



# The Principles of Effective Teaching

Preya Bhattacharya ([pbhatta1@kent.edu](mailto:pbhatta1@kent.edu))

Jennifer Mani ([jmani@kent.edu](mailto:jmani@kent.edu))

# Session Outline

**This session outlines four fundamental principles of effective teaching, which include:**

- Brief tips for developing curriculum from course outcomes
- Tips for preparing and presenting content and materials (and)
- Interacting and engaging with students.



# How to prepare and present course content?

# Guide for Designing your Lessons

- **LECTURE/PRESENTATION**
  - *information and content.*
- **DEMONSTRATION**
  - *How will you see the skill/outcome in your students*
- An opportunity to **PRACTICE** the skill/outcome
  - *receiving feedback from peers, instructor, or both.*
- Then, the **ASSESSMENT** of that skill/outcome.
  - *Testing the student*

# Differentiated Learning

- When you are preparing course content, keep in mind the value of differentiated learning.
- Differentiated learning (DL) is a framework/philosophy which calls for providing students various avenues for acquiring learning materials, processing and applying them.
- In brief, (DL) calls for variations in *how instruction and content is provided* and *how content is assessed/measured*.



# Methods of Presentation

- **Most default to *LECTