Teaching Messages Collection 2023-24

18 Teaching Messages from 14 Institutions

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Sense of Belonging from the Beginning

Instructors spend a great deal of time constructing a syllabus and include a variety of information to support student success, so it can be frustrating if an instructor feels that students have not utilized that resource. One way to promote student use of the syllabus is to create a more student-centered document. Here are some of the major strategies I have been trying to incorporate:

- Use warm instead of cold language
- Incorporate a diversity and inclusivity statement (using whatever title is appropriate for your context) that details how all students are welcomed. I also use this section as another opportunity to reiterate how students can reach out if they are encountering any issues that are impacting their learning.
- Organize the syllabus into sections with a table of contents that is hyperlinked at the beginning
- Use two columns of text to make
- Include accessible graphical representations such as for grading (such as a pie chart). A recent addition that students have had positive responses to was a table of suggested workflow for a typically week.

I have received positive feedback and while I have been working on this for almost two years, I am continually finding elements to adjust, change, and update!

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5 Ways to Help the Reluctant Student Succeed Through the Use of Children's Literature

Why would a student of all people not want to succeed in that which they have self-imposed? They choose a course of study, they sign up for the course, they pay for the course - wouldn't they want to accomplish that which they have signed up to do? Honestly, higher education is not a mandatory sentence nor a punishing consequence for bad behavior. Teachers do not assign homework, papers or exams because we hate our students or desire to ruin their lives. We do all this because they told us they wanted us to do it. I'm only doing that which you have asked me to do for heaven's sake! Additionally, knowing all the benefits of education, the doors it will open in the future, and the joy of discovery - why is it still so hard to get some students to learn?

I suggest we learn how to break-through the resistance we encounter in some students by gleaning from the textbooks that the youngest students learn from. Wisdom abounds in the text primarily targeted to children and it is from such texts that we can find the secret to unlocking a student who seems reluctant to engage in their own academic success.

5 stories with 5 points equals 1 big opportunity for student success!

1. Read *The Little Engine That Could*, Platt and Munk 1930.
    Quote: *"I think I can…I think I can….I think I can…"*
    A student's self-efficacy (their perception of their own ability to succeed) is the barometer of the student's self-awareness that predicts their achievement. No student will do that which they do not believe they can do. Solution: student self-awareness of what they can do is as key as the student's awareness of their limitations. Help the student identify and believe in their own abilities, ensuring them that you believe they can do it!
    Trait to encourage: Believe in a student's potential to succeed

2. Read *Henny Penny,* oral folktale; Brothers Grimm 19th century
    Quote: *"The sky is falling; the sky is falling!"*
    Fatalism assumes that no matter what we do or what might be done, the end result will always be the same. If you have ever heard a student say, "It doesn't matter what I try because nothing works," you have a "Henny Penny" on your hands. Henny Penny had an acorn fall on her head and she jumped to the conclusion that the sky was falling and even when others said that was not possible, nothing would change her mind. Henny Penny did not stop and think it through. For those reluctant students who believe "nothing will work", stop and help them think it through. Remind them to be optimistic because for every time they have tried something that did not work, that's a victory - now they know what never to do again!
    Trait to encourage: Promote an optimistic perspective

3. Read *The Three Little Pigs,* Joseph Jacobs, 1890
   Quote: *"The big bad wolf huffed and puffed and huffed and puffed and did NOT blow this little piggy's house down."*
   The moral of this fable is that success depends on both the recognition and the use of effective resources. The third little piggy in this fable used brick and the big bad wolf could not tear down the piggy's house through his huffing and puffing because of the piggy's wise choice of brick; the other two little piggies used hay and straw which were both easy to use and the cheapest way to build a home. These short-cuts allowed for more free time and relaxation but in the end, by not putting the time in to find and use solid resources, the first two little piggies failed in their attempts to build something worthwhile. Helping students understand that discovering and using resources as tutoring or your institution's writing center contribute to them building a successful academic life. Assist students in fighting a deficit mentality which does not recognize potential assets and available helps; encourage them to put the hard work in to find resources that will allow them to succeed.
   Trait to encourage: Assist a student in identifying available resources

4. Read *The BFG,* Roald Dahl, 1982
   Quote: *"I cannot be right all the time. Quite often I is left instead of right."*
   This contemporary classic lets all of us know that it is perfectly acceptable to be wrong. Perfection is highly overrated and acknowledging our failures is key to actual success. Helping students see their learning as a process of personal formation that ultimately leads to their transformation helps them not only succeed today, but invests in who they are becoming. And no one becomes who they will be without failure being a part of their story.
   Trait to encourage: See education as a means toward personal transformation

5. Read *Out of the Silent Planet,* C.S. Lewis, 1937
   Quote: *"He was only too well aware that such resolutions might look very different when the moment came, but he felt an unwonted assurance that somehow or other he would be able to go through with it. It was necessary, and the necessary was always possible."*
   Christian author, C.S. Lewis, affirmed that the life God has given to each is filled with moments which we expect to be one way, but end up being something entirely different, and though different from what we expected and oftentimes far more challenging to get through than what we had anticipated, the hard is necessary and indeed, possible. Giving students the opportunity to speak about their expectations and emotions allows them to process their academic journey. Remind them of why they are learning, what they want to

achieve, and firm up their resolve and understanding that what they are doing is necessary to achieve that which they say they ultimately want to do.
Trait to encourage: Strengthen a student's resolve

In short, success academically includes what the student believes about themselves and the academic journey they have begun. Often a simple phrase paired with a simple story helps plant a new perspective in the heart of the student, allowing them to embrace academic success as a potential outcome they can actually achieve.

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Addressing "Post-Pandemic" Student Attention, Interaction, and Attendance or lack thereof: The Basics

Three years have passed since a deadly virus has caused our lives to stand still, then change, pivot again, and eventually left us in a confusing sphere of "what was" and "how things should be". In-person classes are back, the seating and mask restrictions have been lifted (though this is up to the comfort of the classroom participants), and everything *should* be back to normal. Should. If you follow any academic journals related to teaching and learning you will have observed a heightened frequency in discussion topics such as lacking student attention, reduced attention span, less interaction, and flaky attendance. Maybe, you have noticed similar trends in your own classes. Now, we are not saying that there was always perfect attendance, interaction, and attention in every classroom prior to 2020, but negative changes cannot be ignored and the reasons are multifold.

Many students have experienced COVID era trauma, including losing loved ones, being sick themselves, long COVID repercussions, uncertainty, lack of structure and security, and missing out on educational and social experiences. During the most lonely times, social media, think TikTok videos in particular, came in handy by providing much needed connection and laughter. Yet, these short videos also influenced how people concentrate and comprehend information. As instructors, how do we teach and facilitate the learning of students who are suffering from the after effects of the pandemic and may have shorter attention spans and decreased engagement with learning? In addition, how can we help our students to gently move forward with their goals and establish new learning routines?

Be realistic and don't assume - Many of your students will have had a much different educational experience than previous cohorts and yourself. Crucial years of learning how to make friends, have discussions, and how to be an in-person student had been altered or taken away. Some students may have even found that they are thriving in online learning and going back into an in-person classroom is actually not the long- -waited- for solution. It can be easy to get stuck in the "what was" cycle. "Things used to be better!" The truth is though, that there have always been changes between cohorts of students, and we must be realistic about where our students are right now and where they came from. Lisa Lawmaster Hess says in a recent Faculty Focus article "Our job has always been to meet our students where they are and take them as far as we can. We may be meeting them at a different place, but our responsibilities remain the same." Do you find that your students lack reading comprehension skills? How about adding a short reading workshop or online module to your class, offering tips and tricks, and sharing university resources?

In the Resilient Educator, Caitrin Blake writes, "**timing is everything**" when it comes to student understanding, attention, and comprehension. The first ten minutes of a class are crucial to attain

attention but it does not stop there. Making meaningful transitions between content, activities, and prior sessions are important. Here are some tips to consider:

- Start with thought-provoking questions about the topic that help students get into the right learning head-space and create learning goals for the session.
- Activate prior knowledge by reviewing previous course content and asking students to share and connect their own experiences.
- Incorporate short writing activities and reflections to break up class discussion.
- Get to know your students and keep their learning trends in mind. If you observe that your students are most attentive in the beginning of class, front load lectures and information acquisition to the first 25 minutes and spend the rest of the class engaging students in meaningful activities and hands-on learning.
- Close with a purpose by leaving students with thought provoking questions, connections to their future careers and goals, and a preview of the upcoming content.
- Choose incentives that encourage student engagement, for example, you may announce that class participation is a part of their grade. Other forms of incentives may be extra credit or the option to drop the lowest grade (if that is not already a part of your grading policy).

None of these tips might strike you as especially innovative and you probably heard of them before. However, not only were students' routines and best practices interrupted over the past three years, they have returned to in-person classrooms physically and emotionally tired and have often forgotten what it means to be a learner. We as instructors need to remind ourselves of what it means to be working in an in-person environment.

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Three Ways to Help Students Find Value in Your Courses

If students see the value of what they're learning and doing in your class, they're more likely to invest time and effort in your activities and assessments. Here are three ways to connect students with the significance of your course content.

1. Show your enthusiasm

Often, we've been teaching or studying a subject for so long we lose sight of what drew us to our discipline in the first place. Spend a bit of time reflecting on what you find interesting and valuable about your subject. What are the big questions that your discipline allows you to investigate? What is the significance of the knowledge generated in your field? Share this with your students.

2. Choice

While it's important to share why we care about our classes, our students will have different big questions than ours. Providing opportunities for choice will help your students connect with what they care about. We use assignments to assess what students know or can do and where they need additional support, practice and instruction. Each time we design an assignment, we're designing a mechanism for allowing students to demonstrate what they know or can do. Consider whether there is more than one way for students to practice using new skills and knowledge and to demonstrate proficiency. Are there options that will allow students to engage creatively with course material, draw upon their own particular skills and interests, and connect course material with their own big questions?

One of the most memorable instances of this for me was in a course where I was teaching the *Epic of Gilgamesh*. I gave the students the option of replacing one short assignment with a creative project and a student used his woodworking skills to create a cylinder seal, a cylindrical object used in Mesopotamia to provide a signature. This was a student who struggled with writing tasks and so it was an opportunity for him to use a skill he was confident in to demonstrate his understanding of a topic we had addressed in class.

3. Authentic Tasks

A third way of connecting students to the value of what we're teaching them is to build authentic learning tasks into our assessments. An authentic learning task is an activity that reflects how course content applies to a real-life situation. In what scenario would students actually have to use what you're teaching them? Can you build that scenario into exam or assignment questions? For example, a recent article published in *Advances in Physiology Education* describes how faculty engaged students in a unit on cardiovascular physiology by having them come up with lifestyle-related cardiovascular disease risk factors affecting students at that university at the start of the unit, and then weaving those factors into the remainder of the unit.

Showing your enthusiasm, providing choice where possible and using authentic tasks to promote and assess learning will help motivate students to engage meaningfully with your course content.

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What If We Just Stopped Grading?!

Content warning: this teaching tip provides general information on college students' mental health and suicidality. Hyperlinks are included for those who want to explore these issues in greater detail. If you or your students are experiencing a mental health crisis, help is available. Please contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline or another helpline in your area.

Somewhere around the middle of every semester (when I'm buried under ungraded assignments) I ponder why exactly we (faculty, collectively) are giving these assignments to begin with and whether we (faculty, collectively) are doing a good job conveying feedback about learning when we grade them. What's the point of grading anyway?!

We've probably all had conversations with our faculty colleagues about the fact that students appear highly sensitive to any negative feedback, critique of their submitted work or any grade less than an A+ on an exam or paper. Data suggests that academic grades, and the pressure students feel to perform well, are directly connected to the mental health crisis facing higher education. In fact, a recent National College Health Assessment survey found that stress and anxiety are the two most noted factors negatively correlated with academic performance. This is especially concerning because students with depression or anxiety are at increased risk for suicidal thoughts and behaviors. CDC data indicates that suicide is among the leading causes of death for young adults and college students.

In light of these facts, it's time to re-consider our approach to assessing learning. We should begin by understanding what we're implicitly and explicitly conveying when we assign exams, papers, or projects and what we're conveying when we grade those. Are we saying that their worth as humans and as emerging professionals is tied to their grade on any given assignment? Are we suggesting that anything less than mastery of a concept is cause for deep distress?

If we want students to understand that we care more about what they're learning than the grade they receive in a course, we must start conceptualizing these elements differently.

Enter "ungrading". Ungrading isn't just one thing, it's a set of strategies that centers the learning process instead of fixation on a grade.

Here are a few examples of ungrading practices:
- **Have students develop an individual learning plan.** This dynamic document provides students with the opportunity to assess not only their current knowledge about and interest in course topics but also how they can use their strengths and preferred ways of learning to leave the course with more knowledge, interest, skills, and abilities. This learning plan guides the work products that students create throughout the semester. This resource from the American Association for the Advancement of Science is an example of how this type of plan benefits students in STEM fields (and can be easily adapted to support students in other fields of study).
- **Give choices for how students demonstrate learning**. For example, instead of a term paper or exam, allow students to create infographics or podcasts. Students can also be tasked with creating their own evaluation structure and rubrics!

- **Incorporate various types of reflections into all submitted work.** Self-evaluation is crucial to building critical thinking skills and the ability to connect knowledge to applied practice. David Kolb's well respected experiential learning pedagogical approach posits that deep learning happens when an experience or activity is followed by meaning-making, linked to application of the learning in a real life context. This list of reflection questions from Teachthought is a great place to start. Reflection doesn't always have to be written responses to questions. Encourage student choice here as well. Posters and Powtoon videos are creative options to consider.
- **Hold individual student conferences.** At various points in the semester, schedule short conferences with students. Students can submit self-assessments of their learning (from their reflections and aligned to their individual learning plan) in advance to use as the focus of the conference or you can leave these more open ended, with prompts during the conference such as: "what have you learned so far?" and "how will you use what you've learned moving forward in or beyond the course?"

Even if your academic institution requires that you grade assignments or you're not quite ready to throw grading out entirely, you can embrace the spirit of ungrading by centering student learning, not their grades. Consider making some assignments no-stakes, with a focus on the feedback, not the points. Incorporate self-reflection prompts into existing term papers. Offer choice whenever possible, even if it's the choice between submitting a research paper and submitting a research poster.

For a deeper dive into ungrading, check out this 1 hour keynote address from the Centre for Teaching and Learning at Western University Spring Perspectives on Teaching Conference May 9, 2022: "Ungrading and Alternative Assessment" by Dr. Jesse Stommel, Assistant Teaching Professor, University of Denver.

Happy teaching!

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What Makes Learning "Significant?"

"For learning to occur, there has to be some kind of change in the learner. No change, no learning. ... significant learning makes a difference in how people live, and the kind of life they are capable of living." – L.D. Fink (2013)

As educators, we want to make a difference in our students' lives, and one of the primary ways we try to do that is through our classes. We hope to engage students by conveying our own enthusiasm about the subject. We hope that our students will learn the material long-term. Perhaps most of all, we hope when our students finish the course, they will think differently about how they approach the world.

So how do we design our classes to create that kind of change in our students? L. Dee Fink, director emeritus of the Instructional Development Program at the University of Oklahoma and author of _Creating Significant Learning Experiences in College Classrooms (2013), felt the need to go beyond Bloom's Taxonomy (1956) to address this question. He developed an expanded, evidence-based, taxonomy of significant learning that incorporates Bloom's Taxonomy and adds human and social components. The taxonomy includes six dimensions:

1. **Foundational Knowledge** includes factual and conceptual knowledge. Students can recall and interpret information and ideas. This information is essential for students to learn more complex information and skills.
2. **Application** is applied learning. Students take use the foundational knowledge in new ways, thinking critically and creatively as they develop new skills and analyze new situations.
3. **Integration** includes evaluation and creation, the two highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy. Students make connections between the course material and information they have learned in other classes and in other settings, such as work and their personal lives.
4. **Human Dimension** might be viewed as "personalization" of learning. Courses incorporating a human dimension helps students learn more about themselves and others, human behavior and ideals, and helps students think differently about who they are. Diversity, equity, and inclusion are part of the human dimension.
5. **Caring** about concepts, issues, and other people often results in a deeper motivation to learn. Students examine and may change their feelings, interests, or values in a course that helps them personalize what they are learning.
6. **Learning how to Learn,** or *metacognition,* is the process of understanding how one learns best. When a course includes metacognitive elements, students realize how they can learn more effectively, both in and out of the classroom.

What might a course look like, if it incorporates all these elements? Here are sample outcomes from a chemistry course:

1. *Foundational Knowledge*: Students will be able to **compare** UV-visible, infrared, and NRM spectroscopies.
2. *Application*: Students will be able to **use** knowledge of spectroscopic and computational tools to **solve** novel problems.
3. *Integration*: Students will **recognize** the role of chemistry in other disciplines.
4. *Human Dimension*: Students will be able to **collaborate** effectively with other people.
5. *Caring*: Students will **discover** ways that chemistry shapes our lives, positively and negatively.
6. *Learning how to Learn*: Students will be able to accurately **self-assess**the quality of their own writing.

Expanding our view of course design beyond Bloom's Taxonomy to incorporate significant learning experiences aligns with our mission to provide a career-oriented education. Fink has also published a 30-page self-directed guide that includes the essential elements for the design of these courses. You are also welcome to drop by the CTL, where we have copies of Fink's book and are eager to work with you.

Resources

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Grouping by Strengths

Faculty frequently design team projects to enable students to accomplish tasks they cannot complete alone (Johnson 2014) and to build teamwork skills. The latter, according to the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), is one of the top eight career-readiness skills that students need to learn in college (NACE 2022). Yet, instructors face a common challenge: How do you put students in groups that work well together?

The following activity helps instructors create groups that incorporate students self-determined strengths, student choice, and instructor matching-making. Additionally, the assignment invites students to reflect on their strengths and express agency in choosing their group members.

Part I: Strengths Assessment
1. Access https://high5test.com/ – Select "Find Your Top Strengths"
2. Take the 100 question High5 Test. (8–15 minutes) Answer as best you can.
3. Read and reflect on your results.

Part 2: Write the Paper
Reflect critically on the five strengths as they relate to your life and to your role in a group. For each of the five strengths:
1. State the strength
2. Describe it. Copy and paste the paragraph about your strength from the High5 website.
3. Write a paragraph noting where you see this strength appear in your own life and in how you work in groups. Use examples of group work in other classes, on teams (ex: sports, volunteering, etc.), and/or in internships or jobs.
4. Conclusion: Do you think these describe your core strengths as an individual? Why?

Part 3: Presentation
Present your strengths to the class in a 2–3-minute presentation. Highlight at least 2 strengths you possess. How do you use these strengths in a group? Why are you a valuable team member? What are strengths you are looking for in a group member? Why?
> *This could be recorded, and presentations viewed by students outside of class.*

Part 4: Listening and group member selection write-up
As you listen to your peer's presentations consider how peers' skills and strengths compliment your own. You do have a voice in choosing potential group members, though the instructor determines which groups work together. You will be in a team with at least one person you select.
1. In order, list four group members you would like to work with.
2. In one paragraph per person (3–4 sentences), explain:
   - How do your strengths complement each other in a group project?
   - What is one possible way your strengths could clash and how could you overcome that challenge?

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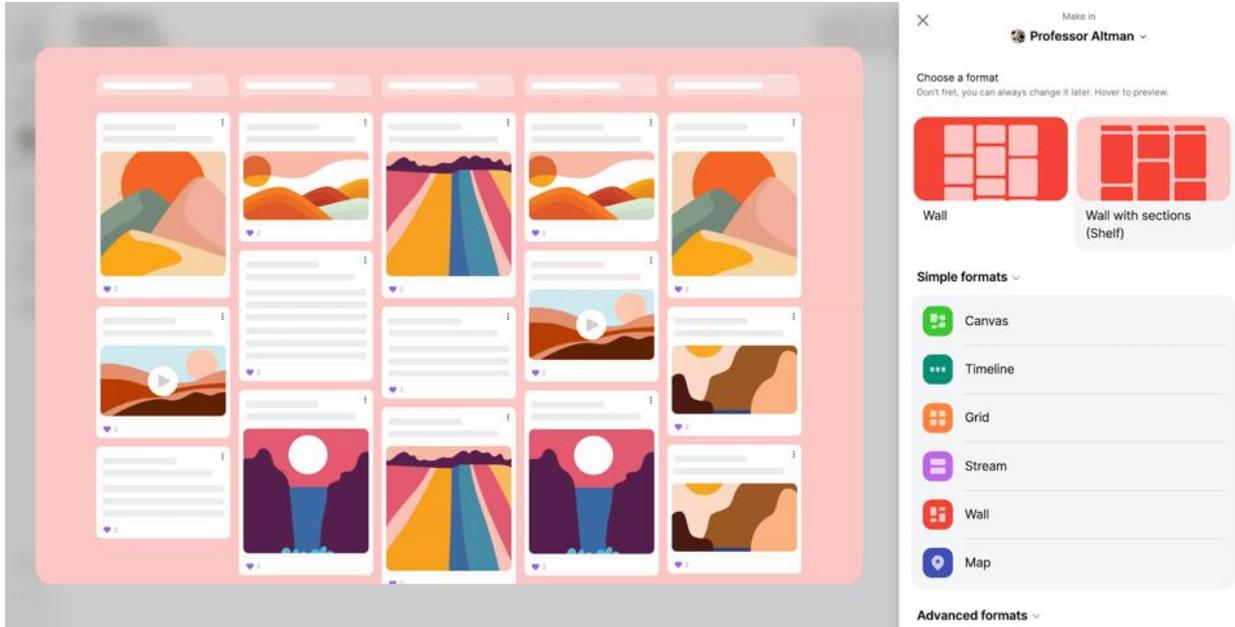
Engaging Students with Padlet

