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Effective Teaching Techniques and Strategies

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Title: ACUE Online Course in Effective Teaching Practices, Q2S, TRC

Description: As a CSUSB Instructor, I was provided the opportunity to engage in an ACUE online course. Following, you will find an abstract with information regarding the course, course reflections, lesson strategies, timeline and other pertinent information. Items discussed further are based and cited from personal experience, readings, and other course details.

Abstract: This Course ensured that faculty learned about—and implemented—the approaches that improve engagement and persistence and promote deeper learning. This 25-module online course concentrated on teaching practices effective in face-to-face instruction. Comprehensive in scope and organized around five units of study, faculty members learned together in cohorts and implement approaches to:

- design an effective course and class
- establish a productive learning environment
- use active learning techniques
- promote higher order thinking, and assess in ways that inform instruction and promote deeper levels of learning

Each interdisciplinary cohort is facilitated by a celebrated CSUSB faculty member. Our local facilitators are 2019 Outstanding Lecturer, Donna Gotch from Communication Studies (Cohorts A & B) and 2012 Outstanding Professor, Todd Jennings from Teacher Education and Foundations (Cohort C).

Completing the Course leads to a nationally-recognized Certificate in Effective Instruction which is co-endorsed by ACUE and the American Council on Education (ACE). In addition, the American Council on Education's Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has recommended this Course for 3 semester graduate-level credit units.

Timeline and Participation: Each of the 25 modules takes 2-3 hours to complete (as determined by ACUE), meaning that participants are engaging in more than 50-75 hours of professional development around teaching and learning. To complete each module, faculty learn about a new practice, watch, evaluate and discuss examples of instructors demonstrating an emerging practice, choose and implement one or more of the practices from the model in their course, and write up a reflection that is scored by a nationally-normed rater to meet or exceed expectations. This time estimate does NOT include the time to develop a lesson plan or teach the lesson with the new practice. It is the time spent engaged in the online course itself.

Within the Quality Matters certified course, faculty encounter over 200 evidence-based approaches to teaching backed by over 350 relevant citations. They also watch and critique authentic teaching demonstrations from 50 faculty and their students at institutions nationwide as part of 180 instructional videos.

(schedule for Cohort A attached, the same material is covered in each with the corresponding time frame)

- Cohort A:

- Launch January 3, 2019
- Course closed June 24, 2019
- Portfolio of reflections in ScholarWorks May 1, 2020
- Cohort B:
 - Launch September 17, 2019
 - Course closed April 12, 2020
 - Portfolio of reflections in ScholarWorks by May 1, 2020
- Cohort C:
 - Launch October 12, 2019
 - Course Closed April 24, 2020
 - Portfolio of reflections in ScholarWorks by May 1, 2020

The product(s) that will be created: After successfully completing all 25 modules of the course, participants will upload a collection of their reflections where they implemented and reflected upon new teaching practices their courses to the Q2S ScholarWorks Collection, using the keywords Q2S, TRC and ACUE. The submitted reflections will have been deemed to meet or exceed the ACUE rubric criteria as determined by a nationally normed rater (required for each module for participants to receive digital badge and certification).

Criteria to Meet Expectations:

- Explains the technique that was used and the insights that were gained
- Describes the technique used or the insights that were gained during the process
- Explains why the technique was chosen
- Explains how the technique is connected to challenges or goals for the class or the faculty members' professional goals
- Explains how the work completed in this module will be helpful to them as an instructor and to their students
- Provides an explanation of the value of the work completed in this module for either the instructor or to their students
- Describes next steps the instructor will take to continue the goals of this module (specific for each module, such as: aligning the assessments to learning outcomes, motivating learners, etc.).
- Shares specific next steps for continuing this work

Methodologies, Implementations, and Reflections: Each module consisted of various teaching principles and techniques that challenged our current styles and required us to reflect and implement new strategies. Following are a few of the reflections that were created, discussed and evaluated during the course:

Criteria	Meets	
Description of the technique and explanation of why it was selected	Name a technique from the module, describe how it was implemented, or explain why it was chosen	Provide sample work and why it received the grade – For this approach, I use a multiple amount of samples, both videos of speeches, and hard copy of speeches, to show the grades they got, and more importantly why they received that grade. The information was providing in print, but also discussed in class allowing with Q and A with the class.
Successes and challenges encountered	Describe successes or challenges, including student responses to the use of the technique	Some of the successes, are that students have little excuses to not follow the instruction or simply mimic the example provided. They cannot say I didn't know or didn't understand, as they also had the opportunity to ask questions during the lecture portion, when it was explained. This proves extremely helpful when grading, as students are less likely to complain about their grade. The bad thing about it, is that in some cases, students who do not speak up, will not get their concerns addressed, which makes it even more important to fully explain, and evaluate and identify non-verbal cues.
Plans for refinement	Specify how the technique(s) from the module will be used or adjusted	I want to adjust my technique a little by simplifying the grading process on my end, which will simplify the understanding the process from the students' point of view. There is such a thing as being too complicated.

Criteria	Meets	
Description of the technique and explanation of why it was selected	Name a technique from the module, describe how it was implemented, or explain why it was chosen	Promoting Online Opportunities for Interaction – I chose this technique of students having an opportunity to have a say in their work as an opportunity to improve my online discussion, although I may teach the course face to face. Not only will it provide an opportunity for me to improve my online communication, but it will also improve their feelings towards online classroom communication, incentivizing them to take online courses in the future.
Successes and challenges encountered	Describe successes or challenges, including student responses to the use of the technique	One of the challenges encountered was their unfamiliarity with communicating online with me. Because it was not something we had done previously, it took some reminders for the them to interact.
Plans for refinement	Specify how the technique(s) from the module will be used or adjusted	By planning the interaction well in advance, and making it a mandatory part of the assignment, (providing three options for their persuasive speeches), I am more likely to get a positive result.

Criteria	Meets (2)	
Selection and implementation of a practice to plan for class discussions	Names the practice, explains how it was implemented, or shares the reasons for selecting it	Self-Grading Activity – I implemented the self-grading activity at the end of last semester for my public speaking course. Rather than just assigning the points for participation in class, I provided a criteria list to my students, and asked them to grade themselves. I thought it was a great opportunity since it was something that I could easily implement and allowed the students to take part of their overall grade. Manage Dominant Talker – This was also done last semester, and what I did was really focus on who the dominant talker was, really pay attention to the adverse effect they had on the peers. We usually look at dominant talkers as an added bonus in

		communication courses, where we see such an attribute as a bonus.
Selection and implementation of a practice to manage class discussions	Names the practice, explains how it was implemented, or shares the reasons for selecting it	<p>Self-Grading Activity – I discussed with the class, what three criteria I use to come up with their final participation grade. This is not new, as I spoke about it at the start of the semester and again midway. But I went over it again, and this time had them write down the criteria. Once it was fully explained, and there were no questions, I asked them to provide their points, along with an explanation as to why they think they deserve those points. In the end, I had the final say in points given, but their feedback would heavily influence my final decision.</p> <p>Manage Dominant Talker – In managing the dominant talkers, I came up with a group activity, Look, Listen, and Observe. In this exercise I asked one member of a group to read the instructions on a form found only on one page on my desk. They then needed to take this information from memory back to their group so they can accomplish their task. Once back in the group, they shared what they read and answered questions. They could return to read the form as many times as they needed. Another member of the group was asked to simply observe the group, note the communication styles, and think about how they can better communicate as a group. All they can do is observe, but then share what they observed. In this exercise, I made the shyest person the reader of instructions, the dominant speaker, the observer.</p>
Successes and/or challenges encountered	Describes successes or challenges and student responses to the use of the practice	<p>Self-Grading – I found this exercise to be an overall success, amongst the students who participated. In most cases, they were spot on, for the points they deserve, or were harsher on themselves. Those who were spot on, were happy with their points, and those who were harsher on themselves, were happy to see the bump increase in their participation points. Only those who were not present, only 2, felt left out and wished they had an opportunity to provide their feedback.</p> <p>Dominant Speaker – I really enjoyed doing this exercise. You could really see the teams work in a different way without the dominant speaker involved in the direct processing of information. I also enjoyed watching the shy person pushing themselves a little beyond their comfort level.</p>
Plans for refinement	Specifies how this practice or other practices from the module will be used	<p>Self-Grading – one thing I will make sure not to do is let them know that they will grade themselves. Having it be a surprise of sorts, allows for more honest responses in my opinion.</p> <p>Dominant Speaker – I think that in the future, I will add a time component, adding a little stress to the exercise, and possibly an incentive or award.</p>