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**Reflection on Effective Teaching Practice, Cohort B Fall 2019-Spring 2020,
Q2S, TRC, ACUE Training**

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Keywords: Q2S, TRC, ACUE, reflection, teaching strategies, implementation, first day of class, learning objectives, planning effective lessons, delivery of lectures

Abstract

The contexts of the first reflections focus on what I did in preparation for “the first day of class”, “planning for effective lessons”, “delivering and effective lecture, and the last reflection focuses on the implementation of virtual class due to COVID-19 transition “setting learning objectives”. For most part, the implementation of techniques was geared for a face-to-face classroom setting. However, the transition from F2F format to online in such short amount of time was challenging as more time for preparation was what I needed. However, this interruption to my F2F classes was an opportunity to test my skills and learn how to implement for the online classroom setting. Although the process seems long, and at times felt overwhelming, the results were positive. I learned to be brave. Teaching is an art and with practice and constant reflection our craft becomes better. Even when things may not go as planned, the process of planning and reflecting on my practice there was success. In general terms, the experience was valuable, the challenges were the ones that gave more satisfaction, I learned something new.

Introduction

In this paper, I share a few reflections and experiences as faculty learner in the ACUE course provided by TRC, Q2S Conversion initiatives. Our campus is transitioning from the quarter to the semester system in the Fall of 2020. Opportunities to engage in professional development around teaching and enhance our pedagogy for the semester conversion were provided in many ways; ACUE training “Effective Teaching Practice” was one of them.

ACUE is short for Association of College and University Educators. The course requires faculty to commit several hours a week for several months reviewing and learning techniques, implementing, assessing and reflecting on various aspects of teaching adult learners.

Before COVID-19

2A Leading the First Day of Class

Objectives:

1. Be prepared
2. Build community
3. Establish course expectations and relevance

Description of the technique and explanation of why it was selected
I implemented at least 3 module techniques described below:

1. Be prepared- Ensure students **have a copy of the syllabus on the first day of class**". I used this technique because in the past, I waited till the first day of class to share the syllabus with students. I had believed students should wait until the first day of class to see it. A big misconception on my part.
2. Building Community, **greet students** as they walk into the classroom. I choose this strategy because I used to do this strategy with my 5th graders long time ago. I forgot that my college students will benefit as well. Also, I like greeting students, it makes them feel welcomed and it is easier for them to relax. They feel they belong to the class. In addition, I teach preservice teachers and this strategy can also be used in their future classrooms. This strategy helps the teacher make close connections with students from the beginning of the class, reducing their stress levels and anxieties about the course, their peers, and perceptions about their professor. Children and adult learners need to feel their learning environment is welcoming.
3. The third technique was "**establish course expectations technique through a mini-lesson**". The mini lesson provided students an opportunity to explore how much they can accomplish with a limited amount of time. My students, future teachers, need to learn how to manage their time, be thoughtful of the type of activities they need to use to prepare and how much preparation takes to carry out lesson. Until this quarter, I did not have students engage in the course content right away. I waited until the second class to introduced content. As I learned in this module, having students go only over the syllabus passively and dismiss them early on their first day is not good practice and set poor expectations. I am not showing or modeling good practice to future teachers.

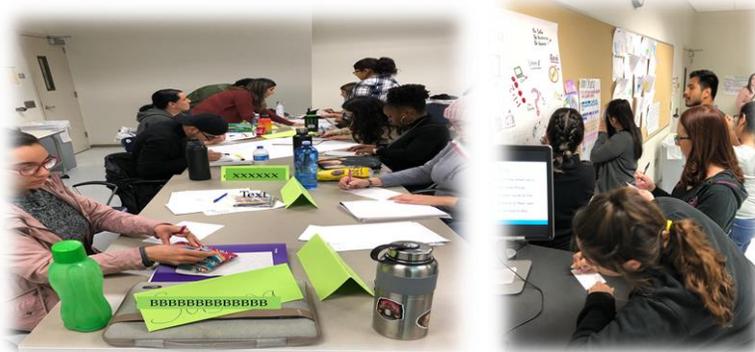
Successes and challenges encountered

The success implementing these techniques on the first day of class led to an increased level of participation and interest in the course.

