Teaching Orientation @ Ohio State: Session Agenda

Introduction to Teaching & Learning—Part 2

Coordinator: UCAT Staff, ucat@osu.edu
Date: ..... Autumn
Time: ..... 9:00 a.m – 12:30 p.m.

Rationale

Whereas the focus in the first day is what TAs need to know before the first day of class, this session provides an introduction to what TAs will need to think about **while teaching** their class.

Goals

Participants will consider four main learning principles and how different teacher behaviors can support those principles. Participants will also learn strategies for implementing, managing and assessing teaching methods.

Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will:

- have continued developing a student-centered focus in teaching
- have explored a variety of teaching methods that support learning principles and accomplish learning goals
- have applied principles of active learning in a sample teaching experience
- be able to list options for getting feedback on teaching

Timeline:

The structure of this agenda must be followed in the order given. Options for activities within each section are provided on the following pages.

9:00 - 9:15 **I.** Transition from Day 1& Introduction of faculty co-facilitator
9:15 - 9:45 **II.** Theory: the relationship between teaching and learning
9:45 - 10:15 **III.** Application: implementing and managing teaching methods
10:15 - 12:00 **IV.** Practice! (includes BREAK)
12:00 - 12:20 **V.** Obtaining and using feedback on teaching
12:20 - 12: 30 **VI.** Wrap up and Evaluations

Other Details:

My co-facilitator is _____

Contact information: _____

We will be presenting in Central Classroom Building, room #_____

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Notes:

I. Transition from Day 1 & Introduction of Faculty Co-Facilitator
(9:00 - 9:15)

Goals:
The TA facilitator will re-connect with participants and integrate the faculty facilitator into the group. The faculty member will answer any participant questions collected on the first day of the orientation during Introduction to Teaching and Learning—Part 1. Facilitators will establish expectations for today's session.

Materials:
- Name tags *(in the materials bin)*
- Attendance sheet *(in the materials bin)*

General Notes:
Your participants are returning to the same room, so they should not be late and you can expect to start on time. Please remember to circulate the attendance sheet. Encourage participants to wear nametags for the benefit of the faculty co-facilitator as well as for each other.

Activities

(1) Introduce (yourself and) the faculty facilitator.

(2) Introduce the session.

(a) Introduce the guiding questions of the session as the basis for getting started.
(*In past years, participants commented in their feedback that it was useful to have those questions written on the board or on an overhead. You could write them as you introduce them, or you could have them already up at the start of the session*).

- What is the relationship between teaching and learning? (3-part question, as follows):
  - What do students need from me in order to learn?
  - What are some foundational learning principles to guide my teaching?
  - What teaching methods are available?
- How do I implement and manage teaching methods? (3-part question, as follows):
  - How do I decide what methods will be most effective in different situations?
  - What factors do I need to consider when planning daily/semester-long activities?
  - What do I do if…?
- How do I know that I am accomplishing my teaching goals?

(b) Set expectations for today: this session is different from yesterday's session. It is no longer focused on preparation for the first day, but on what you need to think about while you are teaching. Also remember to tell participants that the focus in the classroom is on learning, not about what the instructor has to do or how the instructor might appear to students. Good teaching means being aware of what you want to accomplish, i.e. what your learning goals are for your students (and how those goals drive what you do).

(3) Faculty Q/A session

The faculty member should answer questions that participants wrote for him/her on day 1.

II. Theory: The Relationship Between Teaching and Learning
(9:15 - 9:45)

Guiding question(s):
What is the relationship between teaching and learning? (3-part question, as follows):
-What do students need from me in order to learn?
-What are some foundational learning principles to guide my teaching?
-What teaching methods are available?

