“Getting Started”

Agenda

1. Introductions
   a. Facilitator
   b. Session
   c. Participants

2. Habits of Mind

3. The First Day: What’s the Big Deal?
   a. Purpose
   b. Expectations and guidelines
   c. Goals

4. Planning and Presenting for the First Day(s)
   a. Backward design
   b. Creating an Effective Syllabus
   c. Lesson Planning
   d. Establishing Identity and Authority

5. Q & A

6. Evaluations

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**HABITS OF MIND for successful teaching and learning**

Habits of mind are habituated behaviors that shape decision making processes. By cultivating the 16 habits of mind listed here, you’ll be prepared to strategically handle a wide range of pedagogical challenges.

Strong teachers also seek to develop a curriculum that fosters these habits of mind in students.

1. **Persisting.** Stick to it. See a task through to completion and remain focused.
2. **Managing impulsivity.** Take your time. Think before you act. Remain calm, thoughtful, and deliberate.
3. **Listening with understanding and empathy.** Seek to understand others. Devote mental energy to another person’s thoughts and ideas. Hold your own thoughts in abeyance so you can better perceive another person’s point of view and emotions.
4. **Thinking flexibly.** Look at a situation another way. Find a way to change perspectives, generate alternatives, and consider options.
5. **Thinking about thinking (metacognition).** Know your knowing. Be aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings, and actions—and how they affect others.
6. **Striving for accuracy.** Check it again. Nurture a desire for exactness, fidelity, craftsmanship, and truth.
7. **Questioning and problem posing.** How do you know? Develop a questioning attitude, consider what data are needed, and choose strategies to produce those data.
8. **Applying past knowledge to new situations.** Use what you learn. Access prior knowledge, transferring that knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.
9. **Thinking and communicating with clarity and precision.** Be clear. Strive for accurate communication in both written and oral form. Avoid overgeneralizations, distortions, and deletions.
10. **Gathering data through all the senses.** Use your natural pathways. Gather data through all the sensory paths: gustatory, olfactory, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual.
11. **Creating, imagining, innovating.** Try a different way. Generate novel ideas, and seek fluency and originality.
12. **Responding with wonderment and awe.** Let yourself be intrigued by the world’s phenomena and beauty. Find what is awesome and mysterious in the world.
13. **Taking responsible risks.** Venture out. Live on the edge of your competence.
14. **Finding humor.** Laugh a little. Look for the whimsical, incongruous, and unexpected in life. Laugh at yourself when you can.
15. **Thinking interdependently.** Work together. Truly work with and learn from others in reciprocal situations.
16. **Remaining open to continuous learning.** Learn from experiences. Be proud—and humble enough—to admit you don’t know. Resist complacency.

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2 Adapted from *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success* by Arthur L. Costa and Bena Kallick.
GOALS FOR THE FIRST DAY

There are three primary types of classroom goals:

1. *Logistical goals* include “housekeeping” and basic classroom business
2. *Content goals* refer to the “core information,” or content “take-aways” for each session.
3. *Process goals* are often unstated or intangible choices that will help students learn.

Classify the goals listed below as *logistical, content,* or *process* goals. Add goals that your students may have and classify decide whether they fit the above classification scheme.

1. Learn names of students
2. Introduce yourself to students
3. Hand out syllabus
4. Set tone for the semester
5. Create a sense of shared purpose
6. Emphasize value of the class
7. Generate excitement
8. Set goals and expectations
9. Explain class rules and procedures

What is the value of defining your goals for the first day? What conclusions can we draw from this list and from the ways that you classified each of these goals?

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4 Adapted from Nafpaktitis 2003, Cornelius 2005, Merrins 2008, Bebej 2010 CRLT materials
Backward Design: A Brief Overview

“Backward design may be thought of as purposeful task analysis: Given a task to be accomplished, how do we get there? Or one might call it planned coaching: What kinds of lessons and practices are needed to master key performances.”

“Curriculum, no matter how well planned, is realized through the interactions that occur in social situations….Curriculum is more than what is written on the page.”

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Syllabus Checklist

___ Basic Information
___ course title/number/section, days and times taught, location of class
___ semester and year course is being taught
___ your name and office number, office location, email, home phone number
    (if you choose to include it)
___ office hours
___ Web site address or group email address

___ Course or Section Description
___ goals/objectives/relevance of course
___ prerequisites

___ Course or Section Texts/Materials
___ required or recommended (title(s), author(s), edition(s))
___ where texts can be purchased
___ course pack information
___ other necessary equipment or materials (e.g., graphing calculator)

___ Course Schedule/Weekly Calendar
___ dates of all assignments and exams
___ dates when readings are due
___ holidays and special events (e.g., field trips, guest lectures)

___ Course or Section Policies
___ attendance/tardy
___ class participation (if you choose to formally evaluate)
___ late/missing assignments
___ academic dishonesty
___ explicit grading criteria
___ expectations of scholarship
___ accommodations

___ Other Handouts or Information Relevant to Your Particular Course
___ availability of outside help (e.g., tutoring services, language labs, Sweetland Writing Center)
___ unique class procedures and structures that require more detail (e.g., cooperative learning, case study method, class journals).

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7 Adapted from University of Michigan GSI Guidebook
Introducing Yourself and Establishing Authority

Make a Strong First Impression

- Arrive early and put important information on the board. Start class on time.
- Show students your enthusiasm for the subject matter, or for teaching.
- If you are worried about looking “young” or about not commanding student attention, dress more formally on the first day (or days) of class.

Establish Your Credibility

- Share your qualifications with your students. Discuss your prior teaching experience, your research interests, or your beginnings in this discipline.
- Focus on what you do know, not what you don’t know. Instead of saying “It is my first time teaching and I’m not really an expert on this topic,” say “As a PhD student in this department I have always been interested in this subject matter and I look forward to learning even more about it.” Remember, you do know more than your students!

Clarify Your Expectations

- Tell students what will be expected of them with regard to attendance, grading, participation, assignments and late work policies.
- Cover important administrative information like when and where your office hours are, where students can buy required textbooks, etc.
- Allow students time to ask questions. If you cannot answer their questions, say you will get back to them once you find an answer (and do follow through).

Identify the Value and Importance of the Subject

- Explain why your course is important. Describe why the subject matter is interesting to you and what you hope students will get out of taking the course.

Establish Ground Rules for Participation in Class

- As a class, set ground rules for classroom interaction. By asking students for their input you give them a sense of ownership that can help them take the “classroom code of conduct” more seriously.

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Identity and Authority in the Classroom

1. How do you think your students might see you in the classroom? You might consider characteristics such as gender, race, physical presence, intelligence, real world experience, religion, sexuality, age, ethnicity, etc.

2. How do you identify and see yourself? Does this differ from how you thought your students might perceive you? If there are any differences do you think they are significant?

3. How much of your identity do you plan reveal to your students and why? Can you think of any potential reasons or situations in which you might want to either reveal or withhold information about your identity?

4. What strategies do you (or could you) use to establish your authority in the classroom?
Language and Authority

TERMS:

**Positioning:** Through conversation, people situate themselves and others with particular rights and obligations. Speakers take up or resist positions others create from them.

**Circulating Power:** Learners’ power in support of their learning may be thought of as independence, ownership, and self-efficacy. Power is not a possession. It circulates within the social conditions in which a person is acting. It’s a movement of energy between teachers and learners who are working together. Interest, focus, persistence, awareness, engagement, and enthusiasm are essential energy generators that keep learning going. Interest and self-efficacy, and therefore learning of individual students (and teachers), require continual refreshing.

**Face threat:** An utterance or move that threatens a person’s sense of herself or diminishes her status.

QUESTIONS:

What things can you say in your class to position students as learners?

In what ways can you encourage a circulation of power in your classroom?

What are ways students might perceive a face threat in your class? What are ways you might perceive a face threat from your students?

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