1. **Sending the syllabus in advanced** made students felt comfortable. A) They sent emails asking for specifics about the textbook required (availability for online access). In addition, on the first day, they were prepared to ask questions. Also, students engaged in "talking to the syllabus". Students

had highlighted, underlined, circled, or made markings with different colors on their syllabus. These notes let me know they had time to read it, marked the questions for me, and go over the course requirements. B) I was also able to see who is paying attention to their emails. Some students are not accustomed to use the school- Edu email and those who do not check their school email were not prepared. This was an opportunity to explain the use of personal vs school email. I also learned that some students do not have printing capabilities at home. They asked for a hardcopy. For this reason, I brought extra copies of the syllabus on the first day of class.

2. The **Greeting Students** technique was a success. Students were surprised to have me greet each and one of them at the beginning of the class. I saw many smiles. This technique gives an opportunity to build class community and set the tone for the remainder of the course. The environment became very relaxed and comfortable.
3. This is the first time I implemented a **mini lesson** on the first day of class. The topic was on the students demographics attending K-6 public schools. We discussed the number of students assigned as English language learners in public schools. This lesson helped me to show students the relevance and understanding of their future students and why is important to learn and understand first and second language learning theories (a major focus of my course). We discussed the possible learning activities and interactions in class that address English language learners (focus of my course). The minilesson provided students with an opportunity to experience one major first topic of the course, "getting to know your students' backgrounds." Students reaction was positive; students were on task, completed their assignments, provided input and responded to specific questions. They enjoyed working with their new peers. A couple of students mentioned that "class time flew by too quickly". A positive comment showing me that they were totally immersed in the lesson and activities following the mini lesson. Thus, I plan to continue using this technique to "hook" students wondering what the content would cover next class be.



Plans for improvement

I am planning to continue adding more techniques not addressed in this space and keep the ones I implemented so far.

1. The Syllabus- I plan to send it prior to the course, in addition to have a copy ready on Blackboard, and having one physical for the first day class for those students who are not able to have internet or email access prior to the course, or without printing capacity.
2. Greeting students- I will keep this technique. However, I need to ensure I work within time limits and manage time for greetings more efficiently. I plan to change how I did it this time past. I will come 30 minutes before class to set the classroom furniture that can allow me to provide a more personalized greeting and go quickly one by one. Some classes have tables while others have individual chairs which makes a difference in time and how I can greet students.
3. I plan to use the mini lesson again. It was successful. I will adjust it by refining the expectation of the course and be clearer about what needs to be happening after completion of the mini lesson.

I plan to let students work in triads, complete work and share findings with other triads, then, lead a small discussion, and finalize with final points. Also, I will include an assessment in relation to the course content to have a better sense of how much students know about the topic and continue working around their previous knowledge, connecting this mini-lesson planning when I send the syllabus and welcoming email.

1 E Planning an Effective Class Session

Learning Objectives:

1. Start each class to maximize learning
 2. Segment class with active learning techniques
 3. Close Strong
- **Ensure the most important idea is presented first.** After learning about the time span an individual has to learn a concept/idea, I used this technique to start class with a major idea about the topic. For example, "what is culture? What is surface and deep culture?" From these questions, I developed the main idea and continued with further explanation of the concept. By using this technique, I hope students have gained knowledge and not forget it (at least too soon).
 - **Segment class active learning techniques,** from the previous technique, I placed charts around the classroom and students were placed into small groups. Each group wrote on their chart a definition of key concepts. For example, in groups they defined the term culture, surface and deep culture. Then, the group moved to the next chart- reading and making comments to other groups' definitions. Last, students provided examples of deep and surface culture based on their definitions and individual culture. This technique helped them further understanding and ability to recognize the difference deep/surface. Students were able to think about a challenging concept, understanding it and make connections with personal experiences.
 - I implemented a **One-Sentence Summary.** This technique helped me capture what is the most important or pressing issue gained by students for that day's lesson. This technique provided a quick assessment - comprehension of content addressed. It also helps me to begin the lecture following class addressing any misconceptions. This technique is helpful in maintaining students engaged all the way to the end and for me to check my own teaching of a concept.



3C Delivering an Effective Lecture

Objectives:

1. Ensure the lecture approach supports your learning objectives
 2. Develop well-organized and effectively paced lectures
 3. Keep students engaged
 4. Facilitate student involvement
- **Provide an overview** at the beginning of the lesson. I made an agenda and went over the items to be discussed for the night. I used this technique to help student to understand what will be

covered during the day and remain focused on the topics. I helped with organization of the lecture.

- ***Pique students' interest.*** I used this technique because the topic was too broad and by using this technique helped students to focus and narrow down their thinking. I began by asking students to "What do you know about bilingual education?" I wrote on the board students' responses allowing me to assess their previous knowledge and move forward with what needed to be covered.

For 2:

- ***Begin with effective opening and end with an effective closing.*** I used these two because seem that it is the most common way to begin and end a lesson. I asked students to begin with their own writing – they use ½ page to write two things, a) a "wow" moment and b) "still want to know" from the readings. Then, students shared in their small groups and selected the best WoW and best "still want to know question" to be shared with the rest of the class. I use this technique because allows me to gather key words that I can use and refer back to students when lecturing. Also, I used it because I believe it helps students to be up-to-date and engaged with the readings. Student know that their questions/wow moments are being addressed/connected with the lecture.
- ***Plan your visuals and examples-*** For most of my lectures, I use PPTs and also plan for students to create a couple of visuals. I bring chart paper and markers to create a poster along the lesson. The examples come from students when discussing their "wows" and personal experiences- this technique can be planned in advanced, but I like to use students' examples for that day. I use all that is available to enhance the lesson (short video-clips, students writing, drawings) to keep students engaged. By creating visuals in class, students feel their contributions are acknowledge and considered as part of the lesson. Students add personal experiences making it a very enriching lecture.
- ***Change your physical position.*** I usually talk and walk around the classroom. I do not like to stay behind the computer or being far from the students. I like to be close to the students. However, some classrooms have different settings- rows instead of tables. Having students seated in rows does not help me with socialization and interaction. Some students have to turn their bodies to talk with their peers and the chairs are not designed to move your body to talk with someone in the back. So, this last class, I asked students to break the rows and form a "U-shape space" with the chairs. The students jumped right in. They liked the setting and helped with interactions with the 'next door neighbor'. The environment felt more comfortable, I was able to see their faces and name tags were shown for me and their rest of the students. At the end of the class, students returned the chairs to the original position. I love my students.



The challenges are in the time for planning. It takes time, but it is worth it because you see the difference in the interactions with students and connecting with the subject.

Another challenge that I face is the time for class. I need some suggestions that can help me with a 4-hour long classes; meets once a week. I am still learning to go in a quarter system -it is too fast for me and lectures are too long. Q2S may be the solution for me.

I found many successes; I was able to implement the techniques selected. Students appear to be engaged and contribute as much as possible. They are attentive.

Some students do not want to miss class. I experienced this last Wednesday when a student came to me 10 minutes before class apologizing for not being able to remain still in class. She was sick. I told her to go home, and she say, "I do not want to miss class, I really like it." That was a good compliment, but her health is first, so I send it to the campus clinic.

I am planning to incorporate other techniques, like pausing strategically. Given that my classes are 4 hours long, learning when to stop is important. I have a good sense when students need a break and stop for a break. I need to be constant, mindful and purposeful when scheduling a break.



After COVID 19

2D: Learning Objectives

1. Inspire students about your topic
2. Support Students success

"Rationale,

By definition, motivated students want to learn more, so they achieve more. However, better teaching also generates more rewarding learning experiences, which begets more motivation to learn (Nilson, 2010)"

For Module 2D, I implemented the following techniques:

1. I created a video presentation (PPT with audio) describing my background in the discipline. This technique was implemented in the introduction section of my courses.
2. Students engaged in setting goals for the course. On the first day of class, after going over the syllabus and course requirements, students were asked to write 3-5 goals they most likely will achieve.
3. Curate course media. Asking students to search for video-clips as part of one of the assignments for Week 5.
4. Provided opportunities for interaction. Set up discussion sections and breakrooms (via zoom) for engagement and ask questions during and outside class time (student/instructor, instructor/students, students/students).
5. Sent motivational messages to students before the quarter started. A welcome letter to the class two weeks before the quarter started, one before class, and one day before class.