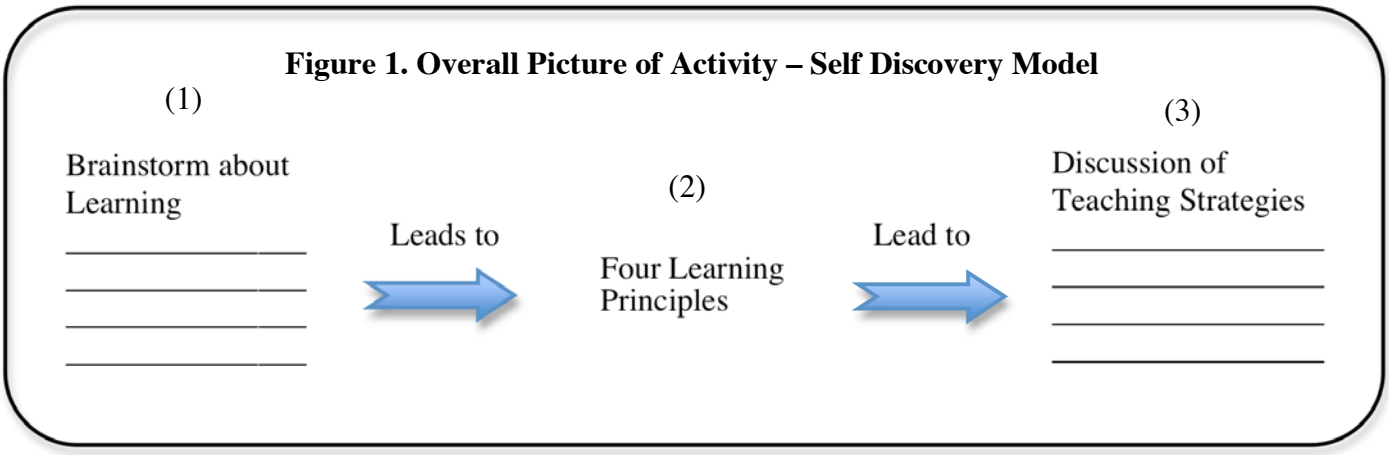
Rationale:
We tend to associate learning with what is being learned, rather than with how it is learned or with how the instructor facilitates that learning. We want participants to spend some time thinking about the latter two: how something is learned and how a teacher can facilitate that learning. Rather than ask you as the facilitator to lecture on different learning principles, we would like for you to help your participants discover these learning principles by brainstorming what does and doesn't work for them as they are learning a new subject. The four learning principles should emerge from this discussion.

Goals:
Participants will consider that teaching is the process of supporting learning. The student-centered focus that was begun on the previous day will continue (recall yesterday's second guiding question: How can I get to know my students and find out what they already know?)

Objectives:
By the end of this part of the session, participants will:
- have discussed how different teaching methods supported (or did not support) their own learning
- have examined the connection between different teaching methods and learning principles
- have generated a list of teaching methods to support learning principles

Materials:
- Optional: blank overhead transparencies and markers *(Provided in your facilitator bags. See the notes that follow.)*

General Notes:
You (the facilitators) will be having three different discussions (Fig.1) with your participants during this section. You may want to divide your white board/chalkboard into three areas, so that you have room to show your participants the relationships across the notes from all three conversations. Alternatively, you could use a mixture of board, overhead, or computer to take notes on your discussions. The bottom line is that you will want to write down what is discussed in all three conversations and keep the notes from the first two conversations until you have finished the third.



Activities:

(1) Participant Experience with Learning (*the first discussion*)

Guide participants in a conversation that will allow learning principles (see above) to emerge. Begin this conversation by asking your participants something like the following:

> "Think about your own learning experience in a classroom where you were learning new/difficult material outside your own major. What did you do to learn it? What did you do for yourself? What did the teacher do to help you learn? How did he/she present the material? What did the teacher not do in classes where you had difficulty? What more did you need from your teacher, or what more did you need to do yourself to successfully learn the material?"

Some things that we hope your participants will come up with include

- organization
- examples
- modeling
- practice
- multiple/varied assignments
- feedback

Hints: (a) You may have to help your participants generalize their experiences in order to identify strategies or categories. (b) They may be inclined to focus on personality traits of the instructor (she was funny, he cared about us, she challenged us). In this section, however, what we are looking for is tools/strategies for learning, which differs from ways to create a good environment for learning. To target ways that the instructor promoted learning strategies, try asking, "What did he/she do to make that happen?" or, "How did that affect your learning?"

