way.

**Principle 6: Dual Relationships With Students**
To avoid conflict of interest, faculty do not enter into dual-role relationships with students that are likely to detract from student development or lead to actual or perceived favouritism on the part of the faculty.

**Principle 7: Confidentiality**
Student grades, other academic records, and private communications are treated as confidential materials, and should be released only if the student has consented, in writing, to disclosure and if the disclosure is necessary for the performance of the faculty’s duties.
Principle 8: Respect for Colleagues
Faculty respect the dignity of colleagues and work cooperatively with colleagues in the interest of fostering student development.

Principle 9: Valid Assessment of Students
Given the importance of assessment and evaluation of student performance in university teaching and in students' lives and careers, faculty are responsible for taking adequate steps to ensure that assessment and evaluation of students is valid, open, fair, and congruent with course objectives.

Principle 10: Respect for Institution
In the interests of student development, faculty are aware and respectful of the educational goals, policies, and standards of the institution in which they teach.

Related Links
Equity & Human Rights –
http://www.viu.ca/humanrights/index.asp/
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act –
http://www.viu.ca/foipop/
Prevention of Violence, Threats, and Intimidation (under review) –
VIU’s Graduate Attributes
The Three Pillars of Our Graduate Attributes

Our graduate attributes are grouped into three “pillars,” which we believe form a solid foundation of citizenship. These pillars are **Literacies** (i.e. the acquisition of knowledge), **Intellectual and Practical Skills** (i.e. understanding the application of gained knowledge), and **Civic Engagement** (i.e. appreciating that knowledge exists in context).

**Literacies**

**Reading**
Reading engages, situates, and analyzes a text in order to comprehend and make meaning. Readers learn to understand how texts are culturally and historically situated, to interpret using a range of genres, and to appreciate that there are different ways to approach a text.

**Written Communication**
Written communication is the use of writing to organize perspectives, knowledge, thoughts, ideas, and information and to present them in a clear and effective manner. Adept writers are able to negotiate different genres and situations.

**Oral Communication**
Oral communication is the use of speech to express perspectives, knowledge, thoughts, ideas, and information in a clear and effective manner. It includes the capacity to listen and to comprehend orally-communicated information.

**Information Literacies**
Information literacies include the ability to find and critically evaluate relevant information and its sources, and to synthesize the information with existing knowledge.

**Scientific Literacy**
Scientific literacy entails an understanding of the scientific method, including the roles of experimentation, numeracy, and reproducibility, sufficient to make evidence-based conclusions and to participate in informed civic debate.

**Technological Literacy**
Technological literacy includes an understanding of how technical innovation has influenced societies. Technological literacy involves an openness to new technologies and processes, as well as the ability to critically evaluate their relevance and uses.
Intellectual and Practical Skills

Disciplinary Expertise
Students achieve domain-specific knowledge and competence in their chosen areas of study.

Critical Thinking
Critical thinking is the ongoing practice of examining, analyzing, and reflecting on something before developing a position or conclusion.

Creative Thinking
Creative thinking occurs when established approaches are reimagined in order to arrive at a new way to represent or understand a subject. Creative thinking is characterized by a solid grasp of established practices within a field of study, by use of imagination and synthesis, and through initiative and risk-taking.

Inquiry and Ways of Knowing
Inquiry is the process of posing questions while trying methodically to answer those questions. Questions arise in relation to past inquiry within a field of study, emerging issues, and individual curiosity. Ways of knowing can be historical, cultural, and disciplinary.

Historical Understanding
Historical understanding is the capacity to see how texts, ideas, and events are informed by the past and situated in their own contexts. The ability to trace change or continuity over time extends to the historical basis of disciplines and knowledge, including how these relate to other social and cultural developments.

Safe and Ethical Practices
Students will become aware of, and adhere to, safe and ethical practices in their areas of study or profession. Such practices could relate to work in a lab, a shop, or a classroom, and includes adherence to ethical standards in research involving human participants and ensuring that the safety, health, welfare, and rights of participants are adequately protected.

Collaboration
Collaboration is the ability to work productively with others, especially within the context of an organization. Effective collaborators understand the processes by which organizations achieve their goals and apply skills and resources to achieve shared objectives.

Active Learning
Active or deep learning occurs when individuals are able to understand how they learn and how to use appropriate learning strategies given the situation, including planning and re-evaluating their approach.
Civic Engagement

**Indigenous Perspective**
An awareness of Aboriginal perspectives includes the different ways of knowing by which these perspectives enrich university life. Indigenous Perspective relates not only to the objective of exploring what Indigenous knowledge is but also to devising ways of integrating such knowledge into our learning.

**Local Knowledge in a Global Context**
A world view informed by geography, sustainability, culture, history, and current events is an important facet of citizenship in an era of mass culture and communication.

**Intercultural Perspective**
Intercultural perspectives comprise awareness and appreciation of different ways of knowing and being which encompass diverse peoples, cultures, and lifestyles.

**Capacity to Engage in Respectful Relationships**
Respectful relationships involve trust, acceptance, inclusion, and emotional intelligence. Graduates of VIU have the capacity to develop meaningful relationships and demonstrate respectful and genuine interest in all people, particularly when interacting with others who have different abilities or backgrounds.

**Foundations for Lifelong Learning**
Lifelong learners are self-motivated learners. They have the knowledge, skills, and attitude to engage in continuous learning; they are characterized by independence of thought, curiosity, and initiative. Lifelong learning is important for personal and professional development as well as for civic engagement.

**Ethical Reasoning**
Ethical reasoning is the application of a moral framework to a given situation or issue.

**Integrative Learning**
Integrative learning is the ability to make connections, synthesize and apply learning in new situations, and bridge theory and practice across disciplinary boundaries.
Support for Excellence in Learning and Teaching

The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning

The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning is committed to supporting faculty, staff, and students in order to enhance student learning experiences. The Centre offers a variety of programs and resources to support faculty new (and not so new) to Vancouver Island University.

The Centre’s Mandate
To assist Vancouver Island University in being a leader in providing high-quality learning through a strong commitment to student success, community engagement and associated scholarship.

The Centre’s Vision
To inspire excellence, innovation and inquiry into teaching and learning.

The Centre’s Mission Statement
This Centre works strategically in line with the Academic and Information Technology Plans and collaboratively with academic faculties, service and support departments, and faculty members, to promote and support innovation and excellence in the design and development of high quality and curriculum-supported learning opportunities, through the appropriate use and integration of evidence-based teaching tools, interactive technologies, and diverse learning environments, to enhance teaching and learning at Vancouver Island University. The Centre is a valued institutional hub facilitating the growth and development of learning and teaching at VIU through close collaborations at all campuses and through high quality professional knowledge, skills and services.

Recognition of Achievement in Teaching and Learning

VIU’s Recognition of Achievements in Teaching and Learning program recognizes and celebrates faculty members who are implementing enhancements into their practice resulting in high quality student learning experiences. Collaboratively designed with feedback from faculty serving on VIU’s 2016 – 2017 Council on Learning and Teaching Excellence, the program launched in August 2017 and is supported by the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning. The program acknowledges and celebrates faculty who have implemented strategies and activities in their classrooms related to one of the four topic areas: Student Engagement and Learning; Design of Learning Experiences; Scholarly Reflection and Inquiry; Leadership and Community. Faculty interested in obtaining recognition of their achievements in a particular area complete required and optional activities and submit a summary of their work to a committee. Successful faculty will be celebrated at a campus-wide teaching and learning event twice a year.
where they will share some of their achievements. In addition, a printed and digital certificate will be presented to faculty to serve as a record of their work.

More info at: [https://ciel.viu.ca](https://ciel.viu.ca) in the Scholarly Teaching Practice Section

**Provost Awards for Excellence in Teaching Design and Practice**
*For full details, see:* [https://www2.viu.ca/pvpa/ProvostAwardsforExcellenceinTeachingDesignandPractice.asp](https://www2.viu.ca/pvpa/ProvostAwardsforExcellenceinTeachingDesignandPractice.asp)

**Teaching Design and Practice that Enhances Deep Learning**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice that significantly enhance and support the development of deep approaches for student learning.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Aids in Student Learning and Increasing Retention**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of student success strategies which aid in student retention and persistence.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Employs Experiential Learning**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of experiential learning opportunities embedded within the course structure.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Focuses on Aboriginal Learning**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of fostering learning with Aboriginal students.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Focuses on International Student Learning**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of fostering learning with International students.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Uses Technology to Enhance Student Learning**
This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of using learning technologies to enhance student learning.
**Teaching Design and Practice that Involves Cross-Disciplinary Learning (Citizenship, Sustainability, Global Community)**

This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of students’ cross disciplinary/interdisciplinary learning in the areas of citizenship, sustainability and global community.

**Teaching Design and Practice that Employs Innovative Practices for Student Learning**

This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of educational innovations through implementing new ideas, programs, or approaches that foster student success.

**Teaching Design and Practice for Community-Based Learning in Regional Communities**

This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of engaging and connecting students to partners and communities within the local region around community-based learning experiences.

**Teaching Design and Practice for Exemplary Assessment and Evaluation in Student Learning**

This award will recognize an educator who has made contributions to advancing teaching and learning at VIU with a particular focus on design and practice of exemplary assessment and evaluation practices aiding in student learning.
2 | Who Are Our Students?

How Does Who Our Students Are Affect How We Teach?

VIU is an open access university, attracting a diverse set of students: many of our learners are mature, ‘non-traditional’ age, returning to University after having worked for a number of years. We have a relatively large percentage of First Nation, Aboriginal learners choosing to study at VIU. Most of our students commute every day to come to VIU. We also attract a large number of international students from Asia, the Middle East, India and Europe. Many students work part or full-time off-campus, and are also caring for families alongside their studies. We serve many “first generation” students, i.e. students who are the first ones in their family to attend university. And of course, some of our students have more “traditional” characteristics: they are ‘traditional age’ (18-22); live on campus; work part-time on campus; and study full-time.

It is important to understand who your learners are so that you can appropriately design learning experiences and meet their needs.

Cognitive and Emotional Development

Our students are on an intellectual journey that takes them through various stages of thinking as they encounter new ideas and new ways to understand the world. Sometimes, as they struggle with new ideas, it may seem as if these stages or phases of cognitive and emotional
development are getting in their way. However, if we accept that moving through stages of intellectual complexity and sophistication is normal on anyone’s path of learning, we can help our students with their intellectual struggles. If we are aware of and can anticipate the stages they are likely to experience, we are better able to respond effectively and assist students in becoming critical thinkers. We will also be able to let go of the frustration that comes our way when students resist certain kinds of thinking, or seem stuck with perspectives that do not serve them well in their learning.

The Perry Scheme
The Perry Scheme is one tool that many instructors find useful for diagnosing where students are on their intellectual journey. The late William Perry, professor at Harvard, originally published his research in 1970, using as his subjects the white males in his university courses.¹ Subsequent researchers have updated the original thesis, to uncover its relevance for a broader population.

Perry identifies four basic stages in the evolution of an individual’s thinking. The summary provided here is a pragmatic simplification of the scheme. In general, Perry’s research describes the four basic stages in the following terms.

**Dualism** (black and white thinking)
- Knowledge is viewed as received Truth; things are either right or wrong
- Teacher is the authority who has all the Answers
- Learning means memorizing, finding the “right” answer, getting the “A”
- Common Dualist question: Will this be on the test? Will you tell us the right answer?

**Frustrations for students at the dualist phase**
- Memorizing worked in high school, why not now?
- Why won’t the teacher answer my questions?
- Questions without clear-cut answers are “tricky,” unfair and not useful.

**Multiplicity** (everything is grey)
- All knowledge is suspect; all opinions and statements are equally OK
- Teacher may be the authority, but he/she represents just another opinion
- Learning means playing the teacher’s game to get the “A”

**Frustrations for students at the multiplyist phase**

How can the teacher evaluate my work if it’s just a matter of OPINION whether it’s good or bad?
Grades are based on whom the professor likes...

Relativism (Everything has a context)
- Knowledge is suspect, but some things are supported by evidence and reasons
- Teacher is a conversation partner, acts as guide, shows the direction, helps students discover
- Learning means realizing that what we “know” is colored by perspective and assumptions. Facts, data are essential, but not sufficient.

Frustrations for students at the relativist stage
- I need more information and more than one perspective, but this class is narrow.
- Traditional university classes are often not challenging enough
- I’m surrounded by students who are clueless.

Commitment in Relativism (knowledge has an impact on who we are, on our moral being)
- Knowledge affects personal actions outside the classroom
- What matters: facts, feelings and perspectives and how I will act upon them
- Teacher is a source among other sources
- Learning includes making choices, and taking responsibility for those choices

Further Reading:

Supporting Diversity in the Classroom
VIU has a number of supports for faculty and students around ensuring diversity is welcomed and valued in the classroom.

- Aboriginal Students: http://www2.viu.ca/sas/
- International Students: http://www2.viu.ca/international/InternationalStudentAdvising.asp
- Positive Space: http://www2.viu.ca/PositiveSpace/
- Disability Services: http://www2.viu.ca/disabilityservices/
- Human Rights Office: http://www2.viu.ca/humanrights/
Indigenous Students

Indigenous students come from many backgrounds and types of experience and there is no single way to describe their previous experience, nor their academic experience at the university. But it is important to remember that Indigenous students come from a culture that prioritizes respect, learning through listening and watching quietly, learning from personal experience, and acknowledgement of the spiritual dimension of relations between people and the world. These ways of knowing and learning are not always consistent with the expectations of a university classroom that receives its norms from western European culture. European culture often privileges active participation in whole-class discussion, rapid-fire answering of questions, abstract conceptual thinking and objective rather than personal approaches to understanding the world. Additionally, the European classroom has historically been a place where Indigenous ways of knowing have been actively and intentionally suppressed, so our Indigenous students may arrive in our classrooms with a certain wariness about how well they will fit in and whether they will be successful in what may be a hostile environment.

Map of Vancouver Island of First Nations

VIU faculty have been experimenting with strategies to help Indigenous student know that they are welcome in the classroom, and that their ways of knowing and being are an asset to the learning that can happen there. Just some of the strategies they have employed include:
Beginning the class with the traditional acknowledgement that we are living and learning on un-ceded Indigenous land. VIU has campuses on the traditional territories of the Snuneymuxw First Nation, the Cowichan Tribes, the Sna-naw-as First Nation, and the Tla’amin First Nation. Acknowledging this fact on the first day of class goes a long way toward letting Indigenous students know that they are welcome and that the faculty member understands a little about their history and culture.

- Setting up the classroom (either permanently or only on some class days) as a talking circle
- Inviting an Elder to teach in the class during the semester
- Allowing for multiple ways of participating in discussion and class activities, not just acknowledging the first hand up
- Designing assignments that have multiple formats and ways to submit
- Designing assignments that allow students to bring their personal experiences into play
- Designing experiential activities that align with course learning outcomes
- Including Indigenous perspectives as part of the curriculum, not just as an add-on at the end of a chapter.

**VIU Elders**

At Vancouver Island University (VIU) our Elders are one of our most valuable resources. They provide counseling, support, and guidance to all students at VIU. You will often hear the students referring to the Elders as "Auntie" or "Uncle", which is a sign of both affection and respect. Vancouver Island University Elders are active in a variety of areas encompassing student support, class-room instruction, teaching traditional protocols and cross-cultural sharing.

In 2011, a special project was undertaken by Dr. Melody Martin and Dr. Laurie Meijer Drees (First Nations Department) that looked at the “Elders-in-Residence” at VIU. They conducted a study interviewing and surveying students and faculty at VIU (as well as surveying 18 other institutions across Canada), reported on results and made recommendations of which many have been put in place at VIU.

From interviews conducted during the study, the following **positive impacts on students** were mentioned. For example, they suggested Elders at VIU:

- provide a particular and important kind of guidance for students,
- inspire students with cultural teachings and stories,
- bring a spiritual presence to campus,
• offer counsel to students experiencing life challenges,
• foreground a holistic approach to interacting with students,
• maintain an emotional balance in the classroom,
• pass on beneficial traditional teachings to students,
• promote “groundedness” for students,
• teach active listening through the stories,
• encourage students to value the wisdom that Elders can bring,
• model respect for culture,
• reassure First Nations students,
• play a critical role in student retention,
• help build a bridge between VIU and First Nations students who may have had previous bad associations with educational institutions,
• bring meaningful teachings that are good for all students

“Uy’shqwaluwunts kw’us I ulup xwu’ ‘iutl’ Snuneymuxw”

Martin and Meijer Drees go on to indicate that many of the same positive impacts listed above also relate to faculty. Here are some quotes from VIU teaching faculty members:

- “has changed the way we do things overall...There are protocols that are in place and our administration continually acknowledges the territory that we are in”
- “has changed me in all aspects of myself as a human being”
- “adds an extra dimension of knowledge and wisdom that many of the instructors don’t have”
- “provides local knowledge and ways of doing things”
- “encourages everyone to pause...for a moment”
- “defuses situations”
- has helped our faculty take “the first tangible step in building culture”
- helps faculty “teach with respect to the [First Nations] culture”

Contact Information for Elders
If you should have questions or wish to invite an Elder to your class, please contact Aboriginal Education and Engagement: Sylvia Scow, Aboriginal Project Coordinator & Elder Support, (250) 753-3245, local 2096, Email: Sylvia.Scow@viu.ca
First generation students are those who the first in their families to attend university. Venturing out in this way takes a significant amount of courage and adventurousness. VIU attracts a significant number of these students, who bring with them some challenges for learning.

First generation students often do not understand, and are initially unprepared for the expectations of a university classroom. Their personal experience of classrooms ended in High School, and they have no siblings or parents who can give them advice. There may be many questions they don’t know to ask, and many resources they do not know how to find. They may not know how to apply for financial aid; be seeing a course outline or syllabus for the first time; need help understanding deadlines and grasping academic standards. They often do not know about the many resources at VIU (the Writing Centre, Math Learning Center, Advising, Counselling, Disabilities, Health clinic, Technology Helpdesk, etc.) and thus waste time trying to work things out alone.

These students also often have added pressures from home. Their parents and siblings and friends do not understand how to succeed at university, and expect their student to continue doing everything he or she did before registering for classes. They are more likely to hold down full time jobs, care for family members, and face financial pressures than other students. They may also experience incomprehension or backlash from family members and friends for stepping outside the conventional norms of their community. All of these pressures can make university an almost insurmountable experience.

Some ideas for helping first generation students succeed:

- Arrange office hours at times and on days when most of your students can attend. Create opportunities for office hours in addition, to accommodate complicated student schedules. Never tire of inviting students to your office. Encourage them to come singly or in small groups for study sessions.
- In face-to-face courses, encourage students to connect with you before or after class, when they are already on campus.
- Create a welcoming online presence so students can connect with you outside of class.
- Be responsive to students, but also clearly explain any limitations you have for responding, especially electronically (i.e. “if you email me I’ll get back to you within 48 hours if it’s a weekend, otherwise it’s 24 hours”)

“A teacher who is attempting to teach without inspiring the [student] with a desire to learn is hammering on a cold iron.”
— Horace Mann
- Create very clear course outlines with expectations, deadlines, contact information and resources clearly explained
- Create assignments with flexible formats, and that can include students’ personal experience in the world when possible
- Be familiar with all the resources available to students so that you can help them connect with those they need

**Mature and Returning Students**

Mature and returning students have many of the same pressures as first generation students. They work, care for families and are often concerned about finances. At the same time, they are often very focused on their personal goals, and clear on why they have come back to school. Additionally, their life experience sometimes helps them see connections to the material that younger students cannot yet make. However, since their academic classroom experience is some years old, they often worry about their ability to keep up with their younger peers in the university classroom and about their writing and math skills. Additionally, they are less likely than traditional age students to create a network of friends, and so often feel isolated at the university.

The strategies that help mature and returning students are similar to those for first generation students. Welcome them in your class, let all students see their experience of the world as an added asset, encourage them to ask for assistance, and supply them with the many resources VIU has to offer students.

**International Students**

VIU attracts international students from many different continents and cultures. These students usually come to us highly motivated, but are often unprepared for the culture of the Canadian classroom. They have many practical issues to solve with regards to immigration, insurance, housing and work. They also have to master a new culture and very different academic expectations than in their home countries. And they are doing all of this in a language that they have not yet fully mastered, and looking through cultural lenses that do not always square with how things work in Canada. International students are often away from home for the first time, and experience homesickness and cultural disorientation while taking on a full academic load. Because of their language and culture differences, they
may also experience isolation from their peers in the classroom and high stress around their academic performance.

International Student services helps students with advice on immigration, insurance, housing, and other practical aspects of moving to Canada. They also provide academic advising, ESL classes, peer helpers, and much more.

However, unless you are teaching in the International Education Faculty, the international students in your classes will already be beyond the initial preparatory courses and workshops offered by International Student Services. Your international students are expected to perform just like any Canadian student in the class. This does not preclude some challenges with language, culture, and classroom expectations. The three largest challenges are writing skills; oral comprehension and communication; and academic expectations—especially expectations around participation in class discussions and conventions of writing academic papers.

**Some ideas for helping International students succeed:**

- Create opportunities in class for collaborative learning, small group discussions so students can practice their thinking before being expected to speak before the whole class.
- Call on various students (not just the liveliest ones) when reporting out from small group discussions (“Li, what did your group talk about?”)
- Explain and clarify expectations around scholarly writing such as what plagiarism looks like, how to cite sources properly, how to create a list of references, etc.
- Be extra clear about assignments, expectations and policies
- Include topics and resources with a more international flavour
- Provide a lecture outline and lecture notes online
- Reduce jargon and explain key words
- Create assignments with flexible formats, and that can include students' personal experience in the world when possible
- Never tire of inviting students to your office. Encourage them to come singly or in small groups for study sessions.
- In face-to-face courses, encourage students to connect with you before or after class, when they are already in the same room with you. This lowers the barrier to talking with you
- Create a welcoming online presence so students can connect with you outside of class.
- Be responsive to students, but also clearly explain any limitations and timeframes you have for responding so they don’t think you are ignoring them
- Be familiar with all the resources available to students so that you can help them connect with those they need
**Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities, be they physical, cognitive, or issues of mental health, have as much of a right to study and improve their lives as any other students. A disability may put a student at a disadvantage, not because he or she cannot perform academically, but because the conditions under which a course is habitually taught includes barriers to that student that do not exist for students without disabilities. For this reason, there are arrangements put in place to support students with disabilities so that they have a more level playing field when they are in an academic setting. Such arrangements are commonly called “accommodations”.

Vancouver Island University is committed to providing access to education for students with documented disabilities and recognizes the legal duty to provide reasonable accommodations to students with a documented disability. Students must provide faculty members a letter from Disabilities Access Services describing the accommodations to which they have a right.

The student has been advised to meet with you privately during office hours to discuss arrangements for accommodation. Acknowledge and be supportive of the student’s requirements. Never ask what the student’s disability is: that information is personal and legally protected. The student may self-disclose, but the faculty member may not ask. Come to a clear agreement regarding the implementation of the accommodations listed in the letter from Disabilities Access Services.

Not all students with disabilities will disclose that they have a right to accommodation at the beginning of the semester, even if you invite them to. This may be because they do not wish to share such personal information, or because they do not even know they have a disability. Some students with disabilities do not learn that they have one until they are already at risk of failing a class. The stressors of academic performance along with other things happening in a student’s life may also trigger episodes where the student is unable to perform in the same way that students without disabilities do.

**Some ideas for helping students with disabilities succeed:**

- During the first class make an announcement about Disabilities Access Services. Let students know you are aware and supportive of services that help students learn.

- Include a welcome statement in your course syllabus such as: *Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodation, please feel free to approach me and/or Disability Access Services (DAS) as soon as possible. The DAS staff is*
available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. They are located in Building 200 and can be reached at 250 740 6446. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

- If you notice a student struggling and you suspect it might be a disability, refer the student to Disabilities Access Services and discuss with the student teaching and learning alternatives that might help the student succeed. Try not to diagnose a disability.

- Treat students with disabilities as you would other students, with the exception of the accommodations that are helping them succeed. Students with disabilities should have the same opportunities to succeed or fail as anyone else. Their work must be equivalent to that of their peers (attend class, meet deadlines, complete assignments) unless otherwise specified in their Letter for Instructors from Disabilities Access Services.

- Be prepared to offer flexibility in assignment deadlines and formats, to help students succeed. The goal is always to provide equal opportunity to master the essentials of your course.

- Be aware of the kinds of accommodations that might be required.
### How to Identify and Respond to Concerns About Student Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Observed Behaviour</th>
<th>Connect and Inform</th>
<th>Resources</th>
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| **Academic Concern** | o Speak to the student directly  
|         | o Document details of concerns and any meetings and/or other communication  
|         | o Refer to the Student Academic Code of Conduct  
|         | o Share/report concerns with your Program Chair, Associate Dean, and/or Dean  
|         | o Submit a referral through EARLY ALERT* | **Counselling Services**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6416 |
|         |                                | **Advising**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6410 |
|         |                                | **Disability Access Services**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6446 |
|         |                                | **Services for Aboriginal Students**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6510 |
|         |                                | **International Student Services**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6315 |
|         |                                | **VIU Student Health Clinic**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6620 |
| **Change in Mood or Behaviour** | o Speak to the student directly and, if appropriate, inform him/her about the available resources.  
|         | o Document details of concerns and any meetings and/or other communication  
|         | o Refer to the Student Code of Conduct (if required)  
|         | o Share/report concerns with your Program Chair, Associate Dean, and/or Dean  
|         | o Submit a referral through EARLY ALERT* | **As above – and:**  
|         |                                | **Director, Student Affairs**  
|         |                                | 250-740-6406/6416 |
|         |                                | **Office of Student Affairs (Conduct)** |
| **Disruptive and/or Disrespectful** | o Speak to the student directly and, if appropriate, inform him/her about the available resources.  
|         | o Document details of concerns and any meetings and/or other communication  
<p>|         | o Refer to the Student Code of Conduct and/or submit an Incident Report. | |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Erratic and/or Acute Distress</th>
<th>Threat of Danger to Self and/or Others</th>
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<tr>
<td>Examples include:</td>
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<td>o Aggressive words or actions</td>
<td>o <strong>First</strong> - get help immediately – call 911</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Damage to property</td>
<td>o <strong>Then</strong> - call campus security 250-740-6600 or local 6600</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Persistent unwanted contact by phone, email, social media or in-person</td>
<td>o <strong>Finally</strong> - contact the Risk and Threat Assessment Team (RTAT)</td>
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<td>o Share/report concerns with your Program Chair, Associate Dean, and/or Dean</td>
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<td>o Refer to the Office of Student Affairs (Conduct)</td>
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<td>250-740-6426/6276</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director, International Student Services</td>
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<td>250-740-6384</td>
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<td>Health and Safety</td>
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<td>Island Crisis Society</td>
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<td>1-888-494-3888</td>
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Our purpose in teaching is to create a sense of responsibility for learning and agency in students that leads to students’ self-confidence and the ability for lifelong learning in their chosen field and beyond. We do this through effective design and implementation of courses by actively engaging students in the thinking of our disciplines, whether online and at a distance, in a blended format, or in fully face-to-face courses.

**Engage Students in the Classroom: Active Learning**

"Active learning" describes a broad category of practices that place students at the center of classroom activities. Students learn best when they are doing something that requires an investment and a commitment of participation, rather than listening to a lecture or watching a video. Being active often means interacting with other learners. Cooperative, Collaborative and Team-Based Learning are some examples of strategies used for Active Learning.

To create this kind of classroom environment requires some planning. For one, the instructor has to communicate consistently clear expectations that the classroom will not merely be used simply for the instructor’s lecture, but will be the place where students demonstrate their learning through their own actions. To be successful as a strategy, this needs to start on Day One, and continue throughout the course. Second, if students are to develop the confidence they need to be challenged in this way, they will need to come prepared. The instructor will therefore need to use strategies and techniques to ensure that students do the preparatory work necessary for their success. Third, the evaluation of student learning will need to be tied to...
students’ demonstrated skill in applying course content in new situations, rather than in mere memorization and accurate recall of information recorded from lecture and readings. Most students will pursue what counts toward their marks, and discount what does not.

**Golden rules for creating an active learning classroom**

The in-class learning activities need structure but should not be canned steps. Students need to act for themselves in using their new knowledge. Asking students to make judgments and decisions is an effective way to exercise the freedom of self-determination, but within a context that you have structured to be relevant.

The in-class activities can and should include a variety of formats: problem-solving, analyses and diagnoses based on situations or data sets, quizzes, and “let’s see what you can do” challenges. These learning activities force students to retrieve, apply, and/or extend the material learned outside of class.

Consistent instructor expectations for student preparedness are essential to make class meetings productive and engaging for students. Students need to demonstrate their preparedness on a regular basis, in the form of online tasks due before class, reading quizzes (online or at the beginning of class), or other assessment activities.

A significant portion of a student’s mark for the course needs to be tied to classroom activities related to applying and using course content.

**Creating Dialogue in the Classroom**

*Dr. Stephen Rader, (Chemistry) and Dr. Tracy Summerville (Political Science), UNBC*

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One of the most important goals – and greatest challenges – of educators is to create a learning environment in which the students participate actively in their education by becoming engaged with the course material. An effective way to promote active participation is through dialogue in the classroom. Unfortunately, many students, trained by years of passive education and cowed by the fear of making mistakes, are extremely reluctant to enter into dialogue in the classroom. So, how do you get students to begin to actively engage in substantive dialogue? We argue that the essential pre-requisite for classroom dialogue is an atmosphere of trust.

**Types of Dialogue**

**Question and Answer (Q and A)**

Q and A sessions are undoubtedly the most common way in which we expect to create dialogue in the classroom. Instructors can invite students to ask questions at any time during the lecture.
or set aside a specific time for questions. The choice to allow students to interrupt during lectures, however, will help in building an active learning environment because students can engage with the instructor throughout the lecture. It is also important to remember that the instructor can ask questions of the students too.

**Think / Pair / Share**

Think / pair / share is a technique that allows students to interact with a peer to work out a problem or question that the instructor has assigned. Students are asked to work with a partner in order that the students can actively work through problems. Think / pair / share works in large classroom settings because students can simply turn to their neighbour to begin this exercise. However, large classes also have their drawbacks because it is often difficult to ensure that students are actually discussing the problem and not last night's party.

**Small Group Discussions**

Small group discussions also work to create interaction between peers. Again, this may be an opportunity to get students to work through a single problem or for the instructor to design different problems for each group. The instructor may have each group share their findings with the whole class at the end of the discussion.

**Informal Debates**

Informal debates may begin in a classroom quite unexpectedly. They should be encouraged and the instructor should take the time to discuss the debate, outlining the different positions including flaws in reasoning, incorrect assumptions or facts. Make sure the students understand that free flowing debate is not tangential to lecture material. Some students assume that the only —voice that matters is that of the instructor. Take the time to point out how students may have used ideas / concepts from the course to argue a point.

**Formal Debates**

Formal debates are a good tool to get students engaged in both careful research and presentation techniques. The competitive nature of debate can often spark student interest. The instructor needs to set out the debate rules, to expect that research is done beforehand preferably demonstrated through an assignment given to the instructor before the debate. One technique for ensuring that students take the debate seriously is to ask that students dress appropriately on debate day.

**Presentations**

Individual and group presentations are good tools to teach the important skill of oral communication. For some students presentations are a joy; for others presentations are wrought with anxiety and fear. There are two vital parts of a presentation, first there must be clear, well researched content and second, they must be organized and clear. It is important to help students understand that presentations cannot be all —bells and whistles without substance.
Instructors may want to ask the students to design the grading rubric for the presentations. Students are likely to put the emphasis on the content when they are asked — what makes a good presentation. A presentation may have lots of bells of whistles but if the content is lost or unclear the audience will feel that they have not learned anything.

**Oral examinations**

Oral examinations can be a very effective way of determining whether or not the students can articulate ideas they have learned in the course. It becomes very clear that a student has done the course readings when you are having a one-on-one discussion with them about the course. When the exam is designed as an open ended interview session with a number of critical questions along the way, the instructor can often gauge what aspects of the course had the most impact on the student. Two notes of caution: first, it is necessary to have a grading rubric template that is completed at the end of each exam otherwise it is very difficult to remember individual student responses; second, it is necessary to mix up the questions so that students do not share the exam questions. This also means that the instructor has to be very clear about what the students should be getting out of the course (i.e. what is examinable) so that there is no basis for students to say that they got — hard questions whereas others got — easy ones.


**Reliable Formats of Engagement for the Active Learning Classroom**

The Active Learning Classroom is driven by students doing their own thinking in situations you have designed, so you (the resident expert) can respond and offer feedback. For many faculty members, the hardest challenge is to design the kind of activity that 1) is engaging and inherently interesting and 2) demonstrates the targeted thinking, so it becomes visible to the faculty member (and to the students, themselves).

One effective strategy for creating intrinsically interesting tasks is to require students to make autonomous choices and decisions within a restricted framework, rather than generate free responses to open-ended questions. This is the same technique used by game designers to make game scenarios so exciting and engaging. Restricted autonomous decisions emphasize the student’s clear commitment to a way of thinking, which implicates him/her more directly in the challenge. This in turn causes the feedback to be interesting, even if the student is working within a topic where he/she has no real interest. By making his own, clear choice, the student has now invested in the challenge, which makes the outcome relevant at a personal level. Now the student is motivated to learn whether his/her decision is sound, which makes the discussion about the decision particularly engaging.
Tasks that are open-format (make a list; brainstorm reasons; generate a solution; “discuss;” etc.) all have their place at times, but they can also lead to lazy thinking if you are trying to promote focused, analytical discussions in class. For one, the responses to an open-format question can be so far afield as to not be highly useful in a general debrief of student thinking. Second, open-format tasks tend to allow certain kinds of students to dominate the conversation, because they are less timid to generate and share their perspective, even if it is not particularly insightful. Also, it’s too easy for less confident, less assertive or less quick-thinking students to defer to the “best” student’s answer. Closed-format questions tend to level the playing field, as slower students are usually quicker to choose than to generate an answer.

**Debriefing**
The benefit of these restrictive format tasks is that an instructor’s follow-up question to students, “WHY?” is now clearly focused and deeply analytical. “Why did you score this paragraph a 7 and not a 3?” Why did you choose that rock, and not the others? Why did you put this object in that category, rather than this other category? “Why” when it follows a student’s own, autonomous decision implicates the student directly, making the answer something that matters, because it is personal and immediate to his own thinking.

**Inquiry Based Learning**
Inquiry Based Learning places the responsibility for learning on the students, and encourages them to arrive at an understanding of concepts by themselves

Some Inquiry-intensive practices include:

**Design Thinking**
Design Thinking supports and structures the creative process of generating ideas and bringing them into reality through concrete actions and products. Commonly used to frame student work in art, but adaptable to many other disciplines, Design Thinking guides students through five phases of thinking and activity: Discovery, Interpretation, Ideation, Experimentation, and Evolution.

**Problem-Based Learning**
Problem-Based Learning confronts students with messy, complex problems encountered in the real world as a stimulus for learning. Problems are raised with students before have been taught the relevant knowledge. By actively engaging with the problem first, learners develop skills around defining problems, identifying what information they need, and finding, evaluating and using information. Learners are able to connect their thought processes in class to solving problems in the real world.
**Case or Scenario-Based Learning**

Case or Scenario-Based Learning engages students in analysis of specific scenarios that resemble or are real-world examples. This method is learner-centered with intense interaction between participants as they build their knowledge and work together as a group to examine the case. The instructor’s role is that of a facilitator while the students collaboratively analyze and address problems and resolve questions that have no single right answer.

**Meta-questions**

Meta-questions are framing questions designed to structure student work during a whole term within an enveloping investigation. Activities are developed and resources are chosen for supporting students’ consideration of this Big Question. Daily discussions and various assignments repeatedly return to the framing inquiry, and at the end of the term students are asked to produce a comprehensive response to the Meta-question.

**Inquiry can also be embedded in other learning frameworks, such as:**

- Undergraduate Research
- Threshold concepts
- Public Sphere Pedagogy
- Engaged Learning (e.g., civic engagement)
- Field work
- Progressive Inquiry
- Project-based learning

**Group Work**

**Cooperative and Collaborative Learning**

These two terms are often used interchangeably, but it's useful to maintain some distinction. Each approach leverages the social dimension of learning in a slightly different way.

**Cooperative learning** focuses on asking students to interact in highly structured ways to process ideas and information, or practice skills. "Think-Pair-Share" is a classic example of a cooperative learning technique in that it asks students to cooperate temporarily for a specific learning purpose. In cooperative learning the interaction with peers does not normally factor into the evaluation of the student's individual performance. The limited scope of cooperative work in the classroom means that it can be incorporated fairly easily into just about any course format or content.
Some Common Examples of Cooperative Learning include:

- Think/Pair/Share
- Cooperative note-taking
- Structured controversies
- Debates
- Jigsaws

**Collaborative Learning**, on the other hand, asks students to work collectively to produce something for which group members share responsibility. For planning purposes, therefore, collaborative learning is more consequential for decisions made at the level of curriculum, course design, and evaluation of learning. Of particular importance, the collaborative approach needs to give students some flexibility and freedom of action, so that groups are able to accommodate the particular needs of group members as they learn to work as a unit.

Important to keep in mind are the logistical and time burdens put on students by collaborative projects that are designed to take place outside of class. Coordinating busy schedules and tracking down student peers takes enormous energy that is not directly relevant to the learning goals of a project. Ensure that students are given some time in class to organize themselves and to touch base at key moments in the course of preparing out-of-class projects.

**Team-Based Learning**

Team based learning (TBL) is a comprehensive instructional method, invented by organizational behavior professor Larry K. Michaelsen, which puts students into roles of greater autonomy and responsibility for acquiring and using information. Some critical components of TBL are:

1. Teams that are permanent
2. A process to ensure individual student readiness for group work
3. Assignments that require students to work collectively on rigorous application of course content, and
4. Peer evaluation. A central strategy of TBL is to shift the use of class time away from instructors transmitting concepts in class (which can be accomplished more efficiently, individually, outside of class), and towards students working in teams to apply course concepts. The team structure is an essential condition for requiring students to perform at higher cognitive levels.
Lots of people use groups. What’s so special about a "team"?

Groups are collections of individuals who might or might not cooperate. Teams are groups with a shared purpose and sense of collective responsibility. Groups evolve into teams when conditions are right. Members start out as individuals who may or may not function well together, due to hitchhiking members, dominant personalities, and poorly designed assignments. Well-designed tasks plus strategic course design teach group members to listen to one another, value each other’s contributions, learn from mistakes, rein in ineffective behavior, and eventually trust in the team's ability to outperform any given individual.

What are the principles behind TBL?
TBL emerged out of research in organizational and cognitive psychology. Among the principles that drive the method are the following:

- Students learn best and are more motivated when feedback is frequent and immediate.
- Working in groups creates opportunities for frequent, immediate feedback and reflection among peers.
- Groups need time together to learn to function as a team, hence the use of permanently assigned groups.
- Effectively functioning groups need very little instructor oversight or management. TBL is therefore a more efficient use of an instructor’s time, and can be scaled to classes of any size.

Flipped Learning

What is Flipped Learning?
Students learn key concepts on their own—they read, view, and interact with carefully selected/created online materials before class, and then apply their learning during class time, in increasingly challenging activities. This process inverts the traditional ‘lecture transmission’ model, reserving in-class time for small-group work that engages students in problem solving and applying the knowledge they have acquired on their own. Many activities can be part of a flipped class: debates, clicker questions, demonstrations, simulations, peer feedback, and role playing. An instructor may choose to flip just a few classes a term, where the concepts lend themselves to active learning experiences, or to flip the whole course.
Components and Benefits

- Increases interaction and personalized contact between students and teachers. Students are more engaged in learning.
- Students can spend time processing materials outside of class – they are not tied to the time frame of an in-class lecture. Students take more responsibility for their own learning.
- Flipping increases students’ focus on the most important and most difficult concepts of the course.
- Faculty can more easily see where students are struggling and adjust the course to attend to the difficulties students actually have.
- Students who are absent due to illness or extra-curricular activities, don’t get left out (content can be permanently archived for review or remediation)
- Flipping offers more variety, more “hands-on” problem-solving than a traditional class
4 | How do I Design My Course?

Seven Steps to Designing Your Course

Before you start updating your course outline or syllabus, make sure you have thought about the design of your course.

Here are seven basic steps to get you going – often done in the order presented.

1. **Recognize who your learners are**
   - prior knowledge, emotional and intellectual development levels, demographics etc.

2. **Write measurable and observable course learning outcomes**
   - skills, knowledge and attitudes to achieve deep learning of key concepts

3. **Identify evaluation methods for demonstrating learning outcomes**
   - assignments, projects, tests, demonstrations, presentations (% and marking schemes)

4. **Consider informal assessment methods to use throughout course**
   - minute papers, tickets out door, surveys, peer sharing, consultations (no marks)

5. **Choose appropriate teaching and learning strategies to allow students to practice new learning**
   - active learning, student-centered, authentic, engaging and experiential strategies

6. **Keep scope of content around key concepts and enduring understandings**
   - absolutely essential and necessary content to include vs. nice to know content
7. **Plan out your course content and how it will be organized**
   - topics, content, scaffolding of learning experiences, time for application

**Writing Learning Outcomes**

**Learning Outcomes are**

- broad statements about intended student learning after the course (or program) has been completed in terms of the desired end product
- what students should know and be able to demonstrate, as well as the depth of the learning that is expected
- knowledge, skills and values required by students to demonstrate learning of core concepts and essential components of the course (or program)
- often presented separately in the cognitive, psychomotor and affective domains, but also reflect a range of interacting knowledge, skills and attitudes
- Based on unique program situational factors and contexts, the number of learning outcomes that represent a graduate’s integrated and essential learning might be demonstrated through:
  - 5-8 broadly-stated COURSE learning outcomes
  - 10-15 broadly-stated PROGRAM learning outcomes

Another way to look at learning outcomes is by referring to the 3 H’s:

- habits of the head (what you want students to know)
- habits of the hand (what you want students to be able to do)
- habits of the heart (what qualities and attributes you want students to have)

*Note: While you will create learning outcomes as best as you can with the curriculum, course content and student learning in mind, unintended learning outcomes do arise during the progress of a course or over a program’s time. Therefore, some learning outcomes may be more constant, whereas other learning outcomes may need to be adjusted, enhanced or created due to learning situations, student needs or course design needs. Learning outcomes are not fixed and should evolve as the course evolves and as students engage in their learning experiences.*
How Learning Outcomes Fit Within the Course Design

- The learning outcomes are linked to the assessment and evaluation methods, along with the teaching and learning strategies.
- It is best practice to write/edit your learning outcomes first, before your other methods and strategies are chosen.
- Keep the learner front and centre at all times during the planning process.

Creating Well-Written Learning Outcomes

1. **Start with an action verb that is measurable and observable.** See charts on following pages. It important that the student can demonstrate the learning and you can observe and measure their degree of accomplishment.

2. Follow the verb with a **statement** that indicates the **depth of learning** to be demonstrated.

3. End with a **statement** to give the learning outcome **context** and to identify **criteria** for an acceptable performance. Use the words “by” or “through” that will help with stating how the learning outcome will be assessed.

4. **Be specific and not ambiguous.** The following verbs are not that specific and do not result in observable demonstrations of student learning. Try other verbs from the charts on next pages.

   - × Appreciation for
   - × Awareness of
   - × Capable of
   - × Comprehend
   - × Conscious of
   - × Familiar with
   - × Shows interest in
   - × Knows
   - × Has knowledge of
   - × Learns
   - × Likes
   - × Memorizes
   - × Understands
   - × Will be able to
5. Create a **balanced set** of learning outcomes. Too broad a learning outcome will be difficult to assess, while an extensive list of detailed learning outcomes will limit flexibility and adaptability of the curriculum.

6. Be **concise and clearly state** the intended learning outcomes. Make it friendly for students, faculty and others.

7. The learning outcomes have to be **realistic** (related to the real-world) and **attainable** within the time period of the course or program.

### Action Verbs Used in the Creation of Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affective (Feelings/Attitudes)</th>
<th>Cognitive (Mental Skills/Knowledge)</th>
<th>Psychomotor (Manual/Physical Skills)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aid</td>
<td>Cite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Answer</td>
<td>Define</td>
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<td>Ask</td>
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<td>Assist</td>
<td>Find</td>
<td>Differentiate</td>
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<td>Attempt</td>
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<td>Display</td>
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<td>Choose</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Distinguish</td>
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<td>Comply</td>
<td>Recognize</td>
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<td>Rephrase</td>
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<td>Follow</td>
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<td>Help</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Complete</td>
<td>Classify</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Concern</td>
<td>Differentiate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demonstrate</td>
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<td>Describe</td>
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<td>Differentiate</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Question</td>
<td>Survey</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Lesson Planning

Importance of Planning
When you take time to plan your classes, you and your students will see improvements in teaching and learning experiences. Listed below are the benefits of taking the time to plan:

- Gives you a chance to examine how each class fits within the whole course
- Allows you to design learning experiences that will address key topics, content, learning outcomes
- Gives you time to be on the look-out for current stories, videos, or special events related to your topic
- Gives students the knowledge and skills to be successful in completing assignments
- Creates confidence because you are organized and know what is coming next in your class
- Offers the opportunity to provide varied, interesting learning opportunities for your students
- Allows you to accommodate special needs students by considering their requests/needs
- Allows you to integrate technology effectively and prepare a back-up plan
- Presents a cohesive class that flows from one topic to another, and links effectively with the previous class and the next one
- Gives you time to think through possible problems or challenges and be prepared for them
- Let’s you pre-create questions and anticipate answers for effective discussions
- Allows you to include time for student questions and feedback
Planning is a vital component to being an effective instructor. When you plan more, you will see an improvement in the flow and delivery of your content. It is important that you take time to lay out a plan for your classes to ensure success for both you and your students.

**Four Key Questions:** Before planning can begin, consider the four questions listed in the box. The answers to these questions will help you begin your class planning process.

1. **What shall I teach?**
2. **How shall I teach?**
3. **How can I organize it?**
4. **How can I assess it?**

**How to Plan**
Always begin by considering what learning outcomes you wish to cover in your class. These will come from your course syllabus. There should be 1 or 2 outcomes that could be reasonably covered within your class time (e.g., 50 minutes or 3 hours). Keep them in the forefront of your mind when planning the class.

**Assessment & Evaluation**
Next consider how the learning outcomes will be met. This is called backwards planning or planning with the end in mind, which basically means you figure out how you will be assessing and evaluating student work in relation to the outcomes. It is like thinking about the ‘end’ first and working backwards to figure out how you will get your students there (Wiggins and McTighe, 2005). Consider how your students will demonstrate the learning outcomes.

To establish your assessment and evaluation scheme, ask yourself these questions:

- What would show you whether or not your students actually learned what you intended for them to learn?
- What will the evidence look like?
- If the students are “applying” their knowledge of the content you just taught, how will you know that they understood those concepts? How will you record this?

Then decide:

- Assessment: What informal feedback will you give to students about how they are doing with respect to the learning outcomes and related course content (e.g., written and oral...
comments, practice test feedback, discussions, activities, questioning) that do not have marks or grades?

- Evaluation: what formal grading and marks (e.g., tests, assignments, papers, mid-terms, exams) are you planning?
- What assessment and/or evaluation strategies do you need to have or develop so you are accountable for students’ learning and addressing the course learning outcomes?

**Relationship between Learning Outcomes and Assessment + Evaluation:** These first two steps in planning are linked together. You may go back and forth considering the outcomes and deciding on different assessments or evaluations. This step may also take a bit longer.

**Pre-Assessment**

At this step, think carefully about your class (number of students, students with disabilities, age of students, previous knowledge about the topic, social and behavioral characteristics, etc.) and how this will impact your class. It is a step that involves pre-assessing what you know already about your students and taking that into account when you plan the rest of the class.

Remind yourself you may have students with learning disabilities or those who have been identified as needing some assistance with learning in your class. How will you be able to meet their needs with this class? List any strategies you might use (e.g., checking in with student, giving another example, allowing more time to complete an assignment, etc.). What principles of universal design can you consider in modifying content or providing alternatives for learning?

Briefly list the background knowledge that you expect your students to have of this content (e.g., Were there previous classes where content may have surfaced? What might they know from secondary school or general knowledge?). This will help you set the stage for planning the class. Sometimes instructors conduct short pre-assessment quizzes, which are not marked, to ascertain what students already know. These are called diagnostic tests.

Think about logistics. Larger classes may require modifications to class content

Think about the social and behavioral characteristics of students: year of class (1\textsuperscript{st} year, 4\textsuperscript{th} year, etc.), maturity level, interest in topic, time of day class is held

Imagine realistically how prepared your students are likely to be: are they ready to take notes, do the readings, grasp the main ideas of lecture, do the homework? This may affect how you structure your class, the level of assistance you may need to provide, and how slow/fast you can teach the material.
Content/ Teaching & Learning Strategies
This step involves brainstorming all the content required for your class and narrowing it down to key concepts. Once you have those key concepts, chunk them into 10-15 minute chunks. How you will deliver the content revolves around the teaching and learning strategies you choose (lecture, small group activity, video, discussion, etc.)

- Brainstorm all content for this class. Lay it all out so you can see scope of content.
- Chunk your content by arranging it into manageable 10-15 minute chunks or segments
- Plan for activities that allow students to apply their learning and intersperse these between the content chunks
- Sequence content and activities in a step-by-step fashion
- Include approximate timing (either in minutes or actual times for the class) to help you decide how much content to include and predict how long class components will take
- Include sample questions you wish to ask with anticipated answers.
- Be sure to include a wrap up or summary of the content before the class ends as it is crucial for students to be reminded of what you just covered.
- Consider a feedback mechanism (e.g., Minute Paper or Ticket out the Door) to elicit information from students about their learning and the class

Chunking of Content in Each Class
It is highly unlikely any student can sit for three straight hours and take effective notes while listening to a long lecture-focused class. Human brains do not have the capacity to sustain such concentration, understand and make sense of the content during long classes.

A simple answer: To make your classes more engaging, chunk your content and activities into **10 to 20 minute segments**. Some segments should contain content and some segments should contain activities for applying the content. Your students need to interact with you and their classmates and should have a change of pace in the class.

Here are some suggestions for breaking down your lecture or class into more manageable pieces. It may change the way you teach and how your students learn.

1. Gather all the content required for your class.
2. Identify sub-sections or sub-topics within the content: consider where appropriate breaks could occur in terms of delivering the content.

3. Pare down each sub-topic into points that would cover approximately 10-20 minutes of either lecturing or some form of direct instruction to students.

4. In a 1 hour class you need about 2-3 sub-topics to fill segments throughout the class; for 3 hour classes you need about 4-5 sub-topics.

5. Between sub-topic segments, include an activity that involves students applying the content you have just taught. These activities could also be 10-20 minutes long and would allow students to interact with the material by having a chance to stop taking notes and engaging with their peers.

6. Examples of learning activities: a small group discussion, watching a small video related to the topic, solving sample problems, using clickers or flash cards to vote on answers to questions, engaging in a debate about the topic, students independently answering questions, reading a passage, teaching a peer, etc.

7. Your class plan should have content interspersed with activities.

8. Allow time for a break (10-20 minutes) within a 2-hour or 3-hour class.

The biggest challenge for most instructors is choosing and knowing how to implement various learning activities to apply content. As you experiment with this format for your classes, you may wish to adjust how much content and what sorts of activities work best for your students.

Re-Assessment & Resources
After the class has been developed, it is important for you to go back and ensure that all your students are being considered through the teaching and learning strategies chosen. Have you considered the diversity of students in your class? Have you created a level playing field for all the students that are in your class? At this point, it is also time to list the resources (web site links, books, videos, stories, handouts, etc.) you will need for the class.

Next Steps & Reflections
After the class is over, jot down notes for next year and reflect for a short time about the class. Make short comments about how the class progressed: what went well, what did not work, what you would change for next year, what took longer or shorter, etc. Indicate any steps you need to take or things you might do differently next year.
Lesson Plan Template

Course Title: ___________________________  Class Date: ___________________________  Time: ___________________________  Room: ___________________________

1. Class Learning Outcomes

   .

   .

2. Pre-Assessment

   Student Accommodations to Consider:

   Student Academic Knowledge of Content:

   Other:

3. Content / Teaching & Learning Strategies

   a) **Beginning** *(Introduction, Agenda, Hook)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4. Assessment & Evaluation

   Include strategies here alongside appropriate class components.
### Introduction/Agenda
- welcoming students to class
- post and/or explain agenda (components) of class

### Announcements
- housekeeping items, announcements about class or upcoming tests and projects

### Hook to Start Class
- include a short hook (quick story, video, demonstration) to start students considering new content and get engaged in class

### b) Main (Content and Application)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Content 1</td>
<td>• Brief points about the content to present</td>
<td>Time – Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sample questions and anticipated answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application-Content 1</td>
<td>• Activity to apply learning of content</td>
<td>Time – Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content 2</td>
<td>• Brief points about the content to present</td>
<td>Time – Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Sample questions and anticipated answers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application-Content 2</td>
<td>• Activity to apply learning of content</td>
<td>Time – Time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### c) Ending (Consolidation, Next Steps)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Timing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation of Class Content</td>
<td>• explain class components + relationship to assignments</td>
<td>Time – Time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• ask questions about main components</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Next Steps/Next Class Information

- include information about homework, preparing for next class, readings, possible feedback from students on class etc.

### 5. Resources & Materials for Class

### 6. Reflections & Notes for Next Year
Setting expectations—Day One

The first day of class is a very important day. On the first day of a course you set the tone and atmosphere of how the course will be conducted. You let the students find out about you to begin establishing rapport, and you help them make connections with their peers. **Students learn very quickly from what you say and what you do on the first day what your expectations for them will be.** So on this first day, it is important to model the kinds of activities that will be common during the semester. If you are the only one talking on Day One, students will believe that the rest of the course will be you lecturing while they listen: it will be hard to get them to learn actively for the rest of the semester, even if that is your intention, because they have already made up their minds about what this class will be like.

This section will present ideas and suggestions that will help you build a solid first set of classes.

**Some Guiding Principles**

1. Provide a well-thought out full first class that models what the student experience will be like during the semester
2. Assist students in making a smooth transition from secondary school / holidays to the classroom learning experience
3. Establish a sense of community and communication within the classroom
4. Excite students about course content—model enthusiasm yourself
5. Engage students in an active learning environment
6. Obtain feedback from students about how they are used to learning
7. Get to know the students’ backgrounds, experiences
8. Learn students’ names
9. Provide support to students in learning how to be successful in your course

**Preparation Prior to the First Day of Class**

- Investigate the classroom (data projector/audio/visual materials to ensure they work; most effective arrangement of desks/chairs, consider entire layout of room etc.)
- Read through class names
- Obtain a camera to take photos of students the first day to learn names
- Create an agenda of what your first class will look like – ensure it isn’t just going over the syllabus and ending class early! Pack your agenda with a variety of activities
that are similar to how you will be teaching the course (e.g., include discussions, engaging activity etc.)

- Examine examples of active learning activities, talk to colleagues about ideas etc.
- Be prepared – gather materials, arrive a bit earlier, be ready for a great first class!

**During the First Class**

Clarify any administrative details about course in case students are in the wrong class or thought they could attend class without being on class list etc.

Ensure you share some details about yourself so students can feel a bit more connected to you.

**Create Student Connections**

Connecting Students: The more students feel connected to each other and to the university or college the more likely they will come to class and have peers they can work with during class. Use ice-breaker activities to help students get to know each other, but also allow you to learn names.

Use low-risk introduction activities that do not require much planning and will immediately engage students early in the class. By focusing activities on fun facts and favourites, students will feel comfortable to participate (e.g., do not ask students to stand up in class, introduce themselves and tell what program or year they are in, or what they hope to get out of the class – this can make some students very vulnerable and embarrassed).

**Course Overview**

Students come to class to learn something and the first class is an opportune time to get started. This is a great chance to model how you will excite them about learning!

Here are some ideas:

- Slideshow of Images/Text/Audio
- Practical Examples/Relationship to Career/Courses
- Tell a Personal Story about how Course Content is Relevant
- Concept Map
- Fun, no-credit team quiz on syllabus

**Engage in a Course Activity**

As soon as you have presented an overview of the course, be sure to engage students immediately. This will serve as a model for students to know what to expect in your course and how you will run the class. Here are some suggestions:
• Case Study
• Misconceptions Questions
• Question and Answer
• Diagnostic Quiz
• Worksheet Activity

**Explain Expectations**

Setting expectations with students is an appropriate thing to do during the first class. These expectations are more general and not often in the course syllabus. Try not to sound like the ‘heavy enforcer’ when you discuss these expectations. Students want to know you have some guidelines but you don’t need to come down hard the first class.

One way to set expectations for in-class interactions is to have students create the rules of class conduct themselves. Don’t worry: they will create almost exactly the same rules you would, but they will want to adhere to them if they’ve had the chance to develop them themselves!

**Course Outline**

Ensure you briefly cover the syllabus. A well-constructed syllabus should stand on its own. Ensure your syllabus has course expectations, contact details, assignment/test dates and percentages, along with details on textbook and academic policies.

**Bridging to the Next Class**

Ensure you have a proper ending to the class – rather than realizing you are out of time or telling students you have nothing else and letting them go early.

The ending of the class is very important in establishing a positive feeling with students, reminding them of what the course will be about, and motivating them to prepare for the next class.

The final moments of the class should recap the big ideas and focus on what the next class will entail. You want to excite students about coming back and share with them what will be covered in the next class.

“I cannot teach anybody anything, I can only make them think.”
— Socrates
Universal Instructional Design: The Seven Principles

The learner-centredness approach to education aims to develop in each student, as early as possible, a sense of responsibility for his/her own learning. The emphasis is on self-reliant learning, which involves setting learning goals and monitoring one's own growth and development. It also includes making explicit the research/teaching link, skill development, and experiential learning.

For this approach to be successful, an academic environment must be fostered in which students are actively supported as they take responsibility for their own learning.

Universal Instructional Design (UID) guides educators in their endeavor to develop learner-centred instruction and course content.

What is Universal Instructional Design?
The core principle of UID is inclusiveness and equity. It suggests that ideally all students should be able to fulfill course requirements without special accommodations.

What are the benefits of implementing UID?
UID avoids segregating or stigmatizing any student. UID creates a learning environment that respects and values diversity.

Principle 1 - Be Accessible and Fair
Guiding question: Is it likely that students will have difficulties accessing course materials or participating in any essential activities related to my classes?

UID is anticipating varying student needs and circumstances. It involves a commitment to remove barriers to accessing course materials and taking part in essential activities.

Suggestions:
- In your syllabus, include an invitation for students with disabilities to meet with you to review their specific needs.
- In advance of a lecture, post an online summary of the key points to be covered in the class.
- Ensure all online materials are formatted so that they can be used with screen reading software.

Principle 2 - Be Straightforward and Consistent
Guiding question: Are there major areas of confusion or inconsistency among course objectives, your own expectations and/or how the course is presented?
UID is overcoming confusion, coordinating all parts of the curriculum, and clarifying communications. Implementing what is known about learning and study skills.

**Suggestions:**
- Confirm that every question on your exam relates directly to information covered in class or within the written materials.
- Verbally communicate changes to course syllabus and provide changes in writing (e.g., online).
- Ensure consistency between written materials and PowerPoint slides – this guides learning by providing visual and cognitive clues, i.e., predicting meaning and actions.

**Principle 3 - Provide Flexibility in Use, Participation and Presentation**

*Guiding question: Does the course offer students enough choices in how it is presented so that they can, to a reasonable extent, approach the course in a way that suites their needs and abilities?*

UID is offering options in order to enable physical use, allow fuller participation, and permit suitable demonstration of mastery of course requirements. Use your imagination to create a rich learning environment for all involved.

**Suggestions:**
- Offer students the option of submitting a written report or doing a class presentation.
- Choose textbooks early and ensure the publisher will provide them in alternative formats (e.g., digital/electronic).
- Design group work projects so that students have choices in how they participate.

**Principle 4 – Present Resources Explicitly in Ways They Are Readily Perceived**

*Guiding question: Are there barriers to students receiving or understanding the information and resources they need in this course?*

UID is maximizing all communication media, without presumption that students are physically or cognitively enabled for all media. Use a two-pronged review of course materials, resources and delivery. There is a difference between explicitly presented and readily perceived. Imagine a clearly spoken lecture presented in a dim room with a hearing-impaired student in the back row.

**Suggestions:**
- Provide an in-class demonstration of the course website or WebCT.
- Post online summaries of key lecture points and/or provide online lecture notes.
- Ensure all online pictures and graphics have text-based descriptions.
• Provide a choice of file formats on your website or WebCT.
• Provide verbal explanations of key information presented in class through visual aides.

**Principle 5 - Provide a Supportive Learning Environment**

*Guiding question:* Will students feel respected as individuals, welcome to express their thoughts and able to explore new ideas in the course?

UID is attitudes and actions that demonstrate respect for students as adults, contributing to the learning of all. Encouraging questions and comments and respecting individual needs.

**Suggestions:**
• Encourage experimentation and make it ok not to succeed at first.
• Provide an online option where students can post comments and ask each other questions.
• Encourage students to sit beside someone different at each lecture and give them 2 minutes to introduce themselves.
• Encourage more experienced students to share their knowledge with others.

**Principle 6 - Minimize Unnecessary Physical Effort or Requirements**

*Guiding question:* If there are physical challenges or obstacles to participating in this course, can they be reduced or avoided?

UID is recognizing that students will be of a wide range of ages, backgrounds, physical characteristics and personal circumstances. Systematically eliminate, or adjust, anything that requires physical effort.

**Suggestions:**
• Ensure you have an efficient, user-friendly interface for your course website or online materials.
• Assignments requiring physical effort should be designed as group activities.
• If the course includes online conferencing provide students with a summary of netiquette, include a reminder to put new information at the top of a forwarded message so that students using screen readers do not have to re-listen to old information before hearing the new information.
Principle 7 - Ensure a Learning Space that Accommodates Both Students and Instructional Methods

Guiding question: Is it likely that students will find any of the materials or activities in this course to be inappropriate or unsuitable?

UID is recognizing that learning happens in intellectual as well as physical space. Review the entire student experience from the standpoint of appropriateness, suitability, and psychological accord, avoiding discord.

Suggestions:
- Check your class numbers and visit assigned classroom prior to the beginning of the semester.
- Adapt your course plans if needed, be creative.
- Design an online component that will enhance learning and alleviate classroom constraints.
5  |  How do I measure Student Learning?

Assessment is not always the same thing as evaluation. It’s a way to provide feedback.

1. Assessment FOR Learning fosters the journey of learning
It is separate from testing and evaluation: it is initially judgment free because it aims to establish a learning baseline and encourage honest answers to determine students’ prior knowledge. (See more at Formative Assessment below.)

2. Assessment AS Learning creates conditions where the assessment tool itself leads to learning achieved through metacognition and recognition of learning gains.

   • Metacognition - assessing how I learn best: What does this assigned task require me to do? How should I begin? What do I do when I study? How could I adjust my habits to learn better?

   • Recognition of own learning gains - what have I experienced here? What have I learned from this experience? How will I move forward from here?

3. Assessment OF Learning creates proof or evidence of learning for others (usually called Evaluation. It is for accreditors/governing bodies, parents, employers, public, etc.) (See Summative Assessment below.)

   • Traditionally achieved through grades, credits, certifications, etc.

   • Requires common standards and criteria, established targets, qualitative or (usually) ‘quantitative’ evidence
Formative Assessment and Feedback

Formative assessment, assessment is the informal gathering of data for feedback to students and instructor. No marks or grades are attached to assessment methods. Formative assessment has a huge impact on student learning, and research has shown that frequent and varied formative assessment benefits students, and instructors, greatly.

The following are some examples of formative assessment techniques:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How To Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ticket-Out-The-Door</td>
<td>During last few minutes of class, students write response to a question or two about class concepts. Hand in as exit class.</td>
<td>Review/read all before next class and use to clarify, correct or elaborate more for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Minute Paper</td>
<td>During the last few minute of class, students write response to “Most important thing I learned today” and “What I understood the least today”.</td>
<td>Review/read all before next class and use to clarify, correct or elaborate more for students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muddiest Point</td>
<td>Similar to One-Minute Paper – but only ask students to describe what they didn’t understand during class and what they think might help them.</td>
<td>Same as One-Minute Paper but if many students have same problem, reteach concept another way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-Generated Test Questions</td>
<td>Divide the class into groups and assign each group a topic on which they are to each write a question and answer for next test.</td>
<td>Use as many of the questions as possible on next test.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memory Matrix</td>
<td>Students fill in cells of a two-dimensional diagram with instructor-provided labels such as a comparison chart outlining similarities and differences in two columns against a variety of concepts in the discipline.</td>
<td>Tally the number of correct and incorrect responses. Look for patterns amongst the incorrect responses. Address in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-W-L Chart</td>
<td>Label three charts K (What I KNOW Already), W (What I WANT to Know) and</td>
<td>Discuss with students perceptions of what they</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Method</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Example</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L (What I have LEARNED)</strong></td>
<td>Complete the first two before a unit/topic and the last one at end.</td>
<td>thought they knew, what they have come to know etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Directed Paraphrasing</strong></td>
<td>Ask students to write a layperson’s “translation” of something they have just learned (geared for a non-expert audience) to assess their ability to comprehend/transfer concepts.</td>
<td>Categorize student responses according to characteristics you feel are important. Address in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>One Sentence Summary</strong></td>
<td>Students summarize knowledge of a topic by constructing a single sentence to cover the core concept. The purpose is to require students to select only the defining features of an idea.</td>
<td>Evaluate the quality of each summary in brief fashion. Note if students have identified the core concepts of the class topic. Share with students.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prior Knowledge Survey</strong></td>
<td>Short survey you give students at beginning of course or any new unit/topic on concepts to be studied.</td>
<td>Review immediately and make adjustments to classes based on what class knows/doesn't know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Think-Pair-Share</strong></td>
<td>Give the class a question. Allow everyone to think on own for a few minutes jotting down some thoughts. Then ask students to pair up with a peer and discuss thoughts for another few minutes. Can do groups of 4 as well. Ask to share with whole class.</td>
<td>Use when you want to have a better discussion by a greater number of students. By thinking alone first and with small groups of peers, shared responses should be richer and more varied.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Application Cards</strong></td>
<td>After teaching a theory, principle or procedure, ask students to write down at least one real-world application for what they have just learned to determine if they can see the transfer of their recent learning.</td>
<td>Quickly read through once and categorize them according to quality. Pick out a broad range of examples to share with the class the next day.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Opinion Polls</strong></td>
<td>Using ‘clickers’, or online polling questions, ask students a variety of questions, often polling devices can present immediate results back.</td>
<td>Often polling devices can present immediate results back.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I measure Student Learning?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>How do I measure Student Learning?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Report</strong></td>
<td>Written by students each week in which they address three questions: What did I learn this week? What questions remain unclear? And What questions would you ask your students if you were the instructor to find out if they understood the material?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Weekly Report</strong></td>
<td>Read at end of each week, categorize responses and share with class. Follow up on unclear questions with class or small group of students.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept Mapping</strong></td>
<td>Ask students to construct a concept map showing big picture and connections of all that they have learned prior to a mid-term or final exam or assignment. Ensure they label relationships between items.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Concept Mapping</strong></td>
<td>Have groups of students complete and share with whole class or with another group. Ask them to explain relationships and understandings of the concepts.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ConceptTests</strong></td>
<td>Instructor presents one or more questions during class involving key concepts, along with several possible answers (multiple choice). Students indicate (by show of hands, or poll/clicker voting) which answer they think is correct. If most of the class has not identified correct answer, students are given a short time to persuade their neighbor(s) that their answer is correct. The question is asked a second time to gauge class mastery.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ConceptTests</strong></td>
<td>Often lasts a few minutes but uncovers misunderstandings, and great conversation amongst students. Share answer after second voting session to see how the class responses changed or didn’t change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor Meetings</strong></td>
<td>Instructor meets informally with students either in class or after class to answer questions, inquire about conceptual understanding or provide feedback on student learning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Instructor Meetings</strong></td>
<td>Design specific questions to help guide the meeting and address concepts and understandings you want to know more about.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question-And-Answer / Class Discussion</td>
<td>Instructor creates a series of questions to pose to the class or smaller groups for discussion. Students may prepare through homework or in class with responses.</td>
<td>Provide feedback to students on how well they engaged in discussion. Ensure all students had a chance to participate and follow up next class with areas for clarification.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summative Assessment and Grading**

Evaluation, sometimes called summative assessment, the assessment of learning (with a purpose of reporting and making decisions) that involves a formal gathering of data for feedback to students and instructors. Evaluation results in the giving of grades, marks, levels, etc. that provides a value to the learning that has been demonstrated.

**Strategies for Fair Grading**

Each department or faculty may have specific guidelines surrounding marks, assignments, grading practices, grading scales, norm or criterion referenced evaluation and communication of marks/grades to students. Ensure that you have checked your department and university policies to ensure that your expectations of students are congruent with the system wide policies.

Once you are familiar with your departments grading policies there are a few ways that you can keep grading fair; one is to institute rubrics for written assignments. Rubrics layout the expectations for an assignment and allow an instructor to tell the students how they will be graded for an assignment based on what the student includes in their paper. Not only does this let the student know what is expected but it also allows the faculty member to control any subjective bias they may have. With specific outcomes required to achieve specific grades laid out beforehand, students are not guessing at what they need to do to get a certain grade and faculty are able to follow a prescribed formula to come up with a final grade.

Other strategies you may want to try: blind grading where you collect all papers and hide the cover pages so you are unaware of whose paper you are marking; marking everyone’s first question, then move on to everyone’s second question, etc. This way you can maintain a singular thought pattern and maintain a clear picture of what you are looking for in an answer, this also helps you avoid getting to the end of your marking and the final few assignments you mark get short-changed with comments as you just want to get done.
What are Rubrics?
A rubric is a scoring tool that explicitly represents the performance expectations for an assignment or piece of work. It divides the assigned work into component parts and provides clear descriptions of the characteristics of the work associated with each component, at varying levels of mastery. Rubrics can be used for a wide array of assignments: papers, projects, oral presentations, artistic performances, group projects, etc. Rubrics can be used as scoring or grading guides, to provide formative feedback to support and guide ongoing learning efforts, or both.

Using a rubric provides several advantages to both instructors and students. Grading according to an explicit and descriptive set of criteria that is designed to reflect the weighted importance of the objectives of the assignment helps ensure that the instructor’s grading standards don’t change over time. Furthermore, rubrics can reduce the time spent grading by reducing uncertainty and by allowing instructors to refer to the rubric description associated with a score rather than having to write long comments.

Used formatively, rubrics can help instructors get a clearer picture of the strengths and weaknesses of their class. By recording the component scores and tallying up the number of students scoring below an acceptable level on each component, instructors can identify those skills or concepts that need more instructional time and student effort.

Grading rubrics are also valuable to students. When rubrics are given to students with the assignment description, they can help students monitor and assess their progress as they work toward clearly indicated goals. When assignments are scored and returned with the rubric, students can more easily recognize the strengths and weaknesses of their work and direct their efforts accordingly.

Testing
When designing tests the primary objectives of the course are what need to be forefront in your mind and you should design your test based on all components (videos, lectures, labs, and readings) of the course. Tests can also be used to provide an opportunity for more learning to take place; students can think about what they learned in a new way.

Make sure your students know what kind of exam questions you will be asking and as old exams may be available to some students; it may be in your best interest to provide an old exam to everyone. If your exam is based more on rote memorization and not a deeper understanding of the material your students will prepare accordingly and deeper learning may not occur.
Be prepared for the amount of marking your exam will require. While essay questions allow students more of an opportunity to organize their thoughts and show a deeper learning, they also require more time to grade so if you have deadlines to meet with your course grades be prepared.

**Exam Checklist**

Here are some things to think about as your exam date approaches:

- Are your students prepared?
- Have your students been exposed to similar styles of questions that they will have on the exam? Throughout the term, ensure you have exposed your students to many question types.
- Have they seen a practice exam?
- Does the exam reflect the goals for the course?
- Have the students covered everything that they will see on the exam?
- Will the students realistically be able to complete the exam in the allotted time?
- Are your instructions clear and concise? Students will waste time trying to understand a question if you have unclear instructions.
- How much is each question worth?
- If a student were to have to choose due to time constraints would be they be able to choose the question that is worth the most value to their final mark.
- Does the structure of the questions themselves allow the students to build confidence? Easier questions at the beginning of a test can help with test anxiety.

**Making the Most of Multiple-Choice Questions: Getting Beyond Remembering**

*David DiBattista’s article is fully accessed at http://apps.medialab.uwindsor.ca/ctl/CELT/fscommand/CELT21.pdf*

Several strategies are presented in this article for generating multiple-choice questions that can effectively assess students’ ability to understand, apply, analyze, and evaluate information. Below is a brief summary of one of those ideas:

Multiple-choice questions are widely used in higher education and have some important advantages over constructed-response test questions. It seems, however, that many teachers underestimate the value of multiple-choice questions, believing them to be useful only for assessing how well students can memorize information, but not for assessing higher-order cognitive skills.
Consider a **typical question** from multiple-choice test bank accompanying an introductory psychology textbook:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In classical conditioning, what name is given to a stimulus that elicits a particular response even in the absence of any prior training?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. conditioned stimulus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. unconditioned stimulus*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. activational stimulus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. discriminative stimulus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This question asks students to do nothing more than remember a fact – namely, that an unconditioned stimulus elicits a particular response without any prior training. Students do not have to know anything at all about the details of classical conditioning or how it works...Indeed, students who cram the night before the test might very well memorize the definition for unconditioned stimulus, answer correctly, and then promptly forget the information immediately afterward. Unfortunately, low-level items like Question 1 are often encountered in test banks, but the good news is that we can use this item as a starting point to generate a question that requires students to have learned something important about classical conditioning.

**Question Revised**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right after a rat smells menthol, it is always given Drug X, which reliably induces substantial water intake. Eventually, the rat drinks water whenever it smells menthol, even when it is not injected with Drug X. In this situation, what is the role of Drug X?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. conditioned stimulus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. unconditioned stimulus*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. activational stimulus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D. discriminative stimulus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notice that the four alternatives that are provided have not changed at all, and the correct answer is still alternative B. However, the revised question requires students to have an understanding of the concepts underlying classical conditioning, and furthermore to be able to classify the role of Drug X in this research setting that they are seeing for the first time.

**Grading Assignments**

Two weeks from the time the assignment was submitted is suggested as a reasonable “turnaround” time for marking or providing feedback on assignments.
With reference to student retention and engagement, withdrawal from a course, is often related
to a student’s perception of how they are doing. Best practices in teaching often require that
students receive some formative feedback three (3) weeks into a course. It need not be a
cumbersome process, e.g., quiz asking students to list the five (5) main principles of a particular
approach. Reasons for withdrawal from a course are varied and it is incumbent upon instructors
to be aware of student behaviours or course outcomes that may present as warning signs.
Informal (and formal) methods of checking the status of such students is important. Preventing
unnecessary withdrawals and understanding the reasons for course/program withdrawals is
important for VIU evaluation processes.

Extensions on assignments, within the confines of the end of term dates, are up to the instructor
to negotiate. You should outline your extension policy on the course outline. [We suggest that
medical or family emergency is the only acceptable reasons for extension. A note from a doctor
MAY be required as per policy. Other reasons may result in a penalty for late submission.]

Incomplete (INC) grades should be formally contracted for as per the calendar description and
proof of the need for such action can be required of the student. An INC grade
AUTOMATICALLY converts to an F if it is not changed by the end of the following term. To
prevent this, the instructor MUST submit a change form (withdrawal form) to the Registration
Center. If this is not done, a grade of “F” (Grade Point 00) will be assigned.

**Grading Group Work**
*Adapted from Eberley Center, Carnegie Mellon*
https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/design/instructionalstrategies/groupprojects/assess.html

All of the principles of assessment that apply to individual work apply to group work as well.
Assessing group work has added challenges, however.

First, depending on the objectives of the assignment, the instructor might want to assess the
team’s final product (e.g., design, report, presentation), their group processes (e.g., ability to
meet deadlines, contribute fairly, communicate effectively), or both. Second, group performance
must be translated into individual grades – which raises issues of fairness and equity.

**Assess individual, as well as group, learning and performance.**
Diligent students can be profoundly demotivated by group projects if they feel that their own
success is dependent on team members who don’t do their share. One way to counteract the
motivational hazards of group projects is to assess individual students’ learning and
performance in addition to the group’s output. This strategy gives diligent students a greater sense of fairness and control and discourages free ridership.

Individual learning and performance can be assessed in any number of ways. Some instructors add an individual component to group projects (e.g., a short essay, journal entries); some combine a group project with an individual test or quiz. Both group and individual performance are then reflected in the total project grade (e.g., some faculty members make the group grade worth 50% and the individual grade worth 50%; others split it 80%/20%. There’s no perfect breakdown, but the grading scheme should (a) reflect your goals for student learning and (b) seek to motivate the kind of work you want to see.)

Assess process as well as product.
If developing teamwork skills is one of your learning objectives for the course, it’s important to assess students’ progress toward that goal. In other words, you should assess process (how students work) as well as product (the work they produce).

Process can be assessed according to a number of dimensions, such as the ability to generate a range of ideas, listen respectfully to disparate perspectives, distribute work fairly, resolve differences, and communicate effectively. Since instructors don’t always have a direct window into the dynamics of student groups, they often rely on teams to self-report via:

- team evaluations: each member of the team evaluates the dynamics of the team as a whole.
- peer evaluations: each team member evaluates the contributions of his/her teammates.
- self-evaluations: each team member documents and evaluates his own contributions to the team.

Make your assessment criteria and grading scheme clear.
It’s always important to articulate your performance criteria so students understand your expectations and standards. This is especially true if you are emphasizing skills that are not usually assessed, such as the ability to resolve conflict, delegate tasks, etc. Criteria for evaluating both product and process can be communicated by giving students a group work rubric before they begin their work and then using it to provide meaningful feedback during and at the end of the project.
It’s also important to think about how you will weigh the various components of group projects in your grading scheme. Some questions to consider include:

- What percentage of the student’s total project grade will be based on the group’s performance vs. individual components?
- What percentage will be based on assessments of product vs. assessments of process?
- How much weight will you give to peer evaluations or self-evaluations?
- Will feedback from external clients also be incorporated into your assessment of the group’s work?

Should you mark class participation?
It is tempting to include a class participation mark as a means of encouraging dialogue. There are two problems with this that merit serious consideration: first, can you and will you evaluate participation fairly, and, second, does a mark (i.e. a threat) promote the kind of active engagement you are seeking? Students often pay more attention to how you mark them than to the course content, so if you are marking class participation—in your head - or as a subjective impression of who contributes, they will resent it and even suspect you of favoritism. Consequently, if you wish to mark class participation, you need to have an explicit rubric (e.g. 1 point for each question asked in class, 2 points for each correct answer, etc), and to have clear written records of who did what in each class. In other words, you will be spending a significant amount of class time noting who is talking and assigning marks to it.

The second point is perhaps even more important: what kind of classroom atmosphere do you want to promote? Do you want an engaged community of learners who are not afraid to contribute and who are thinking about the course material and what is interesting about it? It is difficult to achieve this when students feel coerced into something that they are not comfortable doing. They may be distracted by the pressure and the tension, and so actually become less engaged with the material. And, of course, the students who are really uncomfortable will not participate anyway, and will therefore be penalized to no effect.
6 | How do I Put it All Together?

**Course Outlines and Syllabi**

It is essential that all students have access to the basic information about the courses in which they are enrolled.

The course outline (syllabus) must either be provided in paper copy or be made available in electronic form. If the course outline is only distributed electronically, the instructor must provide detailed instructions on how to access the syllabus. Unless circumstances dictate otherwise, the course outline must be provided on or before the time of the second class meeting.

In the case of fully online classes that do not meet in person in the same physical setting, the enrolled students shall be provided with the electronic address, access instructions, and required information specified in the previous paragraph via either mail or e-mail.

It is important to include the course outline document for students to access and download in VIU’s learning management system (VIULearn) - if your course is offered via this mode.

**Roles and Purposes of a Course Outline**

The course outline can serve many roles within your course – it is not just a document to share on the first day and forget about. Here are some roles your course outline could serve:

| Share Expectations | A course outline will share formal and informal expectations of the course (student-related, course-related, behavior-related, goals of course, etc.) |
| **Promises of Learning Outcomes** | Learning outcomes are really promises of student learning to be achieved by the end of the course. The course outline should include all outcomes to meet accreditation and accountability requirements. |
| **Convey Enthusiasm** | An instructor who is excited to teach the course will have a course outline that conveys this through the choice of topics, the design of assignments, and the organization of the course. |
| **Set Tone** | Students will quickly pick up the tone of the course through reading the content of the course outline. |
| **Establish Contract** | Some institutions will have students sign their name to indicate they have understood course outline and its contractual conditions regarding learning. |
| **Define Roles** | One can quickly determine the roles of the student and instructor after glancing over a course outline. |
| **Assess Readiness for Course** | A good course outline will give enough detail on course content that students can assess their readiness for taking the course. There may be prerequisite courses or skills and abilities students should have before entering course. |
| **Outline Workload** | By far the most important component of the course outline for students is how much work there will be! The workload should be clearly outlined. |
| **Explain Policies and Procedures** | There will always be a standard set of statements and references to policies and procedures. It helps ensure everyone is exposed to the academic expectations of taking the course and the boundaries they must adhere to. |
| **Share Resource Details** | Textbooks, workbooks, clickers, specialized materials, safety equipment, and so on, are some of the items students need for a course. |
| **Outline Big Picture** | The course outline often will share how the course fits within department programs or institutional certificates, degrees or diplomas. |
| **Serve as a Learning Tool** | Well-detailed course outlines are excellent learning tools. They help students design study notes and follow along from week to week. |
Checklist for Your Course Outline or Syllabus

Basic Course Information
In as concise a fashion as possible, list the following basics about a course. Students will frequently access this information. Just release work contact details for your privacy and protection.

- **Institution Info** (institutional name and logo, department/faculty)
- **Course Title** (full course title, course number, credit hours, year and semester)
- **Days and Times** (day(s) of week class meets, start and end times, start week and end week dates, days class is not held due to holidays or religious observances)
- **Class Location** (campus, building, room number)
- **URL** of course web site OR name of course within VIULearn (D2L)
- **Instructor Details** (name, office location, phone, email, office hours, preferred method of communication, appointments or drop in details, mailing address, other contact info)
- **Labs/Tutorials** (location, times, days and location, instructor details)
- **Teaching Assistants/Graduate Assistants** (name, office locations, phone, email, office hours)

Course Description
Students appreciate knowing about the big picture/overview of the course. Ensure you include examples of how you will teach the course and the anticipated workload for students.

- **Prerequisites** (courses, skills, permissions, how to obtain instructor signature if required)
- **Overview of Course** (key concepts/topics, how course fits within program, ideal audience for course, rationale/benefits of taking course)
- **Learning Outcomes** (list all outcomes outlining what students should be able to know and do after the course is completed)
• **Teaching/Learning Strategies** (list of strategies used in course e.g., lectures, group activities, questions, debates, videos, podcasts, to give students a sense of how the class will run)

• **Workload** (estimated amount of time you expect students to prepare for class, work on assignments etc. - students appreciate an honest approximation of your expectations)

**Assessment and Evaluation Details**
*This is the first section most students access. They are very keen to see how you will be assessing and evaluating them. Include in-class assessment activity ideas to let them know how you will be seeking feedback on their learning and their views of how the course is progressing. Evaluation details will help them see where they will be demonstrating their skills and knowledge on the subject matter.*

• **Term Tests and Quizzes** (outline how many tests or quizzes in course, total marks/percentage of each, taken online or in-class, open/closed book, short/long answer, multiple choice/diagrams/matching, levels of cognitive thinking skills required, dates scheduled, length of time, items can bring to exams or tests)

• **Final Exam** (total marks/percentage of final grade, date, length of time, in-class or exam timetable, number of questions, types of questions)

• **In-class Assessment Activities** (what to expect for informal student feedback, purpose and use within class, examples such as ticket out door, minute paper, etc.)

• **Evaluation Methods** (e.g., projects, presentations, demonstrations, essays – how many, due dates, marking info, total marks/percentage of final grade, submission format – online or hard copy, indication if they are any opportunities to improve grades through redoing)

**Required Course Materials**
*Be sure to list all course materials from the textbook to any web sites or online resources. The most important component in this section is to indicate if the course material is ‘required’ or ‘recommended’, as students will surely ask!*

• **Textbook** (author, title, ISBN, edition number, costs, where to purchase, availability of online notes or password access to publisher site for materials)
- **Readings** (what readings are part of course, URLs/web links to readings, PDF copies on course web site or description of where to purchase/copy – ensure you have copyright free use of articles)

- **Course pack** (collection of readings printed and bound, cost, where to purchase)

- **Library Reserve** (share if a copy of the textbook or other readings are on reserve, how long can students take out on reserve/or in library use only, name or readings, location in library)

- **Specific Course Tools** (special calculators, safety equipment, medical supplies, art and photography materials, paper, clothing, software etc.)

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**Course Schedule of Topics/Content**

*This does not need to be a detailed explanation of the course content, nor does it need to make you feel tied to dates and topics each week. Students just want to have a general idea of the topics that will be covered in the course and the general progression of them throughout the term.*

- **Tentative Schedule of Topics** (week by week is the typical format)

- **Format/ Modality** (mode of learning in course: face-to-face with web enhanced environment, blended course (partial online/partial face-to-face) or all fully online)

- **Special Dates/Missed Classes** (religious holidays, special events and times when the class does not meet, off-campus field trips, special performances, last day to withdraw from class)

- **Quiz, Test, and Exam Dates** (included in schedule)

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**Policies and Procedures**

*Try to phrase policies in a positive and friendly format so it does not sound like you are thinking the worst of students and are out to punish them. If you explain the reasoning behind policies, you are more likely to gain students’ cooperation. Additionally, allow for students to ask questions to clarify policies.*

- **Attendance** (lateness, missed classes, penalties, make-up procedures, reporting illness and personal/family emergencies, contact expected with instructor)

- **Assignments** (format for handing in, lateness penalties, extensions, missed, penalties)
• **Academic Misconduct/Dishonesty**
  (plagiarism, cheating, copying, signing permission form for submitting papers to online plagiarism sites, penalties for infractions)

• **Grading** (weighting of components, incomplete, pass/fail explanations, grade appeals, requirements for passing course, completion of all components)

• **Tests and Exams** (what to do if late or missed, penalties, procedures)

• **Participation** (expectations around class participation, involvement in group activities etc.)

• **Professionalism** (what and how you expect students to behave in your class, how you will deal with disruptive students, statement on use of cell phones in class, inappropriate use of mobile learning devices, other situations which may result in students' learning being affected, etc.)

• **Safety** (procedures for lab safety, health issues, proper attire, safety equipment needed, what to do in case of an earthquake, tornado, fire, hazardous spill, bomb threat, violent intruder, or other emergencies that threaten the safety of students in your class; notification procedures for inclement weather/impassable roads – radio, institution website)

• **Respect** (include a statement about your expectations around listening and respecting the points of view of their peers, about how to handle any controversial course content and how to manage their feelings and words when they encounter different attitudes, opinions and information)

**Learning Strategies and Resources**

*This is not a common section in most course outlines, but it is nice to include if you have some suggestions or tips to pass onto students. Students will be very appreciative of any ideas you have from previous students in terms of misconceptions, areas where students get confused, and what learning strategies are effective in terms of studying for exams and completing assignments.*

• **Tips for Success** (different approaches to success, time management tips, common course misconceptions, sample test questions, topics that might cause confusion etc.)

• **Glossary** (technical terms, specialized information to help in studying)
• Links (to previous exam questions, student assignments, style manuals, web-based resources to podcasts/video/and support material)

• VIU Learning Matters Website (learningmatters.viu.ca) is a one-stop shop of multimedia resources (videos, handouts, infographics, images) for students related to learning how to learn, studying effectively and other tips for being a successful student. Share with your students!

Accommodations for Students
Your department or faculty might have a standard statement about accommodating students. You may also wish to approach the Disabilities Services for any further details on workshops, consultations, and information they provide for students of all needs.

• Disabilities (a statement inviting students with physical, medical, mental, or learning disabilities to approach instructor for any accommodations required for success in course)

• Learning Support (location, times, offerings of learner support centre/student support area at your institution, possibly invite a representative to your class to speak for a few minutes about resources and people there to help)

• Missed Classes (a statement about accommodating students who need to miss your class due to religious beliefs, observations and practice, athletic/sports team participation, job/admission interviews, family/personal emergencies, and circumstances out of control)

Rights and Responsibilities of Students
Many institutions are developing rights and responsibility statements with both instructor and student bodies. Here are some examples that are showing up in course outlines:

• Right of students to have class meet on required days throughout term; instructors have right to expect students to show up on time for learning

• Right of students to have an instructor organized and prepared class; instructors have right to similarly expect students to be prepared and ready for learning each class

• Right of students to expect instructors to grade and return assignments and tests within a reasonable time frame; instructors have right to expect students to hand in assignments on time
Social Media: Privacy and Protection of Student Identifiable Personal Data

With the greater attention paid to the privacy and protection of students identifiable personal data on the Internet (e.g., name, class, address, opinions, gender) and national and provincial laws around the use of social media tools in the classroom, be sure to include something in your course syllabus if you plan to use social media tools (e.g., Facebook, Flickr, Google Docs, Skype, Twitter, Prezi, Instagram, etc.) for assignments or activities.

- **Notice:** Including information in your course outline about your use of social media for an assignment is an important first step. Ensure you have alternative arrangements for the assignment if students do not wish to use social media.

- **Knowledge:** Supply information as to why social media use has its risks. This would include information about the use of personal identifiable information being stored on servers outside of their country and how it would be subject to other countries searching and seizing anything written/posted they feel is inappropriate and a threat to country. This could lead to travel issues.

- **Consent:** It is always best to obtain student written consent to ensure students fully understand the risks when using social media. This is an instructor’s best action for due diligence. See BCcampus’ website with resources on privacy but specifically the “Privacy Guide for Faculty Using 3rd Party Web Technology (Social Media) in Public Post-Secondary Courses (PDF)

  - [http://fippa.bccampus.ca/ministerial-order-m030/](http://fippa.bccampus.ca/ministerial-order-m030/)

Disclaimer

- Include a statement about the subject of change to the course outline. Guest speakers, length of time to cover a topic, a field trip, or even some class formats may change your course details. Try not to change assignment and test dates. If there are any changes, inform the students both in writing and orally in class. Provide an updated course outline.
The Graphic Syllabus

A Graphic Syllabus can Bring Clarity to Course Structure

By Maryellen Weimer

Not being a visual learner, I always struggled with ways of graphically representing course content. I was never very successful until I discovered that students could do what I couldn’t. During those summary times at the end of a class session, I often asked them to show graphically their sense of how the ideas related. I was surprised how clearly those visual representations showed whether or not they understood. Even more surprising, they sometimes depicted relationships I hadn’t thought of or positioned ideas so that they highlighted different aspects of a relationship.

Learning is the heart of what universities do. While research has been happening on how learning works for some time, in the past five to ten years there is a growth of information on cognition and learning.

When we come to understand how the brain works, we can use this information to adjust our teaching strategies and the design of learning experiences for students. This section contains research-based principles and information about student learning.

7 | What Does The Research Say About Learning?

Seven Theory and Research-Based Principles of Learning

The following list presents basic principles that underlie effective learning.

1. **Students’ prior knowledge can help or hinder learning.**

Students arrive in our classes with knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes gained in other courses and also obtained through daily life. This prior knowledge influences how they filter and interpret what they are learning. If students’ prior knowledge is robust, accurate and activated at the appropriate time, it provides a strong foundation for building new knowledge. However, when knowledge is inert, insufficient for the task, activated inappropriately, or inaccurate, it can interfere with or impede new learning. Pre-assessing students’ prior knowledge (including misconceptions) goes a long way in ensuring courses and lessons are designed appropriately and allow students to build upon their learning.
2. **How students organize knowledge influences how they learn and apply what they know.**

To learn best requires one to develop rich connections between facts, concepts, processes, principles and relationships. Students naturally make connections between pieces of knowledge. Expert learners often subconsciously make knowledge networks that are dense and connected in meaningful ways. They also see information in coherent chunks. When those connections form knowledge structures that are accurately and meaningfully organized, students are better able to retrieve and apply their knowledge effectively and efficiently. In contrast, when knowledge is connected in inaccurate or random ways, students can fail to retrieve or apply it appropriately. Novice learners tend to process information in small bits of information and don’t see relationships and connections that easily.

3. **Students’ motivation determines, directs, and sustains what they do to learn.**

As students enter post-secondary institutions and gain greater autonomy over what, when, and how they study and learn, motivation plays a critical role in guiding the direction, intensity, persistence, and quality of the learning behaviors in which they engage. When students find positive value in a learning goal or activity, they are likely to be strongly motivated to learn. Students who have learning goals and focus on the intrinsic value of learning the material are generally the most motivated students.

4. **To develop mastery, students must acquire component skills, practice integrating them, and know when to apply what they have learned.**

Students must develop not only the component skills and knowledge necessary to perform complex tasks, they must also practice combining and integrating them to develop greater fluency and automatic learning structures. Students need to learn when and how to apply the skills and knowledge they learn not just to the task at hand but also to situations outside of the learning context. Students must also realize that multi-tasking degrades performance because the brain is experiencing “overload”.
5. **Goal-directed practice coupled with targeted feedback enhances the quality of students' learning.**

Learning and performance are best fostered when students engage in practice that focuses on a specific goal or criterion, targets an appropriate level of challenge, and is of sufficient quantity and frequency to meet the performance criteria. Practice must be coupled with feedback that explicitly communicates about some aspect(s) of students’ performance relative to specific target criteria, provides information to help students progress in meeting those criteria, and is given at a time and frequency that allows it to be useful.

6. **Students’ current level of development interacts with the social, emotional, and intellectual climate of the course to impact learning.**

Students are not only intellectual but also social and emotional beings, and they are still developing the full range of intellectual, social, and emotional skills. While we cannot control the developmental process, we can shape the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical aspects of classroom climate in developmentally appropriate ways. In fact, many studies have shown that the climate we create has implications for our students. A negative climate may impede learning and performance, but a positive climate can energize students’ learning.

7. **To become self-directed learners, students must learn to monitor and adjust their approaches to learning.**

Learners may engage in a variety of metacognitive processes to monitor and control their learning—assessing the task at hand, evaluating their own strengths and weaknesses, planning their approach, applying and monitoring various strategies, and reflecting on the degree to which their current approach is working. Unfortunately, students tend not to engage in these processes naturally. When students develop the skills to engage these processes, they gain intellectual habits that not only improve their performance but also their effectiveness as learners.

Metacognition and Deep Learning: How Students Learn

How Students Learn and Study

By Noel Entwistle

A coherent set of concepts has been established from research on student learning to describe important differences in the ways in which students learn. These concepts have subsequently been used to show how teaching, and a whole range of other influences, affect the ways in which students go about their academic work. Moreover, it is now clear that these differing ways of studying substantially influence the quality of the learning achieved.

Students enter higher education with established beliefs about what it takes to learn, derived from their previous experiences within the educational system. The main distinction between these ideas has been described in terms of conceptions of learning. Some students see learning as the acquisition of facts and, even in higher education, believe they are expected simply to reproduce the information and ideas provided by their teachers. In contrast, others believe learning to require making sense of what is presented in a personally meaningful way. These beliefs about learning translate into different ways of carrying out academic tasks.

The earliest studies in this field looked at how students went about reading an academic article. It was found that some students believed they were expected to scan the material, spotting the information most likely to be tested: this was described as a surface approach. In marked contrast were students who tried to make sense of the author’s meaning for themselves, interacting vigorously with the ideas being presented - a deep approach. The main distinction in these contrasting approaches to studying is the intention of the students, either to reproduce or to understand the information presented to them.

To read rest of the article, access it freely online at:
http://www.academia.edu/3427492/How_students_learn_and_study

Deep Learning vs. Surface Learning: Getting Students to Understand the Difference

by Maryellen Weimer in the Teaching Professor Blog

Sometimes our understanding of deep learning isn’t all that deep. Typically, it’s defined by what it is not. It’s not memorizing only to forget and it’s not reciting or regurgitating what really isn’t understood and can’t be applied. The essence of deep learning is understanding—true knowing. That’s a good start but it doesn’t do much to help students see the difference between deep and surface learning or to help persuade them that one is preferable to the other.
Those differences are further obscured and rendered unimportant when teachers use superficial measures (e.g. multiple-choice questions that test recall) to assess understanding. Why do students memorize isolated facts that they don’t really understand? Because, in many courses, that approach has rewarded them with good or at least decent grades. Until teachers stop relying on questions that can be answered with details plucked from short-term memory, there isn’t much chance that students will opt for the deep learning approaches.

Most teachers recognize that test formats directly affect the choice of study strategies. We are committed to preparing questions that require higher level thinking skills. Our students discover they can’t answer those questions with the easy information bits they’ve memorized and so they start studying differently. The problem is that without teacher guidance, students end up selecting deep learning strategies more by accident and less by design. That challenge is answered by knowing what constitutes a deep learning strategy.

To read the rest of the article, access it freely online at: http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/deep-learning-vs-surface-learning-getting-students-to-understand-the-difference/#sthash.EW4eMxuQ.dpuf

Ten Metacognitive Teaching Strategies to Help Students Learn How to Learn

Definition
meta = ‘about’ and cognition = thinking

Metacognition: Purposefully thinking about one’s own thinking strategies – when people are able to “learn to think” and “think to learn”

Metacognition is the regulatory system people use to understand and control own cognitive (brain) performance. It involves people being very aware of how they learn, what strategies meet their needs, evaluating the effectiveness of strategies and then implementing the best plan of action to optimally learn.

Learners with Strong Metacognitive Skills
- Know the limits of their own memory for a task and elicit help where required
• Do frequent self-assessments of their knowledge to ensure they can figure out how well they are learning something
• Self-monitor frequently and use a variety of strategies to learn
• Undertake careful rehearsal of a skill in order to gain confidence and competence
• Plan effectively at many levels and see the big picture of learning

There is a need to teach for metacognitive knowledge explicitly...we are continually surprised at the number of students who come to [university] having very little metacognitive knowledge; knowledge about different strategies, different cognitive tasks, and particularly accurate knowledge about themselves. (Pintrich, 2002)

The following ten metacognitive teaching strategies come from a few sources that were used including: Promoting Student Metacognition (K. Tanner, 2012), Creating Self-Regulated Learners: Strategies to Strengthen Students’ Self-Awareness and Learning Skills (L. Nilson, 2013), Metacognition (Putting Metacognition into Practice) website by Nancy Chick, Centre for Teaching Assistant Director (Vanderbilt University), Classroom Assessment Techniques (by T. Angelo and P Cross, 1993), Centre for Research on Learning and Instruction (University of Edinburgh) and Peter Arthur, Director, Centre for Teaching and Learning, University of British Columbia Okanagan.

1. Metacognitive Awareness Inventory
There are two processes going on around learning how to learn.

1. Knowledge of Cognition (Declarative, Procedural, and Conditional)
   a. Awareness of factors that influence your own learning
   b. Knowing a collection of strategies to use for learning
   c. Choosing the appropriate strategy for the specific learning situation

2. Regulation of Cognition
   a. Setting goals and planning
   b. Monitoring and controlling learning
   c. Evaluating own regulation (assessing if the strategy you are using is working or not, making adjustments and trying something new)

In 1994, Schraw and Dennison created the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory (MAI) specifically for adult learners to bring awareness of metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation (which they referred to “Knowledge of Cognition Factor” and “Regulation of Cognition Factor” respectively). (You can find the Metacognitive Awareness Inventory on our website at: https://ciel.viu.ca/sites/default/files/ten_metacognitive_teaching_strategies.docx )
Recent research has uncovered a significant correlation between the MAI and some measures of academic achievement (e.g., GPA, end of course grades etc.)

‘Knowledge of Cognition’ is more easily acquired and improved. ‘Regulation of Cognition’ strategies are not that easy to acquire and most often students won’t improve over time in their Regulation scores – because they need to learn the strategies and have chances to practice in and out of classroom experiences. They need their instructors to use teaching to help them build their strategies around regulation of learning.

2. Pre-assessment (Self-Assessment) of Content
A simple activity such as finding out what students already know about a topic can help students begin to think about how learning works.

1. Create a few key questions about the content/topic a week prior to the class. Questions should ask students what they know already about the topic, challenges or successes they have had with the topic, exploration into past experiences or applications of the content/topic.

   These questions may be in the form of a homework assignment, a set of clicker questions for in class voting, a short reflective writing piece done in class and handed in.

2. Have the students individually hand in their responses anonymously. Skim through the answers after class. Possibly categorize/summarize all responses by themes.

3. Share responses with students the next class either verbally or a summary of themes.

4. Have a discussion with students about how asking these questions can help them in thoughtful planning of how they might approach a new idea or topic or how they will approach course content and associated studying/learning strategies.

3. Self-Assessment of Self-Regulated Learning Skills
Students aren’t going to learn how to be good learners unless we engage them in activities and discussions about how they perceive themselves as learners – and to see what approaches are working and not working for their learning.

Here are 21 statements you could pose to students to start them thinking about how they think and think about how they learn.

**Surface Approach to Learning Questions**
1. I find I have to concentrate on just memorizing a good deal of what I have to learn.
2. I am not really sure what’s important in lectures, so I try to get down all I can.
3. I tend to read very little beyond what is actually required to pass.
4. I concentrate on learning just those bits of information that I have to know to pass.
5. I like to be told precisely what to do in essays or other assignments.
6. I often seem to panic if I get behind in my work.
7. Often I find myself wondering whether the work I am doing here is really worthwhile.

**Strategic Approach to Learning Questions**
1. I think I am quite systematic and organized when it comes to studying for exams.
2. I am pretty good at getting down to work whenever I need to.
3. I organize my study time carefully to make the best use of it.
4. Before starting work on an assignment or exam question, I think first how best to tackle it.
5. I look carefully at my instructor’s comments on course work to see how to get higher marks the next time.
6. I put a lot of effort into studying because I am determined to do well.
7. When I have finished a piece of work, I check it through to see if it really meets requirements.

**Deep Approach to Learning Questions**
1. When I am reading I stop from time to time to reflect on what I am trying to learn from it.
2. When I am working on a new topic, I try to see in my own mind how all the ideas fit together.
3. Often I find myself questioning things I hear in lectures or read in books.
4. Some of the ideas I come across on the course I find really gripping.
5. I usually set out to understand for myself the meaning of what we have to learn.
6. I like to play around with ideas of my own even if they don’t get me far.
7. It is important for me to be able to follow the argument, or to see the reason behind things.

All items are to be responded by choosing from “strongly agree”, “somewhat agree”, “somewhat disagree” or “strongly disagree”.

*These items come from ASSIST (Approaches and Study Skills Inventory for Students, Centre for Research on Learning and Instruction, University of Edinburgh).*

**4. Think Alouds for Metacognition**
As the instructor, you are an expert in your field. It can be almost impossible to remember a time when you did not think ‘the way you currently do about your discipline’. As researchers and reflective practitioners we are thinking metacognitively all the time (thinking about your own
questions, how your thinking has evolved, how you incorporate new knowledge into your practice etc.)

Anytime you can talk out loud (‘think aloud’) about how you view a document or a picture or think about a book, or share your thinking processes with students you are helping them become more metacognitive in their own approaches to the subject.

Once you have modelled for them how you would solve a problem or interpret a piece of writing, have students work in pairs to talk out loud as to how they are thinking about an assignment piece of homework or an assignment.

1. One student talks out loud while the partner records what they are saying (the strategy going to be used to complete the homework or do the assignment). The partner also guides them to think through all the steps.
2. Students switch roles and do the same for each other.
3. Now students have thought out the process for completing the assignment or homework, received some feedback from their partner and possibly have a plan written down as to how they are going to undertake the task. Debrief briefly with class as to lessons learned etc.

“[I]t is terribly important that in explicit and concerted ways we make students aware of themselves as learners. *We must regularly ask, not only ‘What are you learning?’ but ‘How are you learning?’ We must confront them with the effectiveness (more often ineffectiveness) of their approaches. We must offer alternatives and then challenge students to test the efficacy of those approaches.*” (Weimer, 2012)

5. Concept Mapping and Visual Study Tools

A concept map is a way of representing relationships between ideas, images or words. Concept maps are a way to develop logical thinking and study skills by revealing connections to the big ideas or the key concepts you are trying to teach. Concept maps will also help students see how individual ideas relate to the larger whole or the bigger picture.

It is best that the instructor demonstrate how to design a concept map of a class or course before students are asked to do so. Design a brief or detailed concept map of the course or sub-components of the course and share with students. Then later on in course students can form small groups and build a concept map as a review activity before a mid-term or as a review of a portion of the course. Students can do it for homework or they can do it in class and share with each other explaining the interrelationships between each component.
Example Concept Map: Based on Novak’s concept map of meaningful learning

6. Classroom Assessment Tools
There are many short activities you can do during class time that will help promote metacognitive thinking in your students.

Sometimes these little activities are called “Classroom Assessment Tools – CATS” (term coined by Angelo and Cross).

See the chapter on **Formative Feedback** for some examples of CATs.

7. Metacognitive Note Taking Skills
Provide students with guidance and models for how to take good notes during a class. Here is a suggestion for a format you can replicate or draw on the board and discuss with students.
Beginning of Class (Plan + Connect)
Encourage students to prepare their notes in an organized fashion. Stop the class and have them complete the connections questions in their notes. This will help them start thinking about how this class fits in with what they already know or want to know more about.

Date:                  Course Name:                  Class Learning Outcomes:

Connections:
- What do I already know about this topic?
- How do I feel about this topic? (excited, anxious, curious, nervous)
- How does this topic relate to something I already know?
- What questions do I have already about this topic?

Middle of Class (Monitoring Learning)
Encourage students to create 2 columns in their notes. In the left column ask students to record insights, ‘ah-ha’ moments, questions students have about the content, connections they are making to other classes/topics, and also any feelings or thoughts they have on the class. In the right column they take traditional notes on what is being presented. Encourage students to refrain from writing everything. Write key concepts and headings on the board and indicate to students when you are shifting to a new section or concept.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Insights</th>
<th>Class Notes</th>
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End of Class (Reflecting on Learning)
Near the end of class, ask students to draw a line below their notes and write a summary of the whole class. Just a few sentences is enough to get students thinking about the key learning that has just happened and what the whole class was about.

You can also write a few prompts on the board to help students with their summary note (e.g., what were the most important ideas from today’s class? what did I find most interesting in class today? how did today’s content relate to another class?)
8. Reflective Writing
Reflective writing helps students make connections between what they are learning in their homework/class content and with how they are integrating the content into their current learning structures. Writing helps students observe themselves before, during and after their reading, watching and listening experience.

Here are some sample prompts to use for your reflective writing activities:

- The most important part of the reading, video or class is....
- The most useful or valuable thing(s) I learned today was....
- The most surprising or unexpected idea I encountered was....
- Two ideas that I have found confusing are....
- The advice I’d give myself based on what I know now and if I were starting this assignment over again would be....
- If I were to paraphrase what we have learned today for a high school student it would look like this....
- What I have learned today, I am able to connect to other courses in this way....

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<tr>
<th>Metacognition: Purposefully thinking about one’s own thinking strategies – when students are able to “learn to think” and “think to learn”</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three critical steps to teaching metacognition:</td>
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<td>1. Teaching students that their ability to learn is mutable</td>
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<td>2. Teaching planning and goal-setting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Giving students ample opportunities to practice monitoring their learning and adapting as necessary</td>
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9. Wrappers
A wrapper is an activity that surrounds pre-existing learning or assessment task and fosters students’ metacognition. You can build a self-monitoring wrapper around any pre-existing part of a course (lecture, homework, or test)

Why Wrappers Work
- Time efficient
- Metacognition practice is built in to the that task
• Students are self-monitoring in context
• Feedback is immediate
• Support can gradually be faded out
• Minor Interventions can significantly change behavior

Course/Lesson Wrapper

1. **Before Lesson Begins:** Indicate to students that in the last minutes of class they will be asked to consider the 3 key ideas from the class. Give the students a few tips on how to actively listen, make effective class notes and engage with the content and

2. **Near End of Lesson:** 10-15 minutes before class ends, ask students to write 3 key ideas from the class. Students can do individually or in small groups (on chart paper, on white/blackboard) and share

3. **Teacher** gives his/her list of 3 key ideas for students to self-check. Students record the differences between their responses and the teacher’s.

4. **Debrief:** Have a brief discussion around similarities/differences between students’ and teacher’s 3 key ideas. Summarize class.

Homework Wrapper

1. Instructor creates self-assessment questions that focus on skills students should be monitoring

2. Students answer questions just before homework

3. Complete homework as usual

4. After homework, answer similar self-assessment questions and draw their own conclusions

Exam/Test Wrapper

Most times instructors hand back exams (tests, quizzes, mid-terms) and focus the discussion on the exam questions, the areas where students did well or poorly. They rarely engage students in a learning experience around how they prepared, studied or took the test.

1. The first exam is returned and students complete the exam wrapper either in class or online within a course management system. (Instructors can either make the assignment required or award participation points for completion).

2. The instructor collects the exam wrapper and reviews student comments. This allows the instructor to assess student behavior patterns and determine whether he or she needs to include additional teaching resources to support student learning.

3. The exam wrapper is returned to students within a week or two before the next exam.
Students review their comments and then have the opportunity to follow their own advice for studying.

Possible Questions for Exam Wrappers

Preparation for Exam
1. How did you prepare for the exam? Explain your process.
2. What resources did you use in preparing for taking the exam?
3. How does your exam preparation compare to three other peers in the class (ask them)?

Planning
1. What strategies did you use for studying (e.g., study groups, online practice quizzes, office hours with instructor, review sessions, peer teaching etc.)?
2. How much time did you study (and how long over what time period)?
3. What aspects of the course did you spend more time on (or less time on) based on your current understanding.
4. What percentage of your exam preparation time was spent on these activities? (re-reading the textbook___%; reviewing your own notes___%, reviewing PowerPoint presentations from lecture ___%; generating your own exam questions and answering them___%; studying in groups____%; other strategies____? 

Performance
1. How did your actual grade on this exam compare with the grade you expected? How do you explain the difference, if any?
2. How do you feel about your exam grade (happy, surprised, disappointed)?
3. Examine the items on which you lost points and look for patterns. Were you careless or did you run out of time?

Next Steps
1. What are you going to do differently for your next exam?
2. What might be your goal (e.g., certain percentage)?
3. What study strategies are you going to use next time to enable you to get that score?

10. Retrospective Post-Assessment
Near the end of a topic or end of the course, ask students to reflect (retrospectively) as to what they thought about a topic or concept before the course and what they think about it now. This activity asks students to reflect on the changes in their knowledge, skills and attitudes and put that into perspective for moving forward.
Practices that Foster Learning and Retention
The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has identified ten engagement indicators and a set of high-impact educational practices that have substantial positive effects on student learning and retention.

**Academic Challenge**—Higher order learning (not just the facts!), reflective and integrative learning, quantitative reasoning (not just the formulas!) and helping students with effective learning strategies.

**Learning with Peers**—Collaborative Learning, opportunities for discussions with diverse peers. An erroneous assumption is often made that students will naturally learn about their peers simply by coming into contact with those who have different views and identities. Educators must facilitate structured opportunities for dialogues between students from different backgrounds and cultures for such learning to occur.

**Experiences with Faculty**—Intensive student-faculty interactions and effective teaching practices

**Campus Environment**—Quality of interactions (trust, warmth) and supportive environments

**High Impact Practices**—Service Learning, Experiential Learning, Study Abroad, Research with faculty, Internships and Coops.

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**10 High Impact Educational Practices**


For over 15 years, data gathering has occurred through the administration of the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) across North America (including Canada). Follow up investigations have happened around campuses that have high achieving students with high retention and engagement rates.

From these investigations, ten key impactful educational practices have been widely tested and have been shown to be beneficial for post-secondary education students from many backgrounds. On many campuses, assessment of student involvement in active learning practices such as these has made it possible to assess the practices’ contribution to students’ cumulative learning. The following is a list of high impact practices that educational research has shown to improve student retention and engagement in learning. You may wish to consider including some of them in your courses or program.
<table>
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<th><strong>Ten High Impact Educational Practices: Descriptions and Examples</strong></th>
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| **1** | **First Year Seminars and Experiences**  
Many schools now build into the curriculum first-year seminars or other programs that bring small groups of students together with faculty or staff on a regular basis. The highest-quality first-year experiences place a strong emphasis on critical inquiry, frequent writing, information literacy, collaborative learning, and other skills that develop students’ intellectual and practical competencies. First-year seminars can also involve students with cutting-edge questions in scholarship and with faculty members’ own research. |
| **2** | **Common Intellectual Experiences**  
The older idea of a “core” curriculum has evolved into a variety of modern forms, such as a set of required common courses or a vertically organized general education program that includes advanced integrative studies and/or required participation in a learning community. These programs often combine broad themes—e.g., technology and society, global interdependence—with a variety of curricular and co-curricular options for students. |
| **3** | **Learning Communities**  
The key goals for learning communities are to encourage integration of learning across courses and to involve students with “big questions” that matter beyond the classroom. Students take two or more linked courses as a group and work closely with one another and with faculty. Many learning communities explore a common topic and/or common readings through the lenses of different disciplines. Some deliberately link “liberal arts” and “professional courses”; others feature service learning. |
| **4** | **Writing-Intensive Courses**  
These courses emphasize writing at all levels of instruction and across the curriculum, including final-year projects. Students are encouraged to produce and revise various forms of writing for different audiences in different disciplines. The effectiveness of this repeated practice “across the curriculum” has led to parallel efforts in such areas as quantitative reasoning, oral communication, information literacy, and, on some campuses, ethical inquiry. |
| **5** | **Collaborative Assignments and Projects**  
Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one’s own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. |
Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.

6 **Undergraduate Research**
Many colleges and universities are now providing research experiences for students in all disciplines. Undergraduate research, however, has been most prominently used in science disciplines. With strong support from the National Science Foundation and the research community, scientists are reshaping their courses to connect key concepts and questions with students’ early and active involvement in systematic investigation and research. The goal is to involve students with actively contested questions, empirical observation, cutting-edge technologies, and the sense of excitement that comes from working to answer important questions.

7 **Diversity/Global Learning**
Many colleges and universities now emphasize courses and programs that help students explore cultures, life experiences, and worldviews different from their own. These studies—which may address diversity, world cultures, or both—often explore “difficult differences” such as racial, ethnic, and gender inequality, or continuing struggles around the globe for human rights, freedom, and power. Frequently, intercultural studies are augmented by experiential learning in the community and/or by study abroad.

8 **Service Learning, Community-Based Learning**
In these programs, field-based “experiential learning” with community partners is an instructional strategy—and often a required part of the course. The idea is to give students direct experience with issues they are studying in the curriculum and with ongoing efforts to analyze and solve problems in the community. A key element in these programs is the opportunity students have to both apply what they are learning in real-world settings and reflect in a classroom setting on their service experiences. These programs model the idea that giving something back to the community is an important college outcome, and that working with community partners is good preparation for citizenship, work, and life.

9 **Internships**
Internships are another increasingly common form of experiential learning. The idea is to provide students with direct experience in a work setting—usually related to their career interests—and to give them the benefit of supervision and coaching from professionals in the field. If the internship is taken for course credit, students complete a project or paper that is approved by a faculty member.
Capstone Courses and Projects
Whether they’re called “senior capstones” or some other name, these culminating experiences require students nearing the end of their post-secondary years to create a project of some sort that integrates and applies what they’ve learned. The project might be a research paper, a performance, a portfolio of “best work,” or an exhibit of artwork.

Portfolios
Developing a learning portfolio engages students in ongoing, reflective, and often collaborative analysis of their own learning, whether within one course or across all the courses in their chosen field of study. The reflection and analysis required to put a portfolio together is what creates the real impact on student learning and self-confidence. The evidence students collect shows them the depth of their own learning, and makes it possible to effectively communicate to others the skills, knowledge and competencies they have developed.

Adapted from Association of American Colleges and Universities: Found online at http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm
What are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching?

Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” first appeared in the American Association for Higher Education (AAHE) Bulletin in 1987. In this article, Arthur Chickering and Zelda Gamson describe a set of pedagogical standards derived from decades of educational research, and designed to improve the quality of teaching and learning in colleges and universities.

These principles have had an enormous impact on university teaching influencing research, faculty development and student learning across the world. They are referenced, quoted and remain a cornerstone of teaching and learning practices to this day.

Chickering and Gamson state that good practice in undergraduate teaching:

1. **Encourages contacts between students and faculty**

Frequent student-faculty contact in and out of classes is the most important factor in student motivation and involvement. Faculty concern helps students get through rough times and keep on working. Knowing a few faculty members well enhances students' intellectual commitment and encourages them to think about their own values and future plans.

*Some examples:* First year seminars on important topics, students taught by senior faculty members, establish an early connection between students and faculty.
2. **Develops reciprocity and cooperation among students**

Learning is enhanced when it is more like a team effort that a solo race. Good learning, like good work, is collaborative and social, not competitive and isolated. Working with others often increases involvement in learning. Sharing one's own ideas and responding to others' reactions sharpens thinking and deepens understanding.

**Some Examples:** Even in large lecture classes, students can learn from one another. Learning groups are a common practice. Students are assigned to a group of five to seven other students, who meet regularly during class throughout the term to solve problems set by the instructor. Many institutions use peer tutors for students who need special help.

3. **Uses active learning techniques**

Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in classes listening to teachers, memorizing pre-packaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences and apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves.

**Some examples:** Active learning is encouraged in classes that use structured exercises, challenging discussions, team projects, and peer critiques. Active learning can also occur outside the classroom. There are thousands of internships, independent study, and cooperative job programs across the country in all kinds of colleges and universities, in all kinds of fields, for all kinds of students. Students also can help design and teach courses or parts of courses.

4. **Gives prompt feedback**

Knowing what you know and don't know focuses learning. Students need appropriate feedback on performance to benefit from courses. When getting started, students need help in assessing existing knowledge and competence. In classes, students need frequent opportunities to perform and receive suggestions for improvement. At various points during college, and at the end, students need chances to reflect on what they have learned, what they still need to know, and how to assess themselves.

**Some examples:** No feedback can occur without assessment. But assessment without timely feedback contributes little to learning. Institutions assess entering students as they enter to
guide them in planning their studies. In addition to the feedback students receive from course instructors, students in many colleges and universities receive counseling periodically on their progress and future plans.

5. **Emphasizes time on task**

Time plus energy equals learning. There is no substitute for time on task. Learning to use one’s time well is critical for students and professionals alike. Students need help in learning effective time management. Allocating realistic amounts of time means effective learning for students and effective teaching for faculty. How an institution defines time expectations for students, faculty, administrators, and other professional staff can establish the basis of high performance for all.

*Some examples:* Mastery learning, contract learning, and computer-assisted instruction require that students spend adequate amounts of time on learning. Extended periods of preparation for learning also give students more time on task. Providing students with opportunities to integrate their studies into the rest of their lives helps them use time well.

6. **Communicates high expectations**

Expect more and you will get more. High expectations are important for everyone -- for the poorly prepared, for those unwilling to exert themselves, and for the bright and well-motivated. Expecting students to perform well becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy when teachers and institutions hold high expectations for themselves and make extra efforts.

*Some examples:* In many colleges and universities, students with poor past records or test scores do extraordinary work. Sometimes they outperform students with good preparation. Most important are the day-to-day, week-in and week-out expectations students and faculty hold for themselves and for each other in all their classes.

7. **Respects diverse talents and ways of learning**

There are many roads to learning. People bring different talents and styles of learning to college. Brilliant students in the seminar room may be all thumbs in the lab or art studio. Students rich in hands-on experience may not do so well with theory. Students need the opportunity to show their talents and learn in ways that work for them. Then they can be pushed to learn in new ways that do not come so easily.

*Some examples:* Individualized degree programs recognize different interests. Personalized systems of instruction and mastery learning let students work at their own pace. Contract
learning helps students define their own objectives, determine their learning activities, and define the criteria and methods of evaluation.


“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.”

― William Arthur Ward

What Less Effective Teachers Do Wrong

Doing the right things with your teaching is of course critical but so is avoiding the wrong things. Richard M. Felder, North Carolina State University and Rebecca Brent, Education Designs, Inc., have come up with a list to the ten worst mistakes teachers make. They are summarized here in increasing order of “badness”.

Mistake #10: When you ask a question in class, immediately call for volunteers. When you do this most students will avoid eye contact, and either you get a response from one of the two or three who always volunteer or you answer your own question.

Mistake #9: Call on students cold. If you frequently call on students without giving them time to think (“cold-calling”), the ones who are intimidated by it won’t be following your lecture as much as praying that you don’t land on them. Even worse, as soon as you call on someone, the others breathe a sigh of relief and stop thinking.

Mistake #8: Turn classes into PowerPoint shows. Droning through lecture notes put into PowerPoint slides is generally a waste of time for everyone.

Mistake #7: Fail to provide variety in instruction. Effective instruction mixes things up: board work, multimedia, storytelling, discussion, activities, individual assignments, and group work.

108 | What are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching?
(being careful to avoid Mistake #6). The more variety you build in, the more effective the class is likely to be.

**Mistake #6: Have students work in groups with no individual accountability.** The way to make group work function is through using cooperative learning, an exhaustively researched instructional method that effectively promotes development of both cognitive and interpersonal skills.

**Mistake #5: Fail to establish relevance.** To provide better motivation, begin the course by describing how the content relates to important technological and social problems and to whatever you know of the students’ experience, interests, and career goals, and do the same thing when you introduce each new topic.

**Mistake #4: Give tests that are too long.** If you want to evaluate your students’ potential to be successful professionals, test their mastery of the knowledge and skills you are teaching, not their problem-solving speed.

**Mistake #3: Get stuck in a rut.** Things are always happening that provide incentives and opportunities for improving courses. This is not to say that you have to make major revisions in your course every time you give it—you probably don’t have time to do that, and there’s no reason to. Rather, just keep your eyes open for possible improvements you might make in the time available to you.

**Mistake #2. Teach without clear learning objectives/outcomes.** A key to making courses coherent and tests fair is to write learning objectives-explicit statements of what students should be able to do if they have learned what the instructor wants them to learn-and to use the objectives as the basis for designing lessons, assignments, and exams.

**Mistake #1. Disrespect students.** If you give students a sense that you don’t respect them, the class will probably be a bad experience for everyone no matter what else you do, while if you clearly convey respect and caring, it will cover a multitude of pedagogical sins you might commit.

*See this website for the origin of this list and other characteristics of effective teachers: https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/planning-your-approach/characteristics-effective-teachers*

“*In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn.*”

— Phil Collins
Face-to-face (F2F) and Online Examples of Effective Teaching Characteristics

In 2008, Memorial University undertook a study to determine student perspectives on effective teaching in higher education.

The following chart gives an overview of these characteristics and examples of teacher behaviours that illustrate those characteristics. Adapted from: Delaney, J.G., Johnson, A.N., Johnson, T.D. & Treslan, D. L. (2010) Students’ Perceptions of Effective Teaching in Higher Education. St John’s, NL: Distance Education and Learning Technologies.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristic</th>
<th>Face-to-Face</th>
<th>Examples for Face-to-Face</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Examples for Online</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Respectful</strong></td>
<td>Fair, understanding, flexible, caring, patient, helpful, compassionate, open-minded, sincere, diplomatic, concerned, reasonable, consistent, kind, empathetic, humble, trustworthy, realistic</td>
<td>Compassionate with regards to students' circumstances; open to &quot;stupid&quot; question; willing to explain many times and in different ways if necessary; uses common courtesy; tactful with criticism; shows concern for students' academic success; willing to admit own mistakes</td>
<td>Fair, understanding, flexible, caring, patient, helpful, compassionate, open-minded, diplomatic, concerned, reasonable, consistent, kind, empathetic, trustworthy, realistic</td>
<td>Prepared to answer more questions than F2F; offers expressive feedback; shows concern for students; must be able to trust teacher's answers; fair and reasonable with expectations, create real world tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Responsive</strong></td>
<td>Available, helpful, perceptive, accommodating</td>
<td>Timely, thorough constructive feedback; set office hours; responds to email ASAP; involves students more during class time; has awareness of students' needs; reads students' body language; accepts that students learn at different paces</td>
<td>Available, helpful, accommodating</td>
<td>Responds to posts and questions in a timely fashion; asks students for clarification to check students' understanding; builds on what students already know; gives students options to accommodate different learning styles; monitors and participates in discussion forums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Knowledgeable</strong></td>
<td>Flexible, competent, eclectic, credible, current, practical, reflective, qualified</td>
<td>Must be credible; conveys content that can be understood; shares real life experience; varies teaching strategies; relates content to real-life</td>
<td>Flexible, competent, eclectic, credible, current, practical, reflective, qualified</td>
<td>Must be competent; conveys content in a way that can be understood; shares personal anecdotes; uses a variety of resources to share content; must be up-to-date on research and practice in their field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Approachable</strong></td>
<td>Friendly, personable, helpful, accessible, happy, positive</td>
<td>Smiles; makes a comfortable atmosphere; maintains appropriate office</td>
<td>Friendly, personable, helpful, accessible, happy, positive</td>
<td>Understands that not everything can be communicated using a written approach; uses recordings to convey</td>
</tr>
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What are the Characteristics of Effective Teaching?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Communicative</strong></td>
<td>Clear, understandable, thorough, constructive, attentive</td>
<td>Speaks clearly; has astute listening skills; uses a variety of teaching methods; is approachable; understands students questions and gets to the point; is organized; maximizes use of class time; gives prompt quality feedback</td>
<td>Clear, understandable, thorough, constructive, attentive</td>
<td>Clear, &quot;listens&quot; and gets points across via electronic (written) communication; uses a variety of teaching methods, quick response time; clearly communicates expectations; personal feedback helps connect student to instructor; offers constructive feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organized</strong></td>
<td>Efficient, focused, prepared</td>
<td>Organized lectures, clear visual aids; stays on topic; provides sufficient feedback in a reasonable time</td>
<td>Efficient, focused, prepared</td>
<td>Organized online content; clear expectations at the beginning of the course; provides timelines; responds to emails and discussion posts promptly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engaging</strong></td>
<td>Enthusiastic, interesting, passionate, motivating, creative, positive, charismatic, stimulating, interactive, energetic, assertive</td>
<td>Interacts with students, has a passion for course content; smiles; varies tone of voice; actively involves students in a lecture; uses creative approaches</td>
<td>Enthusiastic, interesting, passionate, motivating, creative, positive, charismatic, stimulating, interactive, energetic, assertive</td>
<td>Posts interesting info related to the course from news; relates material to real life etc.; offers creative discussion topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional</strong></td>
<td>Dedicated, punctual, dependable, efficacious, hygienic, confident</td>
<td>Dresses appropriately; is punctual, trustworthy, honest; has well-planned lectures; be faithful to the syllabus;</td>
<td>Dedicated, punctual, dependable, confident</td>
<td>Is willing to investigate effective teaching techniques for distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humorous</td>
<td>Friendly, available, positive outlook on teaching, kind, happy</td>
<td>Helps students feel more relaxed; creates a positive learning environment; humour prevents students from falling asleep in class</td>
<td>Friendly, available, positive outlook on teaching, kind, happy</td>
<td>Adds a personal touch to the course; makes the material come alive; makes light observations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choosing a teaching and learning strategy is not an easy task. Strategies need to be chosen carefully in order to contribute most effectively to student learning. Anytime students are actively engaged in learning, exploring new ideas, and grasping the conceptual nature of the discipline, they are learning in a deeper and more meaningful way to apply that knowledge and those skills to other parts of their lives. The following information in this section outlines some strategies that may be used to enhance student learning.

Lecturing: Ten Things to Remember
Adapted from Cashin, W.E. Effective Lecturing. www.theideacenter.org

1. Lecturing is especially useful to convey knowledge, but is not well suited for higher levels of learning.
2. Decide what you want the students to know and be able to do as a result of the lecture.
3. Outline the lecture notes — first your major points, then the minor points that elaborate on or explain each major point.
4. Choose relevant, concrete examples, in advance of the lecture, selecting examples familiar and meaningful to the students.
5. Find out about the students, their backgrounds, and their goals.
6. Permit students to stop you to ask relevant questions, make comments, or ask for review.
7. Intersperse periodic summaries within the lecture.
8. Start with a question, problem, current event, or something that just grabs the students’ attention.
9. Watch the students. If you think they don’t understand you, stop and ask them questions.
10. Use active learning techniques. Use technological aids, such as multimedia presentations.
Encouraging Student Participation: Why It Pays to Sweat the Small Stuff  
*By Mary Ellen Weimer*

A recent classroom observation reminded me that student participation can be encouraged and supported by attention to small but important presentational details. In this article I have highlighted these details in the form of questions, and I hope that you’ll use them to reflect on the behaviors you’re using when seeking, listening, and responding to student contributions.

**How often do you ask a question and when do you ask it?**  
How often does depend on the teacher but there’s evidence from more than one study that a lot of us over estimate how often we ask questions. How often should you seek student contributions? More than you do? Do you ask after you’ve covered a chunk of content and are thinking about how much you still have to get through? Do you ask at the end of the period when a lot of students are hoping nobody says anything so they can get out a couple of minutes early?

**How long do you wait?**  
How much time passes after you’ve solicited input before you move on or offer some verbal follow up? There’s research here too, and the findings are pretty consistent. Most faculty wait somewhere between two and three seconds before they do something else—ask the question again, call on somebody, rephrase the question, answer the question themselves, or decide nobody has anything to say and move on. When asked, most faculty claim that they wait 10 to 12 seconds. Time passes slowly when you’ve asked a question and there’s no sign of a response—it’s an awkward, uncomfortable time for the teacher and the students. But waiting longer has its rewards.


Classroom Management: Finding the Balance Between Too Rigid and Too Flexible  
*By: Maryellen Weimer*

For quite some time now I’ve been interested in a widely held set of assumptions faculty make about the need to assert control at the beginning of a course. The argument goes something like this: When a course starts, the teacher needs to set the rules and clearly establish who’s in charge. If the course goes well, meaning students abide by the rules and do not challenge the teacher’s authority, then the teacher can gradually ease up and be a bit looser about the rules. The rationale behind this approach rests on the assumption that if a teacher loses control of a class, it is very hard to regain the upper hand. In these cases, student behaviors have compromised the climate for learning so seriously that the teacher has an ethical responsibility to intervene and reassert control.
But these examples are also extreme and, in my experience, rare. Far more common are classroom environments where the teacher is so in control that students passively perform what look like learning tasks (taking notes, feigning attention, etc.). Lately I’ve been wondering how much control is necessary to set the conditions for learning and whether that amount of control doesn’t need to be offset by a certain amount of freedom so that students can make the learning experience meaningful to them. And then there’s the question as to how teacher control affects the motivation to learn? Do students learn more or learn better in classrooms that are rule bound?

More fundamentally, I’ve been wondering if those assumptions about needing to establish control at the outset are supported by evidence, experiential or otherwise. What happens if you don’t? Do students automatically rise up and take control? Why do I have such trouble imagining students doing that? They seem so beaten down already.

More sinister are questions of whether teachers don’t benefit more from the control they assert than students do, even though most faculty I know would go to their graves arguing that they only control for the students’ sake. A tightly controlled classroom environment certainly makes for safer, saner teaching. If all potential challenges to authority are headed off at the pass, then the teacher can devote full attention to the content, and isn’t that where the teacher’s expertise really shines? And so the classroom becomes a place that showcases teaching more than learning?

My suspicion is that most teachers overreact to potential threats. Why? Do they question whether they can respond successfully to challenges? Are they in denial about the vulnerabilities that are inherently a part of teaching? Do they like this feeling of control? Depending on the teacher, all these answers may be possibilities, but I think for more teachers, it’s a matter of not trusting students or having lost faith in all of them because of the actions of a few.


Classroom Management Tips for Regaining Control of the Classroom

By: Rick Sheridan

Losing control of the classroom can be one of the most frustrating and intimidating experiences for both new and experienced teachers. Losing control can happen in several different ways. The most common would be where the class is distracted. This could be from a situation outside the classroom such as noisy conversation in the hall, or from an event elsewhere that students find out about, such as a rumor of the football coach getting fired. Losing control can also happen within the classroom, such as when one student monopolizes the discussion, or where there is a general lack of interest in the lecture, and many students are obviously not paying attention. Here are nine possible ways to regain students’ attention.
1. Have a distinct sounding object, such as a bell or cymbal. As long as you don’t use it too often, this can be an effective way to bring student’s attention back to the class discussion.

2. Signal nonverbally, and make eye contact with students when they hold side conversations, start to fall asleep, or show contempt for the lecture material. You can also use hand signals to encourage a wordy student to finish what he or she is saying, or make a time out “T” sign with your fingers to stop unwanted behavior.

3. Remember what your parents told you when a sibling was bothering you. Sometimes it is best to ignore mildly negative behaviors. Often the behavior will disappear if you do not pay any attention to it.

4. Discuss very negative behaviors in private. During break or after class firmly request a change in behavior of those students who are disruptive

10 | Why Integrate Technology into the Curriculum?

The Reasons Are Many! There’s a place for tech in every classroom.


Technology is ubiquitous, touching almost every part of our lives, our communities, our homes. Yet most schools lag far behind when it comes to integrating technology into classroom learning. Many are just beginning to explore the true potential tech offers for teaching and learning. Properly used, technology will help students acquire the skills they need to survive in a complex, highly technological knowledge-based economy.

Integrating technology into classroom instruction means more than teaching basic computer skills and software programs in a separate computer class. Effective tech integration must happen across the curriculum in ways that research shows deepen and enhance the learning process. In particular, it must support four key components of learning: active engagement, participation in groups, frequent interaction and feedback, and connection to real-world experts. Effective technology integration is achieved when the use of technology is routine and transparent and when technology supports curricular goals.

Many people believe that technology-enabled project learning is the ne plus ultra of classroom instruction. Learning through projects while equipped with technology tools allows students to be intellectually challenged while providing them with a realistic snapshot of what the modern office looks like. Through projects, students acquire and refine their analysis and problem-
solving skills as they work individually and in teams to find, process, and synthesize information they’ve found online.

The myriad resources of the online world also provide each classroom with more interesting, diverse, and current learning materials. The Web connects students to experts in the real world and provides numerous opportunities for expressing understanding through images, sound, and text.

New tech tools for visualizing and modeling, especially in the sciences, offer students ways to experiment and observe phenomenon and to view results in graphic ways that aid in understanding. And, as an added benefit, with technology tools and a project-learning approach, students are more likely to stay engaged and on task, reducing behavioral problems in the classroom.

Technology also changes the way teachers teach, offering educators effective ways to reach different types of learners and assess student understanding through multiple means. It also enhances the relationship between teacher and student. When technology is effectively integrated into subject areas, teachers grow into roles of adviser, content expert, and coach. Technology helps make teaching and learning more meaningful and fun.

Selecting the Appropriate Communication Tools for Your Online Course
By: Rob Kelly

When designing an online course it’s important to carefully consider which tools align with the course’s learning objectives and the types of communication that will occur. There are three types of communication that can occur in an online course—one to one, one to many, and many to many. In an interview with Online Classroom, Sara Ombres, faculty development instructor, and Anna Reese, production coordinator/instructional designer, both at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University’s Worldwide Campus, talked about how they help instructors select communication tools to suit the situation.

One to one: journals
A key strength of online learning is the ability to create learning communities, facilitate collaboration, and foster peer review. However, there are instances where one-to-one communication is appropriate. For example, a journal that only the individual student and instructor can access can be used as a way for students to reflect on sensitive topics in a less public way than using other tools might offer. Or in a writing course, perhaps students would prefer not to share their work with the entire class until they’ve made revisions.

In addition to being useful to the students, one-to-one communication can provide valuable information to the instructor.
“We have students’ journal about what they’re struggling with—things they may not feel comfortable sharing with the group. It’s really good feedback for us as faculty developers and instructors to modify and improve [our instruction] to better meet their needs,” Ombres says.

**One to many: blogs**
Consider using blogs as a way to provide students with a means to communicate to the entire class. Although blogs can be set up to enable comments from other students, they’re not the best tool for interactive discussion. Rather, they are an excellent way for individual students to share their personal experiences, reflect, and apply what they’ve learned, Reese says.

Blogs provide a sense of ownership. “Students can comment on other students’ blogs, but they cannot add posts to other students’ blogs. The blog is the individual student’s to do what he or she wants to do. And there has been a lot of research about how when students have that feeling of ownership it really does improve their writing and their level of commitment,” Ombres says.

See more at: [http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/selecting-appropriate-communication-tools-online-course/#sthash.jdYn4Vwh.dpuf](http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/selecting-appropriate-communication-tools-online-course/#sthash.jdYn4Vwh.dpuf)

**VIU’s Learning Technologies**
At VIU, there are a number of learning technologies you can incorporate into your teaching and learning strategies. This page lists the tools and a brief description of each. If you have a question, contact [learnsupport@viu.ca](mailto:learnsupport@viu.ca) for more information.

**VIULearn (D2L)**
[https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn](https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn)

VIULearn (D2L) is the learning management system used at VIU. VIULearn provides a framework you can use as an excellent supplement for your face-to-face classroom experience, blended offering or fully online environment. You can use the Content tools to organize and provide files, links and other resources to learners. Communication tools allow you to pose questions, send mass emails, post announcements and send updates to your students. Assessment tools allow you to upload rubrics, conduct online quizzes and exams, collect assignments digitally, monitor student progress, and give students the ability to check their grades.
VIUOnline Rooms
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viouonline-rooms-virtual-meeting-spaces

VIUOnline Rooms (powered by Collaborate Ultra) is designed to provide faculty members and students the option to communicate in a synchronous online environment. With live video streaming faculty members can conduct small or large group instruction without the need to all be in the same location as you can share your computer screen over the internet. Web conferencing gives you the functionality you need to support a 21st century teaching and learning environment, such as two-way audio, multi-point video, interactive whiteboard, application and desktop sharing, rich media, breakout rooms, and session recording. Educators and students can engage as if they were in a traditional classroom, with as good as, or even better, outcomes.

VIUTube
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viutube

VIUTube gives faculty the option of sharing large video and audio files in a secure and advertisement-free environment. Files uploaded to VIUTube are automatically converted and optimized for streaming and can be linked in your VIULearn content. Any material you or your learners upload to VIUTube stays on a Canadian server, thus avoiding any FIPPA concerns that arise with any non-Canadian based video storage provider. Since all content uploaded to VIUTube is not made visible to other users unless you share the link with them, you can upload videos of your lectures (or other media materials you have created) and make them available to your online or blended classes so your students can watch content that they may have missed in class.

VIUBlogs
https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/technology-tools/viublogs

VIUBlogs (powered by Wordpress) give faculty and learners the ability to create blogs, websites or even ePortfolios. Faculty can also create course sites, project sites or department sharing sites within VIUBlogs. There are a variety of themes and options available to help customize your blog or site. VIUBlogs is hosted on campus and is compliant with FIPPA, although it is important to remember that a blog or site will be more open and visible to the online community then other tools.
**Interactive Whiteboards**
Interactive Whiteboard Systems you may be familiar with include SMART boards, Promethean boards and MimioTouch. Interactive Whiteboards, in general, require a computer and projector in addition to production software and the board itself. They allow users to control the computer from the board and most systems can capture notes written on the board when the appropriate interface device is used. Please check with your department chair to see if there are interactive whiteboards available in your department.

**Classroom Response Systems**
Otherwise known as Clickers, Classroom Response Systems (CRS) are handheld wireless voting devices/cards. They are interactive systems that allow instructors to question students and see their answers in real time. They can be used in a number of ways with the five main uses being pre-assessment, new content reinforcement, review, opinion polling and peer instruction. The Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning has sets of Clickers that they can sign out on a weekly basis to interested faculty. There are also now several online systems that work well for similar purposes.

**Data Projectors**
Many of the classrooms at VIU are equipped with data projectors but you always want to check the classroom you are assigned to for the technology that is available. If you find that your assigned room is not equipped with a specific piece of hardware you can make a request online at [www.viu.ca/library](http://www.viu.ca/library).

**Accessing VIULearn Course Shells**
Each course you are assigned has will automatically be provided with an empty VIULearn course shell.

To access the VIULearn login page:
1. From the VIU Homepage (www.viu.ca), choose **Login** from the top banner (top of page and top right) and select **VIULearn** from the drop down list under “Login” OR
2. Type [learn.viu.ca](http://learn.viu.ca) directly into your Internet browser’s address bar

On the left hand side of the page you will see the login area. The username and password are the same ones you use to login to a campus computer or your Outlook webmail account provided by VIU.

For help with all aspects of building a VIULearn course, visit the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning’s website which contains many helpful videos and instructions for teaching with VIULearn: [https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn](https://ciel.viu.ca/learning-technologies-innovation/viulearn)
You can also gain access to videos, handouts and other training materials by going through the Centre’s main website at ciel.viu.ca. (Go to VIULearn under the green banner entitled Learning Technologies and Innovation.)

There is a self-paced, fully-online training course available for faculty members through the Centre called “The Operations and Functions of VIULearn for Faculty”. You can begin the course at any time and there is no time limit on course access. Please email learnsupport@viu.ca to register for the course or receive more information about it.

If you run into trouble, you can email learnsupport@viu.ca to arrange a consultation about your course.

**General Information about your VIULearn Course**

The online components of your courses can be stored in VIULearn. VIULearn is linked to both the Student Registration System (SRS) and the Schedule and Workload System (SAWS). Each night, SRS and SAWS send information to VIULearn letting it know courses at VIU are currently open for registration, who is teaching them, which students are registered in those courses, and details about students’ contact information. All changes to courses and enrollments are processed nightly, and appear in VIULearn the next day.

This has a few important consequences:

1. You do not have to request a course (known as a “course shell”). When a course is created in SAWS it will be automatically generated in VIULearn.
2. You must be listed as the course instructor in order to access a course. Until you are the instructor of record in SAWS, you will not be able to see or make changes to a course.
3. If you are teaching multiple sections of the same course, you can email learnsupport@viu.ca to request the sections are “mapped” together. This will create a single course shell that all of the sections of your course will share. These requests are processed nightly.
4. When a student registers for your course, they will be automatically enrolled in the VIULearn course shell overnight. This means that your VIULearn class list will not reflect changes made that day.

5. Waitlisted students do not appear in the VIULearn Classlist tool as they do not have an official “seat” in your course. You will see waitlisted students on the official VIU class list, however.

6. Students who have outstanding fees (tuition or other fees) will be automatically removed from the VIULearn Classlist about halfway through the term. Once the student pays any outstanding fees they will be automatically added back into your course overnight. Students withdrawn in this manner will not lose any data.

All courses created in VIULearn will be empty (contain no content) by default. You are responsible for adding material to your VIULearn course.

Material you have developed previously in VIULearn (for instance, in a past term) can be quickly copied into your new course shell within the system.

Additionally, an instructor can choose to share material with another instructor by enrolling them in their course. The newly enrolled instructor could then copy the desired course materials into their own course.

Remember to provide the learn.viu.ca link for your students to access VIULearn in as many areas as possible. This webpage is where you and your students will log into VIULearn to access your course.

**Semester Start-up Checklist for Courses supported by VIULearn**

1. If you require multiple sections to be mapped together, send an email to learnsupport@viu.ca and wait for the mapping to be processed before adding any materials to your course shell.

2. If you have copied course components from a previous year, term, or from another instructor please check that:

   - The start, due and end dates for all content and activities (such as Discussions, Quizzes and Assignments) are updated for the current year or term
   - Any unwanted content or activities are set to “Draft” (hidden) or deleted from your course shell
   - You check any links, feeds, or other third party integrations in your course to ensure they are still functioning as expected
   - You have updated your course syllabus to reflect the current year or term as appropriate
Check that any other instructors, TA’s or support staff members that need to access your course are enrolled correctly

Compare your official VIU class list to the class list in VIULearn to ensure your students are enrolled correctly, remembering the new changes will not be reflected in VIULearn until they are processed overnight

3. Once your course is ready for students, you must activate, or “open” your course for them. You can also edit the start and end dates of your course so it is not available to your students right away.

4. The Centre offers student orientations to VIULearn at the beginning of the term. Consider contacting learnsupport@viu.ca for information regarding student orientations.

5. Check your class list to ensure accuracy once the Add/Drop deadline has passed and changes are no longer being made to enrollments.

The Centre has a semester start checklist complete with links to support resources on their website under VIULearn and Semester Start for Faculty Members.

**Protecting the Privacy of Student Data**

**Required Actions for Compliance with BC’s FIPPA Law**

British Columbia (BC) has one of the strictest privacy laws of personal data in all of North America - enabled to ensure BC citizens are protected when it comes to storage and access of personal identifiable information.

To abide by BC’s Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act (FIPPA) Regulation, faculty members must deploy **three principles when in situations about privacy of student information**: 1) give **notice** to students when they are sending/requiring them to send their data to a location outside of Canada, 2) provide **knowledge** of why they are doing this, and if required, 3) obtain **written** consent from students for doing so. These principles you can apply to almost any privacy situation in order to show you have done your due diligence.

Written consent is the highest level of ‘due diligence’ when classroom work requires the use of social media, or when a faculty member or student forwards email to Gmail/Hotmail (web email services), and when a course requires the use of online textbooks or textbook activity sites.

Educating students is an important part of maintaining their privacy.

It is the responsibility of individual faculty members to ensure that they are compliant with FIPPA regulations. The following information is provided to help ensure that faculty members are aware of their responsibilities.
When to Think About FIPPA

Any time students’ personal, identifiable information (first name, last name, date of birth, course student is enrolled in, student grades, home address, student VIU ID) is stored on a server outside of Canada, or the parent company that owns the server is located outside of Canada, students must be provided with notice, knowledge, and consent. Personal, identifiable information includes any information that can be used to identify an individual student including photographs, file names of documents, student assignment titles, videos, audio files etc.

Instructor Emails

Any email that contains student’s personal, identifiable information should ONLY be accessed from Canadian-based services, such as the official VIU Outlook email account (hosted at VIU). Services such as Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc, host their services outside of Canada (on servers around the world), and should not be used to access emails that contain student personal identifiable information (including accessing VIU webmail from a public computer in another country). This would be a violation of the FIPPA law.

Note: It is possible to have emails forwarded from VIULearn to faculty members’ personal email accounts. Emails from VIULearn DO contain students’ personal, identifiable information, and SHOULD ONLY be forwarded to official VIU email accounts, and NEVER to services like Gmail, Hotmail, Yahoo, etc. unless notice, knowledge and written consent have been obtained from the students.

Online Textbook Resources

Any online learning resource, such as textbooks or any supporting materials included in textbooks (labs, quizzes, resources to access), that faculty require students to use should only be hosted in Canada. If the resource is located outside of Canada, or the parent company is located outside of Canada, faculty must ensure they give students notice of information that will be stored outside of Canada, knowledge of why they need to access the site, and ensures there is student consent (written or some alternative form of recording consent). In this way, students are made aware of the implications of having their data reside outside of Canada and what other companies can do with their data.

Social Media/Web Tools Used in the Classroom

Many students access social media and various web tools outside of the classroom. What students do with social media outside of the classroom on their own is their business, and not the responsibility of faculty. If students are required to use social media, web tools or online resources as part of their classes (make a Prezi, post to Twitter, create a Facebook account, upload video to YouTube etc.), and that tool is based outside of Canada (which almost every company is!), faculty are responsible to ensure they give students notice of information that will be stored outside of Canada, knowledge of why they need to access the tool and how it is
impacted by BC FIPPA laws, and captures student consent (written or some alternative form of recording consent).

Obtaining Student Consent

1. Look at the fine print for the resource, activity or website you are requiring students to use in their classes (remember if it is an optional assignment/activity and they can use other tools not hosted online outside of Canada - you are fine). Reading the privacy policy, what data the resource captures, where the data lives and what alternatives there may be for how much data is required is key to being diligent.

2. Once you have all the information, create a consent form for your students. A consent form is required **FOR EACH COURSE** clearly outlining the assignments, activities and required learning that makes use of a tool or resource that is putting student information on servers outside of Canada. Unfortunately you can’t have a ‘blanket’ program or degree consent form as you need the details for each course assignment/activity spelled out.

3. There is a **Sample VIU Consent Form** for an Online Textbook Site (Word version) for you to download, edit and use with students. Ensure you remove all ‘sample’ content and insert your own information. 
https://ciel.viu.ca/sites/default/files/sample_viu_student_consent_agreement.docx

4. You are also able to create a 'digital consent form' through an online content page in VIULearn where students read and by selecting the response to a question (consent) so you have record of their consent/non consent. Email the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning for assistance.

5. If you wish some assistance to proofread your consent form or you have questions, kindly email learnsupport@viu.ca for a consultation.

Alternatives to Student Consent

1. Research the technology and your assignment/task to ascertain if your students/you require the collection, upload, and use of personal identifiable information (often you may not and can use the social media or web tool without needing such information). You may be able to have students skip sections intended to capture personal identifiable information.

2. If you or the web tool requires personal identifiable information – find out how much your students really need to supply (or are connected to through accounts) and what are the privacy risks or abilities to make more private information – then use a consent form.

3. If a student refuses consent – have a Plan B. Some students who wish to not not engage in privacy-laden activities, should still have an alternative that still fulfils a lot of the main learning intentions, but doesn’t expose them to privacy risks (e.g., use learning management system at VIU etc.)
4. Inquire about ‘on site’ or ‘Canadian hosted’ tools that may allow you to do similar activities but not have to use US servers (e.g., VIU’s learning management system is hosted in Ontario, VIUTube large file video storage is hosted at UBC/Vancouver, VIUBlogs is hosted at VIU etc)
5. Educate students – let them know what is going on. They may have some solutions!
6. Try using pseudonyms for some social media elements that won’t release personal identifiable information.

“Education is not filling of a pail but the lighting of a fire. “
— William Butler Yeats
Student Course Evaluations

All courses taught by sessional/term faculty members and faculty in their first years at VIU before they are “regularized” are evaluated using the student course evaluation survey. There are different question formats relevant to theory, clinical and practicum courses.

Currently, all student surveys for evaluation of VIU faculty occur through an online distribution system. Please check with your Program Assistant or Chair for details regarding timing. Typically these occur in week 9-11 of the course. If your course occurs out of the usual term sequence, advise the Program Assistant who will request the survey administration at the appropriate time.

For instructors who are teaching multiple courses (3 or more) to the same cohort of students arrangements will be made for a maximum of 2 evaluations to occur at the same time to prevent “evaluation fatigue”. Please discuss with the program assistant who will consult with the Dean.

You will receive the results of the student evaluations through an electronic link following the submission of your class grades. The Dean reviews the student results and completes a summary indicating if the student evaluations are consistent with satisfactory teaching as outlined by the standards of teaching.

If there are concerns from the student survey instructors will be asked to complete a self-evaluation describing their strengths and challenges relative to the student evaluations. A plan for improvement which identifies goals and strategies to address the student concerns should be identified. The instructor will then meet with the Dean who will complete a formative instructional evaluation summary to identify whether the results of the student survey and resultant plan for improvement meet the expectations for a satisfactory evaluation (see Standards for Teaching performance). The following term (in which an instructor who received a formative evaluation teaches) the Dean will review the previous evaluation summary as well as the current term student surveys and the results of any additional evaluation tools.
recommended in the formative evaluation. The Dean will complete a summary evaluation after meeting with the instructor to review the results of the evaluation tools and will follow-up any previous recommendations. Sessional instructors (VIUFA) must have a satisfactory evaluation in order to be eligible for right of first refusal. Refer to Article 9.2.2.2 of the VIUFA Collective Agreement for the parameters of this eligibility.

Getting Feedback

Student Feedback
The most widely used feedback method is an end of course survey. These surveys are often part of formal faculty evaluations. These surveys or variations of them can be useful for an instructor to gather information from students about their own teaching and learning.

There are many other ways to gather information from students during the term to improve teaching and learning in a more immediate and powerful way.

Barbara Gross Davis (1993) provided some practical ideas on getting useful information from students that can assist instructors in improving both short and long term teaching. With immediate feedback and some action, it is not too late for the students you are working with to benefit. The feedback can help with selection of teaching methods, knowing what students’ needs are, improving clarity and expectations, and possibly adjusting assignments. You need to be clear on what specific information is useful and have a variety of strategies to collect the information. Some of the possible strategies are:

- **Student feedback form with anonymous voluntary feedback** at the end of a section of the term. General questions and open response work well with this technique. For example you can ask what is going well for them and why, what suggestions they may have for course content or delivery, and/or what their needs are that need to be addressed. You are best to leave the room and have a student volunteer collect the forms and return them to a department secretary for pickup after. Asking such questions at midterm makes it possible for you to respond to student concerns and adjust your course before it is too late for this group of students. If you choose to ask for midterm feedback, it’s useful to report these results back to the students so they know you are paying attention. The idea for this step is to turn students into partners on course design, and to involve them in your thinking as instructor. You might think about the results in clusters of “what you said I’m pleased about” “what you suggested that I can change”; and “what you suggested, but that I can’t change because it is part of the goals of the course”. This can be done in a handout or in a set of PowerPoint slides (you can use the Windows ‘snipping tool’ or use Photoshop and plunk them right
into PowerPoint.) Don’t report on ALL the questions—just the ones that seem most important to you and to the students.

Whatever you do next: DO the things you have promised to change, and students will really see how you are respecting them as colleagues. Doing so might even positively affect the end-of-term student evaluations!

- **Lesson questionnaire at the end of class** with 4-6 short answer specific considerations that can be rated or commented on. You can ask about level of difficulty, use of class time, pace of the class, degree of engagement in lesson, and/or specific suggestions for change.

- **Student focus group** You or a colleague can conduct an informal feedback session with your students during the concluding 10 minutes of one class. Students can be asked to meet in small groups with a recorder who will summarize suggestions and positive comments from the group. You can have general questions such as:
  - What is working well for you or not?
  - What are the most positive aspects of the course?
  - What suggestions might you have for course improvement?
  - A colleague or student can collect and organize the comments or provide them as is.

- **Management committee feedback form.** Establish a student liaison or management committee. You can ask for volunteers or have an appointed/elected group of 2-4 to meet with you periodically outside of class to provide a gauge for how well the content and instruction is working for class members. Students need to know who the liaison committee members are. If teaching multiple sections you can have one delegate from each volunteered, appointed, or elected. Meet with the committee once or twice in the term and acknowledge the meeting results with the rest of the class.

- **Suggestion Boxes.** Have a place for written anonymous suggestions for course content, course comments, questions, student needs, and lesson presentations. You can have a locked box in a convenient location. The back of a classroom or department office are possible locations.

- **Digital student survey.** You can solicit student feedback with an electronic survey through VIULearn (D2L). This strategy has many positive features such as anonymity, efficiency, ease of use, and statistical analysis. Surveys can be used multiple times or at the end of the course.
• **E-mail or other discussion groups** (blogs, wikis) can be useful in responding to facilitating communication and acknowledging student needs and input. Students appreciate a timely response.

• **Individual student interviews.** Carefully select students from the class who will provide honest and sincere feedback on how the course is progressing from a student perspective. Summarize the main points of the interview in terms of what is going well and possible changes for both the immediate and future.

• **Closing Course Outcome review.** Make copies of your course outcome page from your course outline. Ask students to review/evaluate the intended outcomes by rating or commenting on the degree to which the outcome was achieved. This anonymous information can be collected and should provide excellent feedback on your teaching.

**Some general suggestions for communicating with students about their feedback**

• Any feedback provided to should be responded to with gratitude and a sharing of what actions might result from it.

• Do not get swayed by the inevitable few negative comments, (easier said than done!) There is always some negative energy if you look for it. Look for the entire positive and patterns in the constructive criticism.

• Record suggestions and you might change in the course (turnaround time for assignments), or for next year (the text was not good or needed), or not change (having a final exam).

**Peer/Colleague Feedback**

Another valuable way of receiving feedback on your teaching is through peer review. In their own classrooms, instructors are often so busy presenting information, facilitating discussions, monitoring student groups, answering questions, and keeping an eye on the time that they may not notice issues that can negatively impact learning. Having a peer in the classroom who is expressly dedicated to observation can be invaluable.

In peer review, a colleague sits in on a class and offers feedback from a different perspective. Peer review does not have to involve advice or judgment. Often just having more information on what is going on in class can make a big difference in how an instructor prepares and presents lessons.

In some institutions, formal peer review programs exist, often as a requirement for new instructors and sometimes as a professional development option for tenured instructors.
Generally, a team of more experienced instructors make observations and comments on the teaching dynamics they observe in a classroom.

Informal peer review is another option. This can be as simple as asking a colleague to sit in on a class meeting and take notes on what she sees and experiences. It’s best to ask a more experienced colleague, but even a novice can provide valuable feedback. Let that person know what specifically you would like feedback on—presenting information clearly, facilitating groups, or fostering a welcoming community.

Contact the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning for a free copy of our VIU Guide to Peer Observation for Reflective Practice which includes detailed information for how and why to conduct peer observations.

**Self-Reflection and the Course Portfolio**

Following each class, go to your office and write down what you felt worked and did not work for that day and why. Make note of things that you would like to keep the next time you deliver this class and things you should change. It is also a good idea to record any questions that students asked so that you can address them in the next delivery of the class. This tool can also be effective as an ongoing self-evaluation and can be a way to determine what you would like to change or keep the same in any teaching situation (i.e., delivery style).

If you are interested scholarly approaches to reflecting on your teaching, you might also consider putting together a Course Portfolio. A course portfolio is a coherent narrative or investigation of a specific course that is documented as it is being taught. It allows you to make a study of your course, and make conclusions about such things as:

- How well the course learning goals match actual student learning,
- a description of changes that you plan to make the next time the course is taught, and a record that can become a scholarship of teaching and learning project
- a deeper reflection on what you have learned in the process of writing the course portfolio, and clarification of further questions you might pursue about your teaching and learning strategies.

*For more about Course Portfolios, see Hutchings, Pat, (2205) The Course Portfolio: How Faculty can Examine their Teaching to Advance Practice and Improve Student Learning. Stylus Publishing, Sterling, VA*
Teaching Portfolios

“The teaching portfolio is a collection of materials that document teaching performance.” (Seldin, 1991)

Teaching portfolios can serve many purposes, some of which include the following:

- Reflecting on your learning outcomes as a teacher
- Assessing your teaching strengths and areas which need improvement
- Documenting your progress as a teacher
- Generating ideas for future teaching/course development
- Identifying your personal teaching style
- Using elements of the portfolio to promote dialogue with fellow teachers
- Considering new ways of gathering student feedback
- Gathering detailed data to support your goals
- Collecting multiple sources of evidence that document the implementation of your teaching goals and their success

Contents of a Teaching Portfolio

- Teaching Responsibilities
- Statement of Teaching Philosophy
- Teaching Methodology, Strategies, Objectives
- Description of Course Materials (Syllabi, Handouts, Assignments)
- Teaching Goals: Short- and Long-Term
- Efforts to Improve Teaching
- Student Ratings
- Innovations in Teaching
- Products of Teaching (Evidence of Student Learning)

See for more information: http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/teaching-portfolios/

For more information about how to create a Teaching Portfolio, contact the Centre for Innovation and Excellence at Learnsupport@viu.ca

“What we learn with pleasure we never forget.”
— Alfred Mercier
12 | Processes and Procedures

Procedures

This section of the handbook outlines various procedures related to teaching and learning required by VIU.

Communication and Availability

As an instructor committed to student success, it is imperative that you inform students about how they can contact you for help, and what they can expect from you for email and phone response times. We suggest that you use VIU’s learning management system VIULearn (D2L) messaging for all email communication and assignment submission responses with students.

If students do not receive timely communication they may appeal grades or may complain to the Program Chair or the Dean. Please check the course site regularly and ensure responses are timely. For example, you may set a specific day that you will check so students know to email before that day, or you could guarantee a 48 hour or 72 hours response time. Please communicate to students what they can expect on your course outline.

University course management policies require a “timely” turn-around of assignments to students. A timely turnaround on assignments is approximately 2 weeks. Please advise students if you will be taking longer. Two legitimate grounds for student appeals are: ineffective course management, and procedural error.

- Course management issues relate to students who have concerns about how a course is taught or managed. Ideally, the student would first consult the instructor as soon as concern arises and only then contact the chair. If you have any concerns that students are unhappy enough in your course to complain to your chair, it makes sense to have a conversation with the chair first, before complaints arrive at his or her door. Open communication and gathering of feedback from students early enough to make changes in the course are key to avoiding these kinds of situations.
• Procedural error applies when it is believed that there has been an error in the procedure followed in the application of course management or any other applicable policy of the University that has unfairly affected a student’s grade or standing.

Class Lists
You can view your class list and waitlist online. See information about classlists and waitlists at https://www2.viu.ca/facultyhelp/Classes.asp To see your classlist, you will need to enter the Course and Section ID of your class. **Note that you must leave a space between the course code and section ID** - for example: ENGL 115, not ENGL115. Also ensure that when entering the section ID that you use numbers, not letters - for example: F11N01, not FIINOI*.

If you have entered the course or section code incorrectly, you will get an "ERROR: Course / Section not found" message. If this happens, use the back button and try again by fixing the spacing, course name or section ID.

If instead you get a message that says you do not have permission to view the class list, please contact your Program Assistant, Chair or Admin support.

CLASS LISTS - Students currently registered in your class.

WAIT LISTS** - Students waiting to get into your class.

The information provided on these lists is in "real time". As soon as a student registers or the waitlist changes, it will appear on this list.

You can print your own class lists and submit grades using the same system. You can also securely access email for your entire class list or wait list simply by clicking on the icon at the bottom of the page after you have called up the list.

Office Hours
VIU expects each instructor to set office hours. We recommend that you be available for the hour prior to class, either in the classroom or in your office. You might want to set a ‘cyber’ office hour, but more important is prompt return of email messages from students (48 hours is a good guideline). You must specify your availability for office hours and what students can expect from you relative to answering voice mail, email and VIULearn inquiries. This will be clearly outlined in the course outline and announced in class. In addition, office hours need to be visible and posted outside your office.
Textbooks

VIU Instructors are responsible for ordering textbooks. Orders are required about 3 months (e.g., order by May 15 for Fall semester) before the course starts so if you are recommending changes, please discuss them with the Chair or at a departmental meeting in plenty of time. Instructors are required to complete a textbook order form and submit it to the bookstore for ordering. Deadlines are important to ensure your course textbook (or packages) arrive 2 weeks in advance of the semester start-up. You will receive reminders of deadlines via email, but it is a good idea to know the deadlines in advance so you do not have to scramble to get information about resources together. Information on timelines and packages may be accessed here: http://www.viubookstore.ca/faculty_services.asp Just click on the Faculty tab at the top.

Cancelling Class

There are a few conditions that may impact changes in classes from proceeding as usual. These may include:

Instructor Unable to Teach (due to illness, emergency, etc.)

In the event you are unable to teach one of your classes, please discuss with your departmental colleagues (or Chair) for standard processes. If possible arrange an alternate faculty to teach as early as possible. You should also post information on the VIULearn (D2L) site under the announcements.

Severe Weather Conditions

There are times when classes on campus will be closed due to severe weather conditions. In general VIU’s policy is:

a) Before a decision is made to cancel classes and or activities due to snow or severe weather conditions, the Executive Director of Infrastructure & Ancillary Services, or designate, will have monitored local weather stations, RCMP advisories and other weather and road information sources for reports.

b) The decision to close the campus or cancel classes and activities is that of the President, or designate, in consultation with the Executive Director of Infrastructure & Ancillary Services. The Executive Director of University Relations or designate will then implement VIU’s communication protocols to the broader internal and external communities. The notice will be posted on the main page of the VIU website.

c) In situations where the Nanaimo campus is closed for snow or other severe weather conditions, campus closure will be considered in the following blocks:
• Daytime Classes and Activities - decision will be made by 6:00 am – employees working on the Nanaimo Campus will not be required to report to work ("Daytime" refers to any class or activity ending by 6:00 pm)
• Evening Classes and Activities - decision will be made by 2:00 pm ("Evening" refers to any class or activity starting at or after 6:00 pm)

d) If evening classes and activities are taking place on a day that daytime classes have been cancelled, these evening classes and activities will operate without support services. These service areas include the Library, Cafeteria, Student Services and other service and support units. Security will be on campus during snow or other severe weather closures.

e) The Library Commons and Cafeteria seating will remain open during snow or severe weather closures.

Once a decision has been made to close the Nanaimo Campus the Deans responsible for offsite Nanaimo programs and the Campus Principals, will be responsible for the closure of those facilities and communicating the closure to their employees and to the Executive Director of University Relations or designate.

See https://www2.viu.ca/severe-weather/ for up to date information. For further information email University.Relations@viu.ca

Procedures When Teaching Online

The basic expectations of instructors regarding teaching are outlined in your Union agreement. You are free to change content in an online course (within the limitations imposed by the course description and learning outcomes) and load your own pages into the course content module. Be sure that you are comfortable with VIULearn procedures for doing this.

Learning face-to-face should be equitable with the learning online so that neither “group” or cohort receives less information than the other. Please try to keep this in mind.

The following strategies are suggested, choose ones that work for your style of teaching and for the course content:
• Put on your course outline an expectation that everyone will access the course at least once per week and that assignments will be received by email or using the submit assignment feature which allows them to upload files without using email or messaging.

• Attach your lecture notes to a discussion board posting the day after class, summarizing the class discussion and presenting the questions that came up in class/or conversely present questions from the discussion forum in class.

• Develop a course “FAQ” list and post it where students can easily find it.

• If you haven’t worked with bulletin boards or email previously, consider the “hidden” / covert / non-verbals in your messages and try to maintain a friendly and respectful tone. Experience suggests that students misinterpret the written message easily because of the absence of non-verbal indicators.

• Post a Discussion Board message just before an assignment is due reminding students of the best way to name their file (e.g., their name_assign#) and stating that you will NOT confirm receipt but that if you do not have the assignment at the end of marking, you will contact them.

• Ask the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning for the handout entitled, “A Process for Building an Online or Blended Course at VIU” for some additional supports.

Assigning Grades

You are asked to:

• Confirm that assignments, tests, and exams follow the grade breakdown specified in the course outline.

• Ensure that all assignments and tests are properly evaluated and final grade calculations are accurate.

• Reread marginal or failed examinations.

• Verify that accurate grades have been submitted to Registration and Records.

• Notify the Associate Dean and your Chair if you become aware that a student is planning to file a grade appeal.

Incomplete Grades (INC)

• An incomplete (INC) grade is assigned to students with at least passing performance but with some work to be completed by a specified date, no more than four months after the
submission of the incomplete grade. It is generally used in exceptional medical or personal circumstances.

- You must fill out an Incomplete Grade Form available from your Department Program Assistant or online at: http://www2.viu.ca/facultyhelp/Grades.asp Once the student has successfully completed the pending work by the date specified:
  - You must submit the Incomplete Grade Form by the end of the following semester or it will become an F grade.
  - You will need to login with your VIU login and go to Registration/Student Records under the Faculty Resources tab:
    http://www2.viu.ca/compserv/htbin/weblogin_staff

- INP (in progress) category may apply to practicum courses. It is not available for other types of courses. The instructor cannot input this category into the system but must fill in an “In Progress” Grade form. You will need to login with your VIU login and go to Registration/Student Records under the Faculty Resources tab:
  https://records.viu.ca/compserv/htbin/weblogin_staff
  The completed form is sent to student records and they input the information manually. The student will receive a letter (cc to faculty) explaining the INP status and the terms. The INP status remains on the student’s record for a year. At this time it converts to an “F” UNLESS the student has re-enrolled and paid for the course. Assigning an INC would follow discussing the completion requirements with the student.

**Final Grade Reporting**

Semester grades must be entered into Vancouver Island University's Student Record System (SRS) within 5 days of the last day of exams, using the Grade Entry screen on the web and standard Grade values (e.g., A+, B-, INC, etc.).

If a grade has not been submitted by an instructor within this time frame, a grade of NGS (No Grade Submitted) will be entered by Registration. Further instructions on grade entry procedures can be found here:

http://www2.viu.ca/facultyhelp/GradeEntryInstructions.asp

VIU’s Gradebook program is an excellent tool to help you keep track of course assignments, students’ marks and posting final grades. VIULearn also has gradebook managing capabilities.

Note that if you assign an Incomplete (INC), In Progress (INP) grade, or want to change a grade, you must fill out the appropriate form and submit it to the Records Office for processing.
Contact information for learning more about grade management and these forms may be accessed here: http://www2.viu.ca/facultyhelp/Grades.asp

Students may view their final grades online at: https://records.viu.ca/reg/htbin/weblogin. The issuance of final grades is the responsibility of Registration and Records; you may not post or otherwise disclose final grades to students in formats other than those mentioned above.

**Student Attendance**

The current policies and procedures (Policy 96.05: Student Attendance, Procedure: 96.05.001 Student Attendance: Absences) related to student attendance may be found here:

http://www2.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp (In Keyword Search tab = “attendance”).

*Students are expected to attend scheduled lectures, laboratories, field trips, seminars, examinations, practica and work experience. The University reserves the right to cancel registration in any course or program because of lack of attendance (where attendance is deemed by the University to be important).*

Policy 96.01, Student Academic Code of Conduct (http://www2.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp) Non-attendance” may be considered a violation of the student academic code of conduct.

*Non-attendance, where attendance is deemed to be mandatory, is not acceptable. Absences due to personal illness, family illness, death of an immediate family member, religious ceremonies, or sports events in which the student represents Vancouver Island University are allowed and must be approved by the appropriate instructor or coordinator. Non-attendance must be for valid reasons and not falsified. Some departments have specific attendance requirements, and details may be obtained from the instructor, department chair, or program coordinator.*

It follows that, within these guiding parameters, Programs may determine the appropriate attendance requirements for their specific courses. Please consult with your Chair and/or the Faculty policies on student conduct and attendance to ensure that you are within the parameters of the program expectations for student attendance.

**Freedom of Information and Privacy of Protection (FIPPA)**

The current policy (Policy 22.04), states that VIU will comply with the requirements of the Freedom of Information / Protection of Privacy Act. The policy can be found here: http://www2.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp - keyword search “Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act”.

Teaching and Learning Handbook | 143
Related Policies and Procedures: Policy 32.10 Confidentiality of Student Records (keyword search “confidentiality”). A student’s record comprises any information collected and held by the University, including program files. A student’s record is classified as confidential. Vancouver Island University complies with the FIPPA Laws in British Columbia in the handling of all student records. Faculty members who require information from student records should consult with their Chair and/or Program Assistant about appropriate procedures and safeguards.

Vancouver Island University may gather personal information from students under the authority of the University Act, Section 27(4) to (7). These records are used for the purposes of admission, registration and other activities of the University. Information on student records may only relate to academic performance.

**Academic Integrity/Misconduct**

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following acts: Cheating, Fabrication, Plagiarism, Facilitation of Academic Misconduct, Non-attendance -- where attendance is deemed to be mandatory. It is a faculty member’s obligation to investigate and address the issue with the student if you suspect academic misconduct. There is a form available to guide your investigation of academic misconduct at http://www2.viu.ca/studentservices/StudentAppealforms.asp

The Dean must be informed and is ultimately responsible for determining the penalty to the student. The Associate Dean can assist faculty members with the investigation of misconduct and ensure proper procedures are followed, please consult with the Associate Dean as soon as possible, if you suspect academic misconduct. The prevalence of and access to digital information along with the financial and career pressures facing students today makes the risk of academic misconduct higher than in previous generations.

The student code of conduct governs non-academic conduct -- Student Conduct Code Policy (Policy 32.06). Should a faculty member, student, or community member be concerned about the non-academic behavior of a VIU student while engaged with other members of the VIU community a complaint may be registered with Student Services and will be investigated by the Executive Director of Student Services.

**Student appeals**

Students may appeal decisions on admission, final grades, transfer credit, probation, suspension, or the interpretation of any of the policies listed above. The first step is an informal appeal to the individual who made the decision or interpretation. Typically this is the instructor. If satisfactory resolution is not possible at this level, the Dean must be consulted. If again no resolution is possible, a formal appeal may be initiated. Please ensure you are familiar with the policies and procedures of the following main appeals.
Academic Appeals
This policy (96.02) is provided to deal with any grievances or disputes concerning any University policy, procedure or disciplinary action related to admission, final grades, transfer credit, probation, or suspension for academic reasons from a course, program or the institution the interruption or suspension from a program based on student suitability to the profession, or the interpretation of any policies related to these issues. While this policy does not constitute a judicial process, all stages of the academic appeal process will be carried out in accordance with the principles of due process (e.g. the right to be heard, the right to a hearing from an unbiased tribunal). Students should contact the Dean’s office or the office of the Executive Director, Student Services for information regarding the academic appeal process. The procedure related to this policy is 96.02.001. The policy and procedure may be found at:
http://www.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp - keyword search “student appeals”

There are forms available to address this policy:
http://www.viu.ca/studentservices/StudentAppealforms.asp

A specific appeal within this category is Final Grade appeals.

Final Grade Appeals
Students have the right to file a grade appeal if they feel that an error has been made in arriving at their final grade. Before doing so a student may request that the instructor re-consider their work. Please check with the Chair if you are unclear about instructor responsibilities in relation to timely review of student work when a student requests a re-consideration during the term. Typically students have five (5) working days to request a re-consideration of their work. If re-consideration is requested, five (5) working days is a timely response by the instructor.

A formal appeal of grades must begin within 15 days of assignment of final grades. All students have a right to appeal a final grade within fifteen (15) working days of the grade being assigned. There are two types of grade appeal: informal and formal. Most appeals are resolved at the informal stage which involves the student meeting with the instructor and/or Program Chair. If the informal grade appeal is not resolved, the student will request a meeting with the Associate Dean/Dean within five (5) working days of meeting with the Instructor and Program Chair. If the informal grade appeal is still not resolved at this level, the student begins the formal grade appeal. Forms to request a grade appeal are available online, at the Registration Centre, and/or Dean’s offices. http://www.viu.ca/studentservices/StudentAppealforms.asp

After a one-year period, student work which has not been returned to the student may be destroyed or disposed of in a confidential manner. Student assignments and exams should be returned with feedback whenever possible.
Conduct Appeals
Vancouver Island University recognizes the right of students to appeal any disciplinary action imposed by the institution under the Student Conduct Code Policy (Policy 32.06). It can be found at: [http://www.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp](http://www.viu.ca/policies/policies-index.asp) - keyword search “student conduct”. Students should contact the Office of the Executive Director, Student Services for information regarding the student conduct appeal process.

Detecting and Preventing Plagiarism
Credit: Carnegie Mellon University, Eberly Centre
([http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/design/instructionalstrategies/writing/preventplagiarism.html](http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/design/instructionalstrategies/writing/preventplagiarism.html))

Because writing tasks often feel daunting to students, there is the temptation of plagiarizing written work. Written resources have become more easily available on the Internet, and students may not have a clear understanding of what constitutes plagiarism in each of their courses (either because of lack of knowledge or because of mismatches relative to their previous experience).

Clearly Define Plagiarism
At the beginning of the semester – in the syllabus and verbally – give students a clear definition of what constitutes plagiarism and what is considered appropriate collaboration. Note that these definitions may differ from one faculty member to another and from one course to another, so it is especially important to make our expectations clear to students in each course we teach. Reference VIU’s Policy on Academic Misconduct (see section at end of handbook) on VIU processes.

You might communicate to your students a message something like the following (in class, on your course outline/syllabus)

“Your good ideas become better when you test them against others’ ideas. For this course, feel free to discuss your ideas about the assignments with other students. However, using someone else’s words, ideas, or concepts without citing your source is plagiarism. So is presenting part or all of another student’s work as your own. In the world of writing – especially academic writing – this is a serious crime and is treated as such. Anyone who commits plagiarism may receive a failing grade for the entire course and be referred to the appropriate dean’s office for further disciplinary action.” [From H. Franklin’s Interpretation and Argument Syllabus, 2008]

Provide Examples of Proper Citation
Give students examples of how and when they should credit the work of others in their writing. This way, they will have concrete cases to which they can refer when questions arise.
Create Original Assignments
The more unusual an assignment is (e.g., taking a different perspective on a problem, question, or reading), the less likely students will be able to find something (from the Internet or their peers) to submit as their own work. In addition, an assignment that has multiple parts may reduce the likelihood of plagiarism.

Require Rough Drafts
Adding milestones to a written assignment where students must submit preliminary drafts of their work discourages them from the prospects of plagiarizing. It also helps them spread a larger writing task over a longer period of time, so students are not as likely to be in the situation where they are sorely tempted to take the easy way out of the assignment.

Inform Students about Support Services
VIU’s Writing Centre (4th floor Library) helps students be more effective in their academic written work, but not all students know about this resource. Giving a quick endorsement of this kind of help can really encourage students to take advantage of the support that is available. Also for International Students there is support too.

Detecting Plagiarism
There are several warning signs that may be clues to plagiarized material in students’ writing. These include the use of inconsistent writing styles within one piece, the use of phrasing or concepts that are more sophisticated than you would expect (based on earlier assignments from that particular student), or unusual repetitions.

These warning signs only serve to raise our awareness of situations where plagiarism may have occurred. It is then helpful to have techniques for detecting plagiarism more clearly. In this phase, meeting with the student to discuss their knowledge of the topics discussed in the paper can help. Technological tools can also help. For example, using a search engine such as Google to look up an unusual turn of phrase from a student’s paper may help identify whether an excerpt was plagiarized from some resource on the internet.

VIU’s Early Alert System
The Early Alert System is a campus-wide student success and retention tool to identify students in difficulty or crisis as well as those who may benefit from additional support of campus resources. The presence of an effective early warning system and connecting students early to campus resources have been consistently recommended to increase students’ persistence and achievement (Kuh, 2007).
WHY is an Early Alert System Important?
Many students arrive at university unfamiliar with the post-secondary environment and unprepared for the demands of university level courses. These students can quickly become overwhelmed and fall behind, struggling to understand expectations and manage their own learning. A referral through the EAS allows VIU to direct the student to resources that may be of assistance as well as provide the opportunity to intervene at a time when assistance is most likely to allow the student to make the corrections necessary to be successful.

Faculty as the First Line of Defense for Students at Risk of Failing
A faculty member is uniquely positioned to regularly observe students and identify behaviours that may interfere with a student’s ability to be successful in their class. Recent enhancements to the EAS have been made to allow faculty to identify particular behaviours, such as frequent absences, missing assignments and lack of participation in class, among others. These enhancements allow, targeted recommendations and follow up with the student identified as well as referral to the appropriate resources (Advising, Counselling, Writing Centre, other) based on the difficulty being experienced.

Ideally, the first line of intervention is a conversation between the faculty member and student regarding the particular behaviours that may be impeding success in the course. In many circumstances, this is not possible or comfortable for the faculty member however intervention is still desired to provide the student with the best opportunity for success.

WHEN Should the EAS be Used?
Any time a student is struggling and may benefit from assistance to be successful, but ideally within the first 4 - 5 weeks of the semester when there is still an opportunity to make adjustments in behaviour.

A student’s grades are not the only signs of a need for support, engagement in the learning experience, attendance and participation in class activities are also strong indicators of future success (Kuh, 2007).

PLEASE NOTE: EAS is NOT intended for referring students in situations of immediate crisis or where concerns about student health and safety are present. Please use the Crisis Intervention Process identified in the bright orange “Crisis Intervention Information” folder distributed by VIU Health and Safety Services or here http://sites.viu.ca/healthandsafety/files/2012/10/CrisisFolder2012.pdf

How Can I Let Students Know About the EAS System And My Participation In It?
One suggestion for letting students know about the EAS and faculty involvement is to include a statement on your course syllabus, website or statement of expectations. An example of a statement used by faculty at other institutions is found below.
“VIU faculty participate in an early alert system to connect students who may be experiencing difficulty with resources that may be helpful to their success. If over the course of the semester I become concerned about your progress in this course I may use the EAS to put you in touch with resources that I feel would support your success in this class. These may include academic advising, financial aid, the writing centre, counseling or other resources. This information is treated confidentially and is sent because I am concerned about you and your academic success.”

More information about the Early Alert System can be found at http://www.viu.ca/facultyhelp/InformationforStudents.asp

Where Does The Alert Go?
Once you have submitted the alert it will be sent to earlyalert@viu.ca where it will be monitored and a response coordinated for each individual student. This response may involve working directly with the student, or finding ways to put him/her in touch with other helpful resources on-campus.

EAS Procedure
- Access the Early Alert System https://records.viu.ca/reg/htbin/academic_alert
- You will need to enter your VIU credentials first
- Enter your Course ID and Section Number
- Select the Name of the student that you would like to send an alert for.
- Click “Continue”
- Identify the reason(s) for the early alert, and whether you have discussed with the student and/or suggested appropriate resources.
- Click the box if it is ok to identify you as the referrer
- Enter other information that may be helpful.
- Click Submit
- The information that you submitted will be shown on the next screen along with an opportunity to confirm the information or edit.
- Once confirmed the alert will be submitted and you will be prompted to “Close Window”

VIU Calendar and Important Dates
The VIU calendar is available on line and forms the contract we have with students. The important date’s section defines deadlines that both instructors and student need to pay attention to regarding course management, class start and end dates, withdrawals, etc.

https://programs.viu.ca/academic-programs-2017-2018
Reproduction of Copyrighted Materials

Under Canada’s Copyright Act it is illegal to copy or distribute most published materials without permission. This includes works of art, electronic materials, and print materials.

Bill C-11 received Royal Assent on June 29, 2012, and most of its provisions were brought into force on November 7, 2012. The new legislation introduces changes to the Copyright Act that are broad and far reaching for educational institutions, faculty, staff and students. It broadens the scope of the fair dealing exception to specifically include education, in addition to research, private study, criticism and review. Fair dealing for the purposes of education does not currently require attribution of the source and author. Detailed information on the issues is available at: [http://libguides.viu.ca/licenses](http://libguides.viu.ca/licenses)

Frequently asked questions (FAQs) on fair dealings are on the VIU web-site at [http://libguides.viu.ca/content.php?pid=164231&sid=1439771](http://libguides.viu.ca/content.php?pid=164231&sid=1439771). Be sensitive to this, educate yourself and call for consultation with the library.

The bookstore produces course packs for compiled required readings. VIU has assessed options and will continue licenses with ACCESS copyright. There will be no additional expense to students.


Access Copyright Website: for Post-Secondary Educators [http://www.accesscopyright.ca/](http://www.accesscopyright.ca/)

Copyright Licence in Post-Secondary Education

Whether you work in a university, community college or a training or vocational college across Canada, an Access Copyright licence allows educators to copy, remix and share content from our vast repertoire of books, magazines, journals and newspapers with the assurance that the original writers, visual artists and publishers also benefit so they can continue to create new and innovative works.

- Under the model licence, educators can:
  - Share and distribute content from reading lists and syllabi using the latest technology
  - Email and scan portions of published content onto a secure network
  - Include up to 20% of a printed publication in coursepacks and digital course collections
  - Select and share content right way
- Create something new from content selected
- Reward the original creator and publisher

See more at: http://www.accesscopyright.ca/educators/post-secondary-education/#sthash.RtYfR4OJ.dpuf
13 | Useful Resources

VIU Services for Students and Faculty
(During Office Hours)
Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning https://ciel.viu.ca Email: learnsupport@viu.ca, Phone: 250 740 6179

Counselling Services 250-740-6416 local 6416 https://services.viu.ca/counselling/
Disability Services 250-740-6446 local 6446 https://services.viu.ca/disability-services
Early Alert System https://records.viu.ca/reg/htbinacademic_alert

Faculty Resources Page https://www.viu.ca/employees

Health and Safety Services 250-740-6283 local 6283 http://sites.viu.ca/healthandsafety/

Human Resources 250-740-6284 local 6284 https://www2.viu.ca/humanresources/index.asp

Human Rights Advisor 250-740-6430 local 6430 https://www2.viu.ca/humanrights/

Services for Aboriginal Students 250-740-6510 local 6510 https://aboriginal.viu.ca/servicesaboriginal-students

Services for International and Exchange Students 250-740-6315 local 6315 https://international.viu.ca/international-student-services

Student Services Coordinator 250-740-6411 local 6411 https://pr.viu.ca/studentservices/

VIU Students’ Union (ombudsman) 250-754-8866

Western Student Housing 250-754-6338 (24 hr number)
Books and Articles about Teaching and Learning

The following books are excellent references for completing the Teaching and Learning section of the Program Review. Many of these are books that are available for signing out from the Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Learning (5th Floor, Nanaimo Campus Library).


Tips for Sessional and New Instructors: A letter from an experienced faculty member

Dear New Faculty Member:

As someone who came to VIU with some teaching experience, but who had to learn much about VIU, its students, and its programs, I am writing to share some ideas about how you can become successful in your first semester teaching. Below is a growing checklist of things new faculty need to pay attention to—especially those who are hired at the last minute due to unavoidable circumstances such as the illness of a faculty member who was already scheduled to teach. Understanding these things, and asking the right questions will help you be successful in the classroom, and will help students learn more effectively. Getting as prepared as you can, no matter how close to the semester you are hired, will provide a better experience for both you and the students in the first semesters of your teaching career at VIU.

1. Questions you should ask:

About the department:
- Who are the people who work in the department? Can you connect me with them?
- What are the core courses, and how does my course relate to them?
- What sources of information and networking opportunities already exist within the department that I can take advantage of to learn more?
- What is the student body like? Who are the students, and what do they respond to best?

About deadlines and official protocol:
- What are the important dates in the term that I need to take into account? (reading break, holidays, when grades are due, etc.)
- What is the process used for posting final grades?
- What do I need to know about other deadlines and protocols in this department?

About your course:
- What are the pre-requisites for the course I am going to teach? What have the students already learned in that course? How was it taught (teaching strategies, testing/evaluation)?
- What is/are the course or courses into which students will go after my course? What will be expected of them there? What do they need to know and be able to do to be successful in that next course?
- What perspectives, knowledge or key theories are required in the curriculum?
- Are there required course objectives and learning outcomes for this course?
- Are there previous syllabi and textbooks that I can look at?
- What are the grading criteria and marking standards within the department so that I can maintain consistency within the department and between instructors?
- May I see examples of A or C papers, descriptions/rubrics for such papers?
- What challenges have faculty successfully overcome in this course?
About the students:
- Who are the students? Are they primarily traditional or non-traditional age? First generation? Aboriginal? International? Canadian? What do I need to know about your student population to teach them well?
- What are the student services available (disabilities, counseling, other supports)?

About your success:
- How will I be evaluated?
- What is considered a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ evaluation?
- What are the resources available to me to improve and document my teaching?
- If I have a question or a problem, to whom can I turn in the department? Outside the department?

2. **Ideas you might put on the Course Outline**
   a) Define how students can reach you and the expected response time. For instance, if they email you at midnight on Saturday, they might not hear from you until Monday morning. When students know what to expect, they are less frustrated when waiting for answers from you.

   b) Provide your phone number for situations of emergency (you might allow students to text in these situations, but also provide some boundaries i.e. If they text on a Friday night you may not respond until Saturday.)

   c) Provide information about when assignments will be returned: i.e., if it is an assignment all students hand in, there is a two week turn around. If it is presentation done by a few students in class, it will be marked by the following week.

   d) Whenever possible, create office hours that accommodate most students’ schedules and provide clear guidelines on what is important to discuss during office hours. If students do not like something in the class, suggest they can come to your office or put a note in a suggestion box.

3. **When taking over for someone on sick leave**, acknowledge this transition, especially in programs with cohorts of students. To ease these transitions, discuss with the students what was really working for them in regards to the last instructor and what they need to help them succeed. Regardless of the reason for your new teaching position, getting student input is a useful exercise to start the class as it provides an opportunity for the instructor to get to know the students and understand their different learning styles.
4. **Set expectations.** The first class might be used to provide an opportunity for students to create a contract for their grades (research has shown that when people are actively involved in the outcome there are often higher success rates). Doing so also provides the opportunity for the instructor to learn about each student. For instance, for some students this might be an elective and they don’t care too much about their mark while for others the mark might be very important. This process can show how a student plans to attain a good mark. It is also your opportunity to explain your own expectations (i.e. if there is a participation mark, what does this mean for the student? Just coming to class, taking an active role, completing an in-class assignment? If the course requires a paper, what does an A paper look like? What does a C paper look like?)
   - Great Writing Resource: [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/)

5. Students need to clearly understand all assignments, including **interim and final deadlines,** grading criteria etc. If you use a grading contract, grading criteria guidelines and deadlines can be worked into the contract. Students also need a sense for what it will take to complete an assignment. For instance, if a video or class presentation is part of the course how much lead time is needed to start this process? How are groups going to be formed? What do you expect individuals to do in the group project? What does a successful group presentation look like?

6. Provide a **hand-out of topics for group presentations** you assign, each of which are linked to class lecture topics. This way presentations are coherently linked to essential course content.

7. Organize lectures to **weave in learning outcomes** throughout the course, and at the end of the class (or several times during the semester) ask the students what learning outcomes they think have been addressed. This may show you where students are or are not understanding your course structure, and may show them that the course has been carefully designed. Key learning can also be evaluated at the beginning and end of the class, so that both you and the students can see how far they have come.

8. Clearly **articulate how assignments need to be handed in.** Will they hand it in on paper? Use the Assignments function in VIULearn? I recommend they do not email you assignments: the VIULearn Assignments folder keeps student work in one place where you know that you can always find it.

9. When working with new students **ensure there is an assignment due within the first two to three weeks of class** to gain an understanding of the various abilities of the students and provide an opportunity for students to get feedback and learn about you as an instructor.
Providing an opportunity to use VIULearn assignments folder also ensures that all students are comfortable using this system.

10. Collect feedback from students: this is an important part of any course. Working in some sort of student feedback mid-way through the course allows students the opportunity to voice concerns and you to adapt the process before the end of the course. A suggestion box in the class also provides the opportunity for on-going feedback.

Welcome and I wish you best of luck and joy in your new position!
References:

Access Copyright Website: for Post-Secondary Educators http://www.accesscopyright.ca/


Association of American Colleges and Universities: http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm


BCCampus. Privacy Guide for Faculty Using 3rd Party Web Technology (Social Media) in Public Post-Secondary Courses (PDF) http://fippa.bccampus.ca/ministerial-order-m030/


Hutchings, Pat, (2005) The Course Portfolio: How Faculty can Examine their Teaching to Advance Practice and Improve Student Learning. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing,

Kelly, Rob. Selecting the Appropriate Communication Tools for Your Online Course http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/selecting-appropriate-communication-tools-online-course/#sthash.jdYn4Vwh.dpuf


Stanford Teaching Commons https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching/planning-your-approach/characteristics-effective-teachers


Ibid. A Graphic Syllabus can Bring Clarity to Course Structure http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/a-graphic-syllabus-can-bring-clarity-to-course-structure/#sthash.MendeJns.dpuf


“If you can’t explain it simply, you don’t understand it well enough.”
— Albert Einstein