As a professor of studio art, I traditionally hold critiques and discussions about student work by hanging it on the studio wall. This technique is standard pedagogy in the visual arts, where assessment is weekly, and looking critically at work is an integral part of studio practice. For remote live or asynchronous classes, I needed to find a digital alternative to the studio wall, but one that replicated the same experience. How could we see everyone's work at once, and look at the entire group in order to see work in relation to one another? How can we engage in meaningful conversation that supports student learning? The solution was to use Padlet, which replicates the traditional critique wall and allows students to provide verbal (in the case of synchronous classes) or written comments in response to viewing the work of their peers.

What is Padlet?

Padlet is a collaborative digital platform that allows participants to interact with each other in a digital space. Each Padlet can upload content in a variety of formats, and contributions or posts to the Padlet page can include images, video, and written text. Student can post with their name or anonymously and faculty can set up specific parameters for posts. Each Padlet can be public or private, and students can access the Padlet by a link or QR Code provided by the professor. I have found this platform to be exceptionally user friendly. Students can drag images of their work onto the Padlet or upload images or files from their desktop or phone. The QR code seems to be easier for students, as they can access and upload photographs directly from their phone. It is also faculty friendly, making it easy to create and share Padlets with the class. There are two versions of Padlet, a free version which allows three Padlets to be created (you can erase and remake to stay within this limitation) and a paid version with unlimited Padlets. I made a decision to pay for my account, as I like to keep each Padlet throughout the semester, both in my online and face-to-face classes. By paying for my account, I can refer back to past images or use the Padlet as a way to show student development as they revise their work and update their posts. If a lot of faculty members are interested, you can also get an institutional account which allows a certain number of users.

Here is an example of what appears when you make a new Padlet in your account:

As you can see by the image, there are numerous formats to choose from including a wall (which I use most often since it closely replicates our studio wall), Canvas, Grid, Stream and Map which students can use to post where a historical event occurred, or other references to geography.

Advantages of Padlet across the disciplines

• Padlet is easy to use for both students and faculty.

• Padlet offers a different modality that allows all learners to engage with content.

• Padlet uses real time updates. For example, a student can add a reference in real time to their post and the class will see it immediately.

• When teaching a remote live class, students can show work in process throughout the class period and it becomes a record of their working process, and progress. This has been one of the most advantageous reasons that I have been using Padlet. Students can photograph their work in process and post clear images, as opposed to holding it up to their camera.

• You can use Padlet to check for understanding. For example, students can anonymously post the muddiest point, and the Padlet can become a catalyst for class discussion.

• Students can work collaboratively or in small groups to post on a topic or assignment. It is an effective way for them to share resources and house them in one place.

• Faculty can post class content and resources in an assessable format and provide opportunities for student engagement.

• Students can work collaboratively on developing study guides or other materials for reference and share them within the class.

• Students can give immediate feedback in class on a topic.

• Padlet is a primarily a visual platform, and it works well for image references.

• A Padlet can begin in class and then continue to allow students to post responses. For example, in a studio class, students may want feedback outside of class as they continue working on their projects. Students can provide formative assessment and suggestions to each other outside the classroom and before the project is due.

While there are numerous platforms that are similar such as Google's *Jamboard*, and other ways to check for understanding such as *Mentimeter*, *Poll Everywhere,* or *Slido*, I have found Padlet a versatile, engaging, and accessible platform for students and faculty. As visual artists, it replicates our studio wall and allows students to present their work to their peers for discussion and assessment. Of all of the platforms available for online or in-person teaching, Padlet has been an effective modality for both my remote live and in-person studio classes. I encourage everyone to try Padlet to engage their students and support their learning.

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Improving Student Perceptions of Their Own Writing Using Templates

"Some of the world's greatest writing is poetry, and the structure of rhyming and metered poetry is certainly template-based."
    --George Dudley, Public Affairs Officer, North Carolina Department of Correction

When I reflect on my time and growth as a chemistry undergraduate student, much of my time outside of class was spent working on laboratory reports. These reports were typically loosely structured, requiring an introduction, results, discussion, conclusion, and any references. There was usually a rubric to follow, but no detail was ever really given on the formatting of the laboratory reports. This carried over after I became a graduate teaching student, where my own students were writing reports similar to those that I had written when I was a student in the lab. It was not until I became a full time lecturer and laboratory instructor that I thought of the idea that it may be more useful to have students write using a pre-formatted template in the style of a peer reviewed journal.

For the last four years, my students have been turning in laboratory reports using a template provided by the American Chemical Society (ACS) which I chose because it was available on their website. Many different journals require that papers be published using their own templates, so I thought it valuable to the students to actually write in the style in which they would read from the literature. Because most of my students read articles from the ACS, I figured having them write in the style of the ACS could be beneficial to their growth and learning. This structure provided by the templates have seemingly improved my student's perceptions on their own writing in a few different ways, most notably:

- Students have expressed that they feel their reports are more professional in appearance.
- Some students said that they can more easily follow the rubric.
- One student in particular explained that even though they did not quite understand the laboratory exercise, they were still proud of the lab report that they handed in.

It turns out that even when I have the students use other templates provided by other journals, the students are typically adaptable enough to present the information of their labs in those other styles. This makes me believe that using templates provided by other journals outside of the realm of chemistry or STEM to support students in their writing could be beneficial to students as well.

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Combating Cancel Culture in the Classroom

Cancel-culture is just another name for "shame-based culture." Cancel-culture leaves no room for curiosity or risk that could lead to failure. In cancel-culture, one is only as good as what one does and only as good as the last time one did it. In other words, yesterday's success does not count toward today's potential success or failure. The student of today is swimming in this reality. They know the ever-pending possibility of being canceled (shamed) for any misstep or slip-up. Performing and performing perfectly each day is the message of today. Perhaps more accurately, "perform perfectly within the milieu of whatever cultural, familial, friend, educator, or boss may determine as worthy today. And then when you wake up tomorrow, figure it out once more and do it again…perfectly."

How, professor, do you think this impacts the classroom? Shame and learning do not mix. They are like oil and water. Impossible to blend. We can shake things up hard enough to give the illusion of a mixture but give time for settling, and the divide is evident once more. As a professor, my key role is to educate, to get students to learn. But I often find students hindered greatly in the learning process because of fear of cancelation, because of shame. Shame has no place in the classroom; therefore, as a professor, if I want to execute my key role well, I need to create a classroom that invites students to let go of shame and embrace vulnerability. With the freedom to be vulnerable, students will be curious and creative, attempt to think outside the box, ask real questions, and begin to learn. As Thompson (2015) notes in his text *Soul of Shame*, "It is challenging to create a culture of vulnerability that encourages curiosity in a world so wrapped in shame" (p. 161), but I want to encourage you, professor, by saying, that is precisely what we must do if we say we care for the students in our classrooms and care for the field of higher education.

So, how do we do this? Three key things I do in my classroom each semester to combat cancel culture to usher in vulnerability and, therein, the ability to learn are:

1. Praise the effort, not just the outcome.
2. Learn students' names.
3. Promote thoughtful learning.

1. **Praise the effort, not just the outcome**: Demonstrate that the effort is recognized by saying, "I see the effort you've put into this; it's clear you dedicated time and thought to this assignment." If we do this, we promote a mindset in our students that what they put into what they do is essential. When we teach them that only success is what matters by assigning a grade alone versus seeing the effort at achievement we are teaching them but probably not what we would hope. Success feels good, so they quickly learn "I feel bad if I do not find success. If I feel bad when I do not succeed, I cannot fail. If I cannot fail, I cannot risk, so I must do exactly what is asked or quit altogether." When we praise effort we are not lowering the bar of expectations or minimizing the importance of developing a skill over a particular challenge – be it a math equation, scientific formula, therapeutic treatment, application of ethics, etc. Instead, we are telling our students, "This classroom is a place of learning, and learning demands we struggle to develop some skill or knowledge we do not yet have, a struggle that occasionally leaves us flat on our faces. As your professor, I won't leave you there but will help you get back up to try again." This kind of classroom is one of empathy

allowing for vulnerability rather than one of shame. This kind of classroom helps the anxiousness of the student to subside. "The part of the brain that would normally fear the exposure of not being enough is being cared for by an instructor who, via empathy, enables the students to freely do their work and turn their attention away from failure and shame. And who does not desire this?" (Thompson, 2015, p. 164).

2. **Learn student names**: None of us went to all the schooling (16 years in total for me!) to attain a degree to hear ourselves talk about things we love without hoping to instill in the next generation of learners a passion for those same things. If you did, then you should consider another profession! When students feel like a number or a letter *in your class*, that is all they will get *out of your class*. Relationships make the world worth living in; they give life meaning. We know who we are because of the relationships we have with others. I know I am selfish, kind, petty, or gracious because of how I interact with others and how they respond to me. If we want our students to understand that what we convey to them from the traditional or online classroom platform has meaning, we must develop a base level of relationship with them. The base level relationship is "I see you, I hear you, and I know you have a name." At the end of one academic year in particular, a senior left me a handwritten note at the end of her last semester sharing how I had changed her whole perspective of her time in her undergraduate program because I knew her name when she walked into the classroom. She went on to share that "although I didn't really like the subject of Abnormal Psychology at first because it's just an elective and not really in my major, your class was one of my favorites, and I feel like I learned so much because I felt like you saw me." I didn't have to have hour-long conversations with this student, albeit some students we do find we have those conversations; I just needed to call her by name for her to learn. I aim to learn student names within the first two weeks of each semester, I'm not perfect at this, but it clearly matters so I risk failing for the sake of my students.

3. **Promote thoughtful learning**: In my Masters's program, I had a professor who would start each class with the following, "what if I told you that no matter what you did in this course this semester, there was no way you would get an A? What would you think or feel? Who would you go report me to?!" He'd follow it up: "Now, what if I told you that no matter what you did in this class this semester, there was no way you could get less than an A? Everyone, regardless of work or effort, will receive an A this semester. What would you think or feel? Who would you *not* report me to?" He set up the class to consider whether all we were there for was (perfect) success or failure. If that was the case, we were there for the wrong reasons. We needed to be there to learn. I learned much from him, not just about the subjects he taught but about how to be a professor. He allowed us to engage in the education process, from the start, for the sake of learning. Regularly conveying he was pleased with us when we would ask questions out of curiosity and movement of thought. As professors we need to be careful to avoid questions being closed only, right or wrong only, all or nothing only. "When the questions are directed toward facts alone, I pay attention to the narrow bandwidth of facts, closing myself off to a vast array of other possible questions and answers. Thus, I fail to see the goodness and beauty in places I do not look because the answer could not possibly be there" (Thompson, 2015, p. 165). If there is for sure only one way to answer questions or else one is wrong, this shrinks the world of thinking, curiosity, and creativity for the student

and allows shame to step in to whisper, "You better not get this wrong. There is just one response worthy."

Professors, we have the power to combat cancel culture and create a learning environment for students. Let's use this power to fight for our students, the field of higher education, and the gift of learning.

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Learning Journey Library

"The FeedbackFruits Learning Journey Library" is a free online resource to help educators implement different pedagogical approaches.

The Learning Journey Library allows educators to browse through over 20 templates and filter them according to pedagogy, learning goals, and prep time. It also provides use cases and examples of how other institutions applied these journeys.

Each learning journey details step-by-step how faculty can create fruitful learning experiences both synchronously and asynchronously. You can find journeys in facilitating team-based learning (TBL), flipped classroom, skills development, stimulating engagement, integrating AI tools, and more. All the journeys are scalable across any course modality, class sizes, and adjustable to your subject domains and available technology.

The library is not exhaustive, but it will be constantly updated with new journeys.

References and Resources
- All learning journey templates can be accessed and downloaded in this page
- This video showcases how a specific learning journey works

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Talking to Students about Purpose in the Age of AI

"If you have a strong purpose in life, you don't have to be pushed. Your passion will drive you there."― Roy T. Bennett, The Light in the Heart

In today's digital age, students have access to a wealth of technological resources, including advanced language models which can generate generic written text efficiently. Artificial intelligence has been with us for a while but the emergence of the accessible and capable large language models like ChatGPT prompted an urgent need for us to radically change the way we talk to students about the purpose of learning to write for themselves. Some faculty are focused on policing students who take advantage of these tools but the reality is that not only are these models are going to become increasingly more capable and harder to detect, the jobs of the future may require students to be able to work alongside AI systems.

John Orlando wrote in Faculty Focus (Orlando, 2021), that we need to encourage students not to focus on their grades but on the development of their abilities. While these tools can be beneficial in certain situations, it is crucial to communicate to students the significance of learning to write for themselves. Encouraging them to develop their writing skills can have several profound benefits that go beyond what AI can offer. Here are some reasons why talking to students about this is essential:

Critical thinking and creativity: Writing is a cognitive process that stimulates critical thinking and fosters creativity. When students write for themselves, they engage with their thoughts, ideas, and emotions, honing their ability to think critically and creatively. This process helps them articulate their unique perspectives and develop their voice, which is essential for personal and academic growth.

Deep understanding and retention: Writing about a topic requires students to delve deeper into the subject matter. When they take the time to craft their ideas on paper, they develop a more profound understanding of the material, leading to better retention of knowledge. This active learning process enhances their academic performance and prepares them for more significant challenges beyond college.

Communication and empathy: Effective writing goes beyond grammar and structure; it involves connecting with the audience on an emotional level. Encouraging students to write for themselves helps them develop empathetic communication skills as they consider the perspectives and needs of their readers. Such communication abilities are valuable in their personal relationships and future professional endeavors.

Adaptability and versatility: As impressive as AI language models may be, they have limitations and may not always produce appropriate content. Teaching students to write

independently allows them to adapt to various writing situations and formats. They become versatile writers capable of adjusting their style and tone to suit different audiences and purposes.

Ethical and responsible use of technology: It is vital to foster an understanding of responsible technology usage in students. While AI language models can assist in writing tasks, they should not replace the students' own efforts and originality. By encouraging them to write for themselves, you promote academic integrity and ethical use of technology.

Personal growth and self-expression: Writing is a form of self-expression that allows students to share their thoughts, experiences, and emotions with the world. Through writing, they can explore their identity, understand themselves better, and reflect on their personal growth throughout their college journey and beyond.

Real-world application: The ability to write effectively is a crucial skill in any professional field. Regardless of their chosen career path, students will likely encounter situations where they need to communicate through writing, whether it's composing emails, reports, or proposals. Strengthening their writing skills prepares them for success in their future careers.

Incorporating discussions with students about the purpose of learning to write for themselves can inspire students to take ownership of both their writing process and their learning. By helping them see the value of developing their writing skills beyond the capabilities of AI and simply getting the grade they need, you empower them to become more confident, versatile, and expressive communicators in both their academic and personal lives. In fact, the very purpose of awarding summative grades is to measure and reward the achievement based on the work of learning rather than the end product itself but students rarely see it this way because of the impact of 'bad' grades on their progression through college. In the era of artificial intelligence that can easily structure and write a standard college essay it becomes imperative that we talk to our students about what they stand to gain from developing their own skills in writing rather than use a tool to do it for them simply to get the grade they need to move forwards.

Talking to students about purpose of their college degrees has always been important for motivation towards learning. Purpose is also a key aspect of transparency in learning and teaching (TILT, 2023) but it is now critical if we want our students to engage in the work of learning particularly with respect to developing their own writing. Below are a number of different ways to approach discussing the purpose of learning to write with your students in any discipline. They all have value and could be employed individually or together depending on relevance to the course in question.

1. **Success in their current course.** Describing in full how an assignment will help students meet a specific learning objective and therefore be successful in the course is a great first

step. Many faculty go over this in person but not necessarily explicitly in the assignment itself which is where students who miss the explanation or zone out during it will go for information. This helps students not see an assignment as busy work because they understand the purpose of it for their success in the course.

2. **Success in a sequence course.** The expectations of students increase as they go through their courses in sequence and continue to grow and develop. Outlining how the assignment will help students in a sequence course can also help students see the purpose of developing the ability themselves.

3. **Success in their degree.** Students infrequently have the global view of how the learning in each course adds up to successful degree completion. Describing the purpose of an assignment for student success long term in their program can be really powerful for motivating students towards doing the work of learning.

4. **Success in their careers.** Whatever the career, employers are looking for students who can speak, write, and work in teams. Articulating carefully the purpose of the assignment for helping students achieve successful careers long term can also be motivating for students to develop their own skills rather than relying on AI tools.

5. **Success in their lives.** Speaking as someone who never mastered mathematics, some subjects just cannot be avoided in life! Writing is as key to life as it is to both college and career. Talking to students about the purpose of being able to write to say, land the job or partner of their dreams, can also motivate those who would otherwise take the short-cut when offered.

AI language models can be a valuable tool to complement students' writing efforts, but they should never replace the rich experiences and benefits that come from crafting their own words and it is our job to show them why this is the case.

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AI Is Here to Stay and Thrive: Ways to Advance Student Learning Using ChatGPT

The advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) based applications (ex., ChatGPT) has, understandably, induced the fear of god (high level machine intelligence, really!) in many educators. The assumption is – students will now use AI/ChatGPT to write their homework and other assignments. Many jobs will become automated and therefore the people currently doing those jobs will become redundant. That is indeed the premonition of a rather bleak future for humans. Is it really all that bad? Is ChatGPT an invasion of the way we have always done things? On our job securities?

Students and educators all over the world are experiencing unprecedented exhaustion brought on by multiple factors - trauma due to loss of loved ones, lay-offs, inflation, long COVID symptoms, to name just a few. Beth McMurtrie in their Chronical blog talks about [Teaching in an Age of " Militant Apathy](#)." Apathy. If students are tired and apathetic, what stops them from choosing to use ChatGPT to complete their assignments?

AI does a very good job at writing. What if, we as educators, recognize the existence and ever-increasing capabilities of AI and harness it to facilitate learning in students? Can we teach our students to use AI responsibly, to learn more effectively? Not to reinvent the wheel but to use the wheel to go places? I want to share with you some ways, which I think ChatGPT can be used to write, with the hope that you can pick up some ideas on how you can teach your students to use AI to advance their learning:

1. Design assignments that ask students to fact check and then annotate an AI generated output. This will help students learn how to be critical readers!
2. One needs to have some prior knowledge about the topic to prompt the AI to generate useful information. Provide students readings on the topic and then ask them to generate appropriate prompts.
3. You can ask your students to first generate an output and then fact check through research. You can ask them to put down the citations from their findings that support/don't support the AI output. This teaches students to fact check and support arguments with evidence.
4. Encourage students to have a questioning mindset. Design assignments that expect them to add (to the AI output) other/diverse viewpoints backed by research/evidence.
5. AI generates information as good as the quality and depth of information it receives via the prompts given by the human user. Gather enough prior knowledge about the topic before creating prompts if you want a rich output. Design assignments where students need to ask the right questions or frame questions in multiple ways to get the right feedback. This teaches students research and communication skills.
6. The conclusion section of any writing is a fertile opportunity for students to demonstrate higher levels of learning (Think Bloom's taxonomy?) they have achieved - synthesis, evaluation, and creation of new learning.

ChatGPT and other AI applications are here to stay and thrive. Thank goodness for all this advancement in technology! Let's try to make best use of these upcoming growths and

conveniences to make life easier and learning fun. What are some ways you plan to use AI in your discipline? Please share with colleagues.

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Using AI to Develop Critical Evaluation and Feedback Skills: Example Activities

AI can be leveraged to design effective learning activities, and below you can find several learning activities to help students develop not only critical reflection of AI-generated content, but also feedback and collaboration skills. These activities are by examples shared by Nathan Riedel – Instructional Technologist at Fort Hays State University in a webinar on embracing AI.

Activity 1: Critical analysis of ChatGPT-generated content

Using ChatGPT, instructors generate answers to a number of exam questions and place these in a document, which is uploaded to an interactive platform. Within this platform, students are required to critically analyze the AI-generated answers and detect the existing flaws, by responding to instructors' annotated questions and discussion points along the document. FeedbackFruits Interactive Document can be an effective platform for this interactive analysis activity, as the tool allows instructors to upload and enrich the study materials with questions and discussions for students to interact with.

Activity 2: Peer review and self-reflection of AI-generated content

The same critical analysis activity can be upgraded into a peer and group assessment, in which students submit their ChatGPT-generated answers to a peer review platform and give feedback on each other's submissions. This activity update would normally take up plenty of time for assigning peer reviewers or group members, developing feedback rubric criteria, and such. However, educators can make use of available peer review tools such as FeedbackFruits Peer Review to streamline the entire review process. Within the tool, students easily upload their AI content, get assigned to another peer's work to review based on a set of criteria. They can also annotate the submission and add questions or discussion points for further exchange.

Educators can also add another layer to the critical analysis activity, by turning the assignment into a self-reflection where students upload their ChatGPT content to a self-assessment platform then critically analyze this based on a set of criteria. At the same time, instructors can access students' progress, give comments on the analysis and provide timely support. This activity helps stimulate self-regulatory skills and teacher-student interactions, while encouraging students to think carefully about their interactions with AI.

Activity 3: Utilize AI in feedback delivery and guidance

Effective, quality feedback needs to be continuous, growth-oriented, and personalized. However, achieving this can be quite challenging, especially within a large student cohort. This is where AI can be leveraged to support instructors in the feedback delivery process, and FeedbackFruits Automated Feedback is developed to fulfil this role. Powered by AI, this LMS plug-in scans through students writing and provides instant, formative feedback on structural writing elements

like citation, academic style, grammar, and structure, which then leave instructors with more time to address higher-order cognitive skills like comprehension and critical argumentation. Based on these feedback, students can iterate and produce a better final work.

Besides generating personalized feedback on academic writing, AI can also be harnessed to guide students in delivering better feedback. The Automated Feedback Coach, which operates upon Large Language Models provided by Azure OpenAI Service, is an AI plug-inthat assists students provide quality feedback during the peer or group assessment activity. Once activated, this feature automatically generates real time suggestions when students' feedback are: too short, too general, sounds like a personal attack, overly positive or negative, or overlapped with other given feedback. The AI plug-in also identifies and praises students for quality feedback comments.

Reference and Resources
- Details of these activities and more can be found in this article: Practical activities to leverage AI for engagement and skills development
- For more information on Automated Feedback Coach 2.0, check out this article
- For details regarding the tools mentioned in this teaching tip, you can refer to the tool website

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Responding to Mid-Semester Discontent

In any given semester, I always find a few students who are unhappy with my courses. They may have scored poorly on an early project, they may resent the work I'm assigning, or they may be uninterested in the content I am teaching. Sometimes I find that they are generally dissatisfied with their education, and my course is simply a symptom of that broader experience. When I review the results of my midcourse survey, I'm on the lookout for these students. It may not be possible to win over every student, but by addressing concerns early in the semester, instructors can improve overall classroom morale.

Here are my strategies for responding:
1. Show that I hear them. Each semester I publicly review the feedback and highlight some of the critical comments. I don't argue, I just acknowledge their concerns with the class.
2. Announce special office hours. In a one-on-one meeting we would be able to make quick progress talking through any course-based concerns. For this reason, I always suggest that students with concerns are welcome to visit me to help me better understand.
3. Offer a "focus group." If many students seem upset, I suggest that students join me in a focus group where we can talk through course issues. In a live class, I might do this as a class activity during the last 15 minutes of a class session. In online classes I individually invite students to join a live video call. This works much like "Small Group Instructional Diagnosis," which compliments what is learned from the survey while giving students an opportunity to be heard.

I have found that this combination of strategies dramatically improves the class atmosphere, and many times, disarms dissatisfied students and helps them commit to the course.

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Snack Baskets for Better Learning

For many years, I have brought a snack basket with me to my classes. Some colleagues have given me side-eye for this, but food insecurity on college campuses is a real problem, and it appears (in my experience) to have been made worse by the pandemic. We have known for a long time that school children have problems concentrating when they do not have proper nutrition, hence free breakfast and lunch programs nationwide. College students are no different. While many institutions require on-campus students to purchase meal plans if they live in the residence halls, struggling students usually purchase the bare minimum, which might be as little as one meal per day. Some students stack schedule their classes with no breaks (especially common with first year students) and sometimes forget to grab their own snack to tie them over before they head to class for the day. Other students work all day and come to night classes without time to grab something to eat before their long night classes. With food insecurity and forgetfulness in mind, my snack basket began.

On the first day of class, I bring and talk about the snack basket, about food insecurity, and that I never want anyone to sit in my class hungry and thinking about what or when they will next eat or trying to ignore their rumbling tummies. I want them to take a snack if they need it, but if they don't, please leave it for those who do. It is rare that anyone takes what I'd call "more than a fair share," but sometimes they do, and if I notice a student doing that, I ask them privately after class if they know about the food pantry on campus (which is conveniently across from my building).

My snacks are varied. I ask on my information sheet if there are any food allergies, too, so that if we have someone with a peanut allergy, for example, I can share with the class as a whole to avoid the things that might set off their neighbor. (Students usually happily "out" themselves and their allergies and let people know if it's a "not in the room with me, please" or a "just make sure I'm not next to you" allergy. I always have a breakfast bar or granola of some kind. I also include chips, cookies, and trail mix. There are suckers. There is chocolate. There are gummies and hard candies. There are applesauce sleeves. I get cheese and crackers, too. It is rare that a hungry soul can't find something to help them out.

How do I afford this? Like probably all of you, I'm certainly not wealthy or reimbursed. I watch the clearance areas of my local groceries—they often put boxes there that are damaged, but the food inside is perfectly fine and 75% off or more. I use coupons. I watch for sales. I live for the weeks after Valentine's, Easter, Halloween, and Christmas! If I bring fresh fruit, I do so on Mondays so that hopefully it's gone by Friday. And I remind the students that this is out of my own pocket, and that I do my best to keep the snack basket full, but sometimes it might be a bit empty. I've had students bring things to contribute that they bought (or their parents did) and decided they don't like. I've had colleagues contribute, too. (The student workers and graduate assistants always know they can come and get a snack, too, if they need one).

I know not everyone will be interested in doing this. Some will say this isn't part of their job. And it's not—it does go beyond normal teaching, service, and scholarly duties. Alternatively, it would only take a moment of your time to look up what help is available on your campus and in your community for food-insecure students. Most campuses now have food pantries. In my city, the churches near campus offer meals and food pantries to our student population just as they do everyday folks just trying to make ends meet. Having a resource sheet that you can hand students will be appreciated and remembered by them.

Articles of Interest

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Managing Public Speaking Nerves in your Teaching

Shaky hands, racing heart, flushed cheeks, butterflies in the stomach, drawing a blank. Sound familiar? Same. I've had a fear of public speaking my whole life and I used to wonder if people like me could ever be teachers. *Teachers speak publicly almost every day…How was I going to manage? s*

The good news is you can indeed be an excellent teacher despite public speaking nerves. There are lots of excellent teachers out there who have a fear of public speaking (including, to my surprise, several of my favorite professors!). The other good news is, you aren't doomed to be as afraid of public speaking as you are now for the rest of your life–these nerves can lessen with time and practice.

Here are five things to keep in mind about public speaking nerves and teaching.

Recognize Your Strengths

There's more to being a good teacher than being a good orator. (Being a good teacher is not the equivalent of giving a TED Talk multiple times a week!). For example, effective teaching qualities include being organized, thoughtful, responsive, prepared, knowledgeable, adaptive, etc. And, a class period need not–and indeed, should not!–be composed solely of a 75-minute lecture. Public speaking surely will be part of your class period, but a good portion of the class time should be devoted to discussion, reflection, and small group activities.

You, just as you are, bring strengths to your classroom. Be yourself. Recognize and lean into your strengths while also challenging yourself a bit out of your comfort zone so you can grow.

Take a moment to reflect: What strengths do you bring to your teaching?

Catch Your Catastrophic Thinking

Anxiety makes us fear for the worst. An anxious thought I've often had is: "Everyone will notice I'm nervous. Then they will think I don't know what I'm doing. And I'll make everyone uncomfortable, and then…" These are known as catastrophic thoughts. In reality, catastrophe probably won't strike in your classroom. Rather, your students likely won't even notice your nerves, and if they do, they probably won't mind or judge you for being nervous.

If you find yourself having a catastrophic thought, notice it and challenge it: "I notice I'm feeling really worried about appearing like a fraud. But, my students probably won't think something so harsh of me."

In addition to challenging negative thoughts that arise about all the ways your teaching can go *wrong*, it can be helpful to focus on positive thoughts about all the ways class could go *well*. There is evidence that focusing on what you are excited about can help with nerves.

Consider: What do you find exciting about working with students in the classroom?

Be Prepared, but Don't Expect Perfection
Anxiety is often a response to ambiguity–there's no way to know what's going to happen in class until it happens. However, by preparing, and thinking in advance about a couple different ways the class period could go, this can help you feel more confident once you're up in front of the class and thinking on the fly.

For example, when preparing for a class period, take at least a couple minutes to pause and consider what questions or confusions your students might have about the day's content. Anticipating these questions in advance will help prevent you from feeling caught off guard in the moment.

But again, there is no way to avoid ever being surprised in class, no matter how much preparation you do. So resist the urge to try to plan for every possible scenario that could arise– such preparation will have diminishing returns, be unsustainable, and may actually increase your anxiety.

It's ok if you don't know the answer to every question, it's ok if an activity you try ends up being a flop, it's ok if you make a mistake. A perfect class period is impossible. Imperfection is to be expected. Allow yourself to make mistakes, forgive them right away once they happen, and focus on the lesson you learned so you can keep improving.

Recall: What's one instance where teaching didn't go as you'd hoped? What did you learn from this experience about how you can better promote your students' learning?

Have a Growth Mindset About Public Speaking
Looking back at my own public speaking fears–a lot of them were based on a fixed mindset about my abilities. In other words, I thought public speaking must be an innate skill and I was just not the type of person who could do this. This black and white thinking over-simplifies reality.

In reality, public speaking is a skill that, with practice and support, anyone can become better at. Believing this is known as having a growth mindset about public speaking. Public speaking nerves are normal and extremely common. While they may be intense, they are something that you can learn to manage.

Think back: What's one (even small!) way your public speaking has improved over time?

Focus on Student Learning–Not Your Teaching Performance
It's easy to be hyper focused on yourself when you're feeling self-conscious. But remember, the classroom is all about your students' learning. It's not about you. Intentionally focusing your attention on student learning can help you avoid fixating on your own performance.

For example, when responding to a student question, do you catch yourself worrying about proving that you know the answer, or are you thinking about how you can respond in a way that deepens the students' learning? It often is better to guide a student to an answer rather than to give them the answer yourself right away. And remember, if students ask you tough questions, that's a great sign that they are engaging with the material (a teaching win!), rather than a sign that they don't trust you as a knowledgeable teacher.

Reflect: What's one way you would like to improve your students' learning experience?

Finally, remember to take a deep breath. You are qualified and competent. You bring unique strengths to your teaching and you will continue to get better with practice. You can do this.

Further Reading
"Public Speaking for Teachers I: Lecturing Without Fear," Poorvu Center for Teaching and Learning, Yale University

"How to Foster a Growth Mindset in the Classroom," School of Education, American University

"Public Speaking Tips for Teachers and Educators," School of Education, American University

"9 Tips for Overcoming Classroom Stage Fright," Edutopia

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Book Review: Teaching Across Cultural Strengths

"A professor's role is to create an environment in which diverse student strengths, knowledge, and perspectives are integrated and valued. Then we must design ways for students to naturally contribute to their own and others' learning" (Chávez and Longerbeam, 2016, p. 159).

Higher education institutions are becoming more and more diverse in terms of student populations, but not necessarily in terms of instructor populations. It is therefore more common today that faculty will have classes full of people today who have cultural understandings of teaching and learning that are different from their own. Since our own culture is often something we are blind to, it is important for faculty to reflect on their assumptions about factors such as the purpose of learning, time, the role of the teacher in learning, and the importance of student-student interactions. The higher education model used in the United States today is based on systems and understandings of learning that originated in Northern European cultures. By accepting these systems uncritically, we run the risk of alienating or disproportionately challenging students from other cultures.

By identifying the ways that one's assumptions about learning may overlap and differ from those of one's students, faculty can begin to deliberately structure courses and classroom activities in ways that will both challenge and reach each of their students. This will benefit all students in the long run.

These are some of the claims of "Teaching Across Cultural Strengths" by Chávez and Longerbeam (2016). The authors describe their Cultural Frameworks in Teaching and Learning Model, which includes eight cultural continua that range from Individuated to Integrated. The authors describe ways that faculty can adjust course activities to be in line with different types of cultural backgrounds, and share interviews with students from diverse backgrounds about the impacts of various teaching methods and attitudes on their learning. Many of the strategies shared are relatively easy changes that faculty can apply to a specific lesson or activity. The authors advocate for incorporating a balance of individuated and integrated strategies over the course of the semester, so that some students will be 'at home' in the learning environment and some will be challenged.

I highly recommend this book as a resource for all faculty. This would make an excellent focus for a Faculty Learning Community, a book discussion group, or a campus-wide read.

"Despite these demographic disparities, faculty can reach all students when we understand the influence of culture in teaching and learning, our own cultures of origin, and the impact of our origins on our teaching" (Chávez and Longerbeam, 2016, p. 67).

Chávez, A. F., & Longerbeam, S. D. (2016). *Teaching across cultural strengths: A Guide to balancing integrated and individuated cultural frameworks in college teaching.* Stylus Publishing, LLC.

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