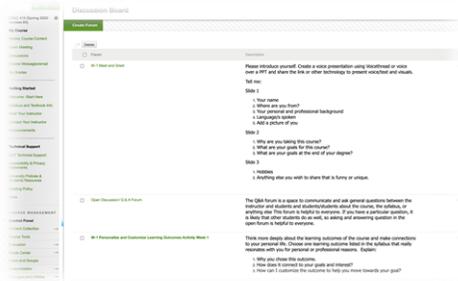
I choose these techniques because aligned well with the changes I wanted to include to improve my courses. The time for Covid19 created the opportunity to make connections with students early and to let

them feel welcome. These strategies were helpful as students and instructors had to adapt rapidly from Face2Face to “virtual/Zoom” classes.

Meet and Greet Dr. Jacqueline E. Arroyo-Romano



- Hello, I am Jacqueline.
- I am your instructor for this spring-2020 course.
- I took in the Ed and MS Credential Program and for the TESOL Masters degree.
- Year of experience in Higher Ed: 10+ years at various institutions Illinois State, University of North Texas, Texas A&M and CSU in California. Also I taught in multilingual/multicultural settings (elementary level K-6) and Spanish high school in California.
- I am a second language learner. I am completely biliterate in English and Spanish, French and ASL were my other languages.



Student in ESEC 419

Personalize and Customize Learning Outcomes

Learning outcome: Create an environment with experiences that are adapted to meet the individual needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. (3h, 3i, 4j, 4k)

Sampler from Student A

“1.) I chose this outcome because I am a person who struggled relating to the content that was taught to me when I was coming up in public education. I had zero cultural connection to the educators in my school district and zero connection to the content that was taught to me. Most of the students in my classroom were the children of Mexican and Central American migrants, myself included. With this being said, I want to create an environment with experiences that are modified to connect to the individual needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

2.) This learning outcome connects to my goals and interests because, I want to be relatable and practice pedagogy that is related to the demographic that I work with. Coming out of Dr. Fullam's course where we learn about how a culturally relevant curriculum is the way to close the academic achievement gaps of Latino/Indigenous and African American students to our White and Asian relatives. A culturally relevant education helps to connect different ways of knowing and engages students from non-white backgrounds in showcasing their proficiencies in language usage, grammar, mathematical knowledge and other tools they use for their go abouts daily. Students from non-white backgrounds can learn how to translate the logical structures of their knowledge and map them onto the school curriculum. This understanding will lead to transformation and motivate students to fight for freedom, justice, and equality.

3.) Being that I will most likely work in a demographic with a high percentage of Latino/Indigenous and African American students, I would appreciate any articles, resources, or any type of support that can assist me to make sure they are getting the best education possible being that we know that the current direction we are moving in is not working for specific demographics because it only empowers those students who come from the dominant society or culture in the US, which is white American. I would appreciate if these articles or resources you provide are inter sectional beyond race and ethnic background, and be inclusive of gender and sexuality.”

The techniques implemented were positive. Students appreciated receiving a welcoming letter and notifications about textbooks, times to meet, office hours, etc.

Setting goals was perhaps the most fascinating task for them to do. The students were puzzled, it was the first time they have been asked to think about their goals and what they want to accomplish this quarter under Covid-19. (no one say missing classes)

3. Curating media assignment is due next week, so I am confident students will find good video-clips. I was able to check a couple from the first submissions. The videos are so far acceptable.

4. Interactions have been positive; the Discussion section is used by students without a problem. Every week students submit questions about the weekly readings, assignments, or thoughts. They are responsive. Next week, students will review two video selections from their peers and discuss them.

Challenges: my PPT with voice failed the sound. But it helped me show students how to use Voicethread instead. They were able to follow me while I was doing it. Students did their own Voicethread to share with the rest of the class.

All the techniques were useful and timely because of Covid19 restrictions, it was helpful sending the welcoming letter to students. They felt better. Setting goals helped students to focus on what they want to accomplish this quarter, asking them to curate video/media, makes them feel they have a voice and contribute to the curriculum. Using discussion posts and use of technology adds their voice to the course. For the future, I took notes on the things I need to adjust for next time I teach these courses. It is a big challenge and responsibility to plan two new courses, create assignments and getting around virtual teaching, it certainly made it worse with the Covid19 situation. I am tired, but I am planning to revise all the assignments and instructions for next semester. It is challenging to have all rubrics, directions, and tasks on target. I am taking note of what I need to do for next time, and every week I try to adjust as what is needed and to make it clear as possible for students.