What kinds of participant stories might suggest one of the behaviors in the above list? _____

_____

_____

_____

(2) Linking Participant Experiences to Learning Principles (*the second discussion*)

Once you have a good list that you think will work, it is time to briefly introduce each of the following four learning principles by drawing connections between the principle and the appropriate items on the list that you have constructed. *Note that some of the strategies generated in the first conversation may correspond to more than one learning principle*.

Learning Principles

Students who have learned are students who…

(1) **…understand how information is organized.** Students must see structure, connections, and patterns, as well as recognize what within that structure is important.

(2) **…see course content as relevant and meaningful.** They see how course content relates to things outside of the course and why they need to know that content.

(3) **…can use what they know.** They are able to apply information and skills to successfully complete assignments in the class, and they are able to transfer what they have learned to situations outside the class including future coursework.

(4) **…are aware of their own learning.** They can accurately assess their understanding and abilities; they have developed effective strategies for learning content in the discipline.

Choose one of the following:

(a) For each principle, display it on an overhead transparency or write it on the chalkboard. Then ask participants to link the principle to something on the list of strategies they generated in the first activity.

—OR—

(b) Group some things that participants have said together into a category, and then use the learning principle to explain how the items in that category work together.

We will _____

(3) Planning Teaching Strategies to Promote Learning (*the third discussion*)

Once you have linked their brainstorm list to all four learning principles, ask your participants to go through each of the four principles and come up with some teaching strategies that they will try to use in the classroom to promote that aspect of learning. You may use the prompt "How will you do that in your classroom?" or "What will that look like in your classroom?"

Option: you could try putting your participants in small groups of 3-4 and assigning each group one of the learning principles to work on. Then you can have each group report out and make a master list of teaching strategies for each principle.

We will _____

_____

III. Application: Implementing and managing teaching methods
(9:45 - 10:15)

Guiding question(s):
How do I implement and manage teaching methods? (3-part question, as follows):
-How do I decide what methods will be most effective in different situations?
-What factors do I need to think about when planning daily/quarterly activities?
-What do I do if….?

Rationale:
Now that we have considered a number of teaching methods and strategies that support the four learning principles, this section provides your participants the opportunity to consider different strategies within an actual scenario. In addition, beginning teachers need to think about a "plan B" for when the unexpected occurs. In this section, we want to help them to apply concrete solutions in situations in which they have to respond to the unexpected. This is related to Day 1's conversations about who students are, teaching at Ohio State, and setting expectations, while also looking forward to Day 3 sessions on specific college teaching topics.

Goals:
Participants will consider different teaching strategies for a given scenario. They will understand that—even with great planning—occasionally things don't work, so it is worth considering alternatives for when strategies don't go as expected. Participants will also consider external contexts and constraints on teaching.

Objectives:
By the end of this part of the session, participants will:
- have discussed different ways to teach in a given scenario
- have generated possible ways to change their teaching in response to different factors

Materials:
- "Teaching Scenarios" on overhead transparencies or note cards *(in the materials bin)*
- *Optional:* Second page of "Planning for the First Day of Class" *(on flash drives)*

Notes:
You will choose your Teaching Scenarios with your co-facilitator during training. ***Please email your staff coordinator by the end of the training week****, indicating which scenarios you will use and whether you would like them printed as overhead transparencies or on note cards, or both.*

Activities:
(1) Teaching Scenarios

Choose **one** of the following methods for distributing scenarios:

• Divide the participants into groups. *(These do not need to be disciplinary clusters*). Distribute the teaching scenarios on note cards, such that each group has one scenario.

- OR -

• Have all the participants discuss one or two scenarios displayed on overhead transparency.

(a) Ask participants to come up with a plan for the **worst** way to teach in that context.

(b) Next, ask groups to think about what would work better.
If participants struggle to think of viable options, you may want to suggest to them that they think about why their first silly answer would not be a good strategy, and then to look for a strategy that specifically addressed that concern.
(Whereas participants should easily be able to come up with humorous answers to the question in part (a), they should expect answering this question to require more thought and discussion before they reach one or more strategies that would be more effective.)

(c) If participants were working in groups, bring them all back together and share methods.

(d) Debrief: Discuss the following questions with your participants.

- How did they arrive at the strategy they selected?
- What factors did they consider, or what factors would they need to consider (e.g., student population, time of day, difficulty of material, point in the term, etc.), in order to decide which method to use?
- How do such factors influence teaching strategy choices that you might make?
- Emphasize that there is a vast repertoire of techniques that participants can use, and all can be good in certain situations, and to remember they can also think about planning things for students to do outside the classroom.

Options:

- In order to help participants think about how specific circumstances can affect the choices they might make, provide examples of scenarios you have faced that made you think about what to do in light of particular constraints. Explain how you addressed the situation and why/how the constraints led you to make the choices you made

  _____

  _____

- If you have participants with prior teaching experience, this may be a good time to ask them for examples of choices they have made.

(2) "Plan B" Activity

Add additional confounding questions that bring in implementation questions as well as classroom management questions. What would be a good plan B should this teaching method not work out? You might throw in some additional "what if" questions for unexpected things they might not have considered. For example, …what if nobody has done the reading? …what if it's Michigan Week? …what if it's horrible weather? …what if what you've tried really isn't working? How can a teacher assess whether or not it's working?

End this activity by asking participants to sum up or help you sum up the main points. Remind them that there are many options of teaching methods, and their challenge is to find ones that fit their style while maintaining flexibility to try a variety of things to promote student learning.

Encourage participants to write alternate activities as part of their plans. You might project the "Session Plan" on page 2 of the "Planning for the First Day of Class" handout from Day 1 and show them how, if they choose to use this worksheet or something similar, they might do so.

IV. Practice: Group Lessons
(10:15 - 12:00)

You have one hour and 45 minutes for this section. During this time, student groups need to plan and present a lesson, and the whole class needs to provide feedback on the microteaching activity. At the end, the participants need to do a 5-minute reflection.

Rationale:
This part of the session provides participants the opportunity to practice any of the teaching strategies that have been discussed so far. It allows participants to apply what they have been learning today.

Goals:
Participants will experience different teaching techniques as "students" and once as teachers. In part, this should reduce anxiety for new teachers.

Objectives:
By the end of this part of the session, participants will:
- have practiced at least one teaching strategy
- have provided constructive feedback on others' teaching methods

Materials:
- Overhead transparencies *(provided in facilitator bags)*
- Markers, chalk, erasers *(provided in facilitator bags)*
- Overhead transparency: "Teaching Topics – Recitation" *(in materials bin; can project from flash drive if you prefer)*
- Handout: "Points and Examples for Discussion" *(in materials bin)*

General Notes:
Participants should consider general presentation issues (voice, posture, pace, visual aids, etc). But they should also consider other planning issues such as how they will chunk content into a 5 -minute lesson (what is reasonable to accomplish) and how they will involve "students".

Activities

(1) Planning for Microteaching:
Participants will have 15 minutes to plan and a 10-minute break (total 25 minutes)

(a) Group students by disciplinary clusters.

(b) Display the overhead transparency "Teaching Topics – Recitation" or project it from the flash drive.

(c) Give the groups no more than 3 minutes to choose a topic in one of these broad categories that might be presented in their class. Topics that participants choose need to be something substantive (and not, e.g., "how to make a sandwich.")

Note to facilitators: Calculate how much time each group will have for their presentations.

60 minutes ÷ number of groups = _____ minutes per group

(d) Participants should plan as a group how they will present their chosen topic.

- Be sure to let them know how long their presentations will be.
- While they are planning, circulate and listen to their ideas, giving bits of feedback where you think necessary. Also make mental notes of examples you might want to bring up in the closing discussion.
- As a meta-teaching point, facilitators should point out to participants that this activity is a type of active learning and that active learning techniques can serve to reinforce learning. (Note that this is connected to the learning principle, "Students can use what they know.") Participants should try to involve their "students" in their mini-lessons in order to practice implementing an active learning strategy.

