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# Engaging Students

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# Not Just the Classroom

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Engaging students depends on  
*so much more*  
than just what we do in the classroom.

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# The frame...

# Teach in Character

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- Be yourself.
- Adapt your style to your audience.
- Adapt teaching “tricks” from others – don’t “adopt” them wholesale.

# Be Respectful

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- Of students and their opinions.
- Of student diversity.
- Of the faculty team.
- Of program goals.

# Be Organized

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- Prepare lecture notes, case plan, game process.
- Prepare for common questions.
- Keep notes in good order.
- Use a class agenda.
- Hand out as many materials/assignments as possible at the start of the term – and **don't change them** unless absolutely necessary!
- Prepare for different “paths” through the material.

# Set the Tone Early

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- Set high expectations.
- Be friendly, but be clear about who's in charge.
- Be clear about your grading criteria.
- Think about your goals and plan/implement tactics in the first class (particularly for class participation).
  - “Cold calling.”
  - Depth of analysis behind responses.
- Be tougher with grading early; it's easier to curve up than down!

# Be Accessible and Responsive

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- Offer reasonable office hours.
- Use technology.
  - E-mail.
  - Course support software.
- Solicit feedback early in the term.
  - Use a method that provides actionable information (SSC).
  - Be clear about what you are willing – and not willing – to change.



# Reinforce!

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- “Tell them what you’re going to tell them, tell them, tell them what you told them.”
- Use class agenda.
- Summarize at end of class (you or student).
- Connect to other classes.
- Connect to “real world.”

# Think About Relevance

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- Connect to the “real world.”
- Consider the age of materials; if age doesn’t matter, discuss it in class!

# Be Fair

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- Plan assignments to make it possible for students with strengths in different areas to be successful (papers, exams, class participation) – and to minimize the risk of cheating.
- Grade thoughtfully – and make it your practice not to change grades (unless, of course, you made a mistake); more on this later.
- Remember students are taking other classes, too!
- Don't burden students with busywork.

# Teach, Don't Tell

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We learn and remember after one month...

- 14% of what we hear.
- 22% of what we see.
- 30% of what we watch others do – demonstrations.
- 42% of sensory redundancy – classroom rituals that repeat seeing, hearing, and doing important skills or concepts.
- 72% of “movies of the mind” – learning that is linked to remembered or imagined life experiences of the learner.
- 83% of performance of a life–challenging activity – first–time or demanding action that applies the new learning.
- 92% of what we teach others!  
*B.C., Canada*

*Gary Phillips, Vancouver*

# Teach, Don't Tell

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Why are you *telling* them this?

Why are you telling them *this*?

Why are *you* telling them this?

# In the Classroom

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- **Show your interest** in the material and the students.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm, preparedness, thoughtfulness, organization, and flexibility in your presentation.
- Learn students' names early in the semester.

# In the Classroom

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- Use humor.
- Challenge students ("I bet none of you can figure out the answer to this question in three minutes!").
- Use analogies and examples that relate to their lives.

# Engaging Students

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- Think–pair–share.
- Three–minute summary.
- Debates.
- Class votes.
- The Teaser: What profession would a historical character have today? Where would we be today if we did not know the structure of DNA? Current events?



# In the Classroom

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- Ask students questions that probe their understanding, discuss the question in small groups, report answers.
- Use student response systems ("clickers").
- Call on students randomly using dice, spinning wheel, shuffled index cards with their names, etc.
- Distribute props that the students can handle and manipulate.
- Use active exercises/simulations.
- Play devil's advocate; have students discuss what the opposite outcome would mean
- Use case studies.
- Use quiz-show like ways to introduce or review material.

# Outside the Classroom

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Find ways to have students apply the course content in the “real world.”

- Projects.
- Field trips.
- Interviews.
- Your research.

# Outside the Classroom

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## Use technology

- Blogs.
- Chats.
- Wikis.
- Connecting via Internet to people in other parts of the country or world.

# Getting Feedback from Students

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Around the semester midpoint, solicit feedback from students about how the course is going.

- Provides an opportunity to show that you're open to feedback.
- Provides an opportunity for you to refocus, if necessary.

# Getting Feedback from Students

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## Start–Stop–Continue

- Asking “how’s it going?” doesn’t usually get much concrete, actionable feedback.
- Asking three focused questions is more likely to give you focused answers:
  - What should I **start** doing?
  - What should I **stop** doing?
  - What should I **continue** doing?
- Collect the responses, organize them, and discuss with your students.

# Getting Feedback from Students

START-STOP-CONTINUE: HEINEKE

OM 725 Spring 2008

<u>Start</u>	<u>Stop</u>	<u>Continue</u>
5 Giving more exam practice problems (throughout semester)	2 Using old cases	6 Class discussions
5 Arriving 10 minutes early to expedite the conclusion of IS class (or revisit starting later)	Leaving more room for interpretation (instead of being black and white)	5 Postings on SMGtools
3 Having more in-class interactive exercises	Using PowerPoint summaries (versus chalkboard)	2 Using Beer Game
3 News updates on OM issues/real life examples	(Or shorten) asking about ongoing issues at beginning of class	2 Putting agenda on board
2 Giving us homework and correcting (counting as part of grade)	Cold calling	2 Explaining calculations in detail
Giving more instructions before case analysis	Discussing so much theory	2 Being available
Showing things that are more interactive (instead of a case, a video)	Reviewing final solutions to cases so quickly	2 Opening cases with "problem definition" (structure of case discussion)
Adding post-class specific questions on SMGtools		Teaching via Q&A
Spreading around class input to more people		Giving us specific questions for each assignment
Providing information about what they did in cases		Entertaining lecture format
Explaining better when students have an opinion that is contrary to current beliefs or practices		Teaching via Q&A
Supplement notes with readings from experts [Note: there's a full reading list in most notes]		Hearing all points of view and pointing out rights and wrongs
Providing information earlier (for example, about Beer Game)		Making sure everyone understands
Explaining calculations in memos		Giving lots of examples
Publishing more and simpler exercises		Basic explanation of new topics
Cold calling		Lectures on philosophies
		Concise notes
		Being nice [☺]

# Grading

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Be **Fair!**

- Is the exam/quiz/paper representative? Are the questions in proportion to the time spent or emphasis placed?
- Are exam questions (or paper expectations) clear and unambiguous?
- Can you develop an **objective** grading scheme that will enable you to explain to students exactly how points were awarded (or deducted)?

# Grading

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## Reviewing Grades

- Students may want to see you to go over their assignment grade.
- Some are sincerely interested in self-improvement.
- Some are concerned about the numbers!
- First step: be consistent and fair
- Use a grading template.
- Note how many points you award (or deduct) for particular answers.
- Grade one question (or a page of questions) for the entire class, rather than grading exams start-to-finish for each individual student.
- **If you're confident you've been fair, be firm.**  
Of course, it's always possible that you made an error in grading (or adding!) and you should make adjustments to grades when that happens.



# Grading

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The issue may be the grade, or it may be about self-image.

- Emphasize that grades don't necessarily always reflect what a student knows; anyone can have a bad moment on an exam or not express a thought as clearly as intended.
- **We're not all right all the time – and we're still "okay."** That's as important a lesson as the content of any course. Learning how to recognize our own mistakes, how to face them and to come up with ways to make fewer in the future is an important part of learning and of life.

# Greater than the Sum of the Parts

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Engaging students involves a set of activities:

- Developing your own voice as a teacher.
- Planning all aspects of the course.
  - Materials.
  - Graded elements.
  - Activities.
- Managing the classroom.
- Grading.
- All aspects of interacting with students.