



Leading an Effective Classroom Session

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The latest version of this presentation can be obtained
from http://sahan.org/teaching_presentations.html

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Session Description

- Sahan will share his ideas about what makes an effective class session. He will discuss organization, presentation techniques, active learning, and use of examples specifically as a means to achieve a good discussion.

Outline

- Introduction
- Planning the Lesson
- Starting the Lesson
- Perfecting Your delivery
- Questioning Techniques
- Effective Groups
- Active Learning
- Ending the lesson

Planning the Lesson

- Plan your lesson
“If you don’t plan you plan to fail”.
- Refer to “planning a lesson” small group session
- Make sure you have
 - Topic
 - Objective
 - Content Summary
 - An ordered outline of the material preferably with the amount of time
 - A very clear ending, summarize the material

Planning the Lesson

- Think of the big picture and where your lesson falls in the semester.

Examples?

- If its before an exam then the students expectations are going to be different, don't do lots of new material try to review.
- If it's the end/beginning of a sub section then use some time to summarize the subsection and put it in context.

Planning the Lesson

- Don't include too much material
 - too many faculty and TA's try to cram as much information as possible into the lesson
- Divide the material both in terms of time and content
 - We like small chunks of information
- Microteaching Lesson Plans
 - You only have 8 minutes

Planning the Lesson

- **Microteaching Lesson Plan**
 - **Topic**
 - Not too general or too specific
 - **Objective**
 - Something achievable in 8 minutes
 - **Content Summary**
 - The main points you want to get across
- **Share a few of your Microteaching topics, objectives and key points.**

Starting the Lesson

- Go to class a little early and talk informally with students
 - A little bit of small talk helps build a good rapport with the students and encourages them to ask questions
- Put your lesson plan on the board or have it on the power point
 - easy to do and gives the students an idea about what is coming up and how things are organized
 - Helpful when students are preparing for the exams
 - Helps you keep track and on time
- Spend a minute to put the class in context with the course and relate it to the previous class

Perfecting Your Delivery

- Don't lecture continuously for the whole time; engage your students.
 - Use examples
 - Get the students to solve a problem
 - Ask the students to come up with a scenario or give examples
- Watch your students and make eye contact.
 - You can react and respond to the student
 - Students are more likely to answer questions
 - Students are more alert

Perfecting Your Delivery

- Vary the pace at which you speak.
- Vary your voice.
 - No one likes to listen to a monotonous drone.
- Walk around the lecture room.
 - You are able to get more attention this way.
- Use pauses.
 - Pauses are a very effective speaking tool that is under utilized.
- Be conversational.
 - Use simple colorful language, students respond better to conversational inflection and tone and pitch variations.

Perfecting Your Delivery

- Lecture from notes or an outline, instead of using complete text.
 - Caveat, for the first few lessons, if you are nervous then write everything out, learn it before the lecture and practice the delivery instead of worrying about the material
- Don't turn your back to the board for too long.
- Don't talk while writing on the board
- Make sure you solve your examples/problems before coming to class

Questioning Techniques

- Questioning done properly can add greatly to the learning process
- Look back to Blooms taxonomy of questioning and knowledge types
- Take the time to create good questions that get the students to think
- Ask a few easy (not dumb) questions at the beginning of the lesson
 - It makes the students comfortable with answering the harder ones later on.
- Make a three bad questions and three good questions for your microteaching (5 minutes)

Questioning Techniques

- If no one answers your questions.
 - Don't point at a student and ask them to answer
 - Change the wording and ask the question again
 - Try to use silence effectively
 - Ask questions from the front back left right or this row next row
- One or a few students will always answer
 - Tell them one student can only answer once
 - Ask questions from the front back left right or this column next row etc

Effective Groups

- Group work can be an efficient method to
 - let students get feedback from each other
 - solve large complicated projects/assignments
 - change the monotonicity of the lesson
 - Interact with students in large classes
 - Allow students to get to know each other

Effective Groups

- Group Types
 - Base Groups – Formed for the duration of the semester for large projects
 - Random Groups – Students randomly get into groups for specific assignments
 - Different Groups – Students get into different groups each day
 - Assigned Groups – Students are assigned to groups
 - Assigned Groups with roles – Students are assigned roles in each group
 - Assigned Groups with roles and trade – Students can trade their roles

Effective Groups

- Methods to form base/assigned groups?
 - A's and F's
 - Gender Balance
 - Racial/Ethnic Balance
 - Obtain skills information from students and assign according to skills.

Active Learning



- I hear....I forget.
 - I see.....I remember
 - I do....I understand
- Confucius

Active Learning

We retain,

- **10% of what we READ**
- **20% of what we HEAR**
- **30% of what we SEE**
- **50% of what we SEE and HEAR**
- **70% of what is DISCUSSED with OTHERS**
- **80% of what is EXPERIENCED PERSONALLY**
- **95% of what we TEACH TO SOMEONE ELSE**

- William Glasser

Active Learning

- Active learning is the process whereby the students learn by engaging the material using higher order cognitive tasks.
 - As opposed to learning by passively listening to lectures or memorizing information from textbooks.
 - Bonwell and Eison state that active learning strategies are comparable to lectures for achieving content mastery, but superior to lectures for developing thinking and writing skills.

(Active Learning: Creating Excitement in the Classroom. ERIC Digest, Bonwell & Eison, 1991.)

Active Learning

- We retain information when we use it, and instead of merely lecturing if we get the students to use the material in class there is a higher likelihood of them retaining it.
 - In my classes we do 15-20 minutes of practice questions during every discussion
 - The students work in small groups and talk to each other and I walk amongst them answering questions

Active Learning

- Examples and questions can be used as an effective tools of Active Learning
- Use examples that require the students to process and apply the material.
- Spend time to create questions that require the students to process and apply the material.
 - This gives them an opportunity to clarify doubts while in class
- Come up with an example to use in your microteaching.

Ending The Lesson

- Summarize the main points
- Re-emphasize how things are connected
- Given an idea about the next lesson and how they can prepare
- Don't leave as soon as the lesson ends.
 - Some students like to clarify things at the end of the lecture.



The End

Thank you for listening
Good luck on your teaching!

If you have questions/suggestions please e-mail me:
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