(e) Each group should select at least one person to get up in front of the whole class and present the topic. It is OK - even encouraged - for the group to elect to have multiple members share the presentation.

(2) Presentations

(a) Before the presentations begin, distribute the handout "Points and Examples for Discussion." All participants should be taking notes and jotting down their thoughts, ideas and examples to remember for the conversation that will follow the presentations. Remind them that the areas on this sheet are very broad, and that they should also address some of the more specific issues that were discussed earlier in the session.

(b) Use the kitchen timer provided to make sure each presentation does not go over the allotted number of minutes, and tell the participants in advance that you will be doing so.

(3) Debrief

(a) The goal now is to think "what did I learn about teaching from this?" After all groups have presented, have a discussion about what makes for good teaching, citing examples from the presentations. Try to focus the discussion more on the preparation and planning rather than on specific presentation skills. Here are some questions that may help guide the discussion:

- Did any of you consider a different way of presenting your topic than what you eventually chose? Why did you choose the method you did? Why did you not select other options?
- Did any of you try something that didn't work out the way you had hoped it would in your planning? What surprised you?
- Would any of you try doing something differently next time? Why?
- What things did you observed that seemed to work well?
- What didn't work as well?

(b) Give participants a few minutes to reflect on how what they have experienced this morning can be applied to their teaching. You can ask them to jot down a few sentences on scrap paper or just think about it. Ask for two or three volunteers to share.

V. Obtaining & using feedback on teaching
(12:00 - 12:20)

Guiding question:
How do I know that I am accomplishing my teaching goals?

Rationale: Assessing your own teaching in different ways lets you know whether your teaching methods and strategies are actually working for your students. In addition, students benefit from giving feedback because it gives them the opportunity to reflect on and assess what they have learned – this is important for increasing students' awareness of their learning (one of the learning principles discussed at the beginning of the session). You will have just modeled this at the end of the Practice section (IV) when you asked participants to simply reflect on how to apply what they learned to their own teaching. You can point this out to participants for another meta-teaching opportunity.

Goal:
Participants will be introduced to different ways of assessing their teaching.

Objective:
By the end of this part of the session, participants will:
- be able to list different ways of getting feedback on their teaching.

Materials:
- Handout: "Sources and Types of Feedback" *(in the materials bin)*
- Overhead transparency: "Sources and Types of Feedback" *(in the materials bin)*
- Table: "Resources for Feedback on Your Teaching" *(project from flash drive)*

Important Note:
UCAT will visit either early in the session or late in the session to talk about teaching consultant feedback. You'll have to allow about 3 minutes for this.

Activities

(1) Sources of Feedback (5-8 minutes):

(a) Ask participants to brainstorm about sources of feedback for their teaching in response to a prompt such as, "Who can give feedback on your teaching?" Help them to come up with some of these if necessary. (Supervisors, Peers, Students, Teaching Consultants)

(b) Pass around the handout "Sources and Types of Feedback." Choose a few (5-8) rows for participants to consider. (The number can depend on how much time you have left). Choose a set of rows that will provide a mix of sources. Ask participants to mark the sources that are most appropriate for that type of feedback.

(c) Debrief: Collate the answers on the overhead transparency provided. Discuss the overall picture of the answers provided. The bottom line should be that there is no one source for all kinds of feedback on your teaching.

(2) When can you get feedback from students? (7-10 minutes)

Project the document "Resources for Feedback on Your Teaching" to discuss the three types of feedback—mention the first one, focus on the last two. Note some of the resources listed in the table for each type of feedback.

(a) End of Term Feedback

- Quantitative feedback: the SEI is administered in **online form** only. Some departments may have their own feedback form with numerical ratings to use instead of or in addition to the SEI.

- Qualitative feedback: electronic SEIs have room for discursive comments. Alternatively, they can be written on a blank sheet of paper during class. If you'd like to you can ask for feedback on specific things about your course, depending on what you'd like to know, e.g.

  - Did class activities help you learn concepts?
  - Was the book well organized and easy to use as a learning tool?
  - Do you understand _____?

  Note that very few recitation instructors will receive SEIs. But TAs can still generate their own feedback forms for end of term feedback, if they want it. They should check with departments to find out what evaluation processes departments have in place for recitations.

(b) Mid-Term Feedback

- Collecting feedback at the mid-point of a class gives teachers the opportunity to make adjustments for the students who provide the feedback (instead of for a new group of students in a subsequent term). Even small adjustments can be beneficial and it gives students a voice in the teaching process.

- Facilitators can describe how you or your colleagues collect mid-term feedback, or ask participants whether they experienced giving midterm feedback as a student (or elicited it as a teacher if they have previous teaching experience). There are different resources to help teachers do this at OSU: Feedback on Your Instruction or FYI, the survey tool on Carmen, or simply creating their own survey.

- Facilitators should also describe **how you have responded to feedback** in the past, e.g. addressing both positive and negative comments with your students after collecting the feedback, explaining what is and is not in an instructor's power to change, describing what sorts of changes you have made, and noting that it is not necessary (nor is it advisable) to change everything.

- During their visit to your groups, UCAT consultants will describe the SGID focus group process that UCAT offers. It is likely that they won't come just exactly at the second that you are discussing mid-term feedback, so be sure to connect that piece to this segment of the session.

(c) Ongoing feedback

- It is possible to collect feedback every day or every week.
- You can remind participants of the short reflection that you had them do after the practice teaching portion of today's session. This was a form of classroom assessment technique (CAT).

- Remember that it is useful for students to assess their own learning, and eliciting feedback on an ongoing basis can provide them the opportunity to do this. It also provides the teacher with more frequent communication with the class. The teacher can use this to find out sooner rather than later whether the class is confused about anything.

- These types of short tasks do not need to be graded. Note in particular, in the resource document, the web site on classroom assessment techniques. There are several such techniques available. If you or your colleagues have used classroom assessment techniques in the past, you can describe how this went for your participants. Alternatively, describe another example of the classroom assessment technique (e.g. the minute paper or muddiest point).

- Point out that questions used in obtaining ongoing feedback can focus both on participants' understanding of material and their reception of the presentation, and that responses to either kind of question provide feedback on both teaching and learning.
- Have participants answer the following questions:
- What question would you ask students to answer in a *minute paper* that would let you know whether they understood the mini-lesson you just taught?
- (Depending on how much time you have, you can ask participants to work in their teaching group or to volunteer examples individually.)

(3) Final thoughts

- Point out to participants that saving records of teaching feedback will not only let you know whether your methods are working and allow you to make modifications that help your students to learn, but also having a record of feedback is useful for generating teaching portfolios, which they will likely have to do at some point to go on the job market.

VI. Overall Wrap-up
(12:20 - 12:30)

Materials:
- Evaluations of Introduction to Teaching and Learning, Part 2. *(in materials bins)*

Activities:

(1) Please point out to participants the following additional resources

On the flash drive that will be distributed at the orientation (and to you at training), there is a document containing several links with related and supporting material. The document is entitled "Additional Resources on Teaching and Learning." *It will be available on the flash drive only, and not used as an overhead transparency or handout. Relevant resources on this document include:*

Sorcinelli, "Dealing with Troublesome Behaviors in the Classroom"
www.scf.edu/pages/PDF/Library/Dealing**TroublesomeBehaviors**.pdf

Learning Styles Web Sites

Teaching Goals Inventory

Classroom Assessment Techniques

(2) Answer any final questions.

(3) Distribute evaluations and have participants fill them out before they leave. Make sure facilitator names are written on the board, because participants will be asked to write them on the evaluation form.

Indicate to participants where you would like them to leave their completed evaluations before they leave the room.

Jobs for Facilitators after Participants have left:

(1) Pack up materials
- Bring the attendance sheet, extra handouts, and completed evaluations to UCAT headquarters.
- Be sure that a UCAT staff member sees you and checks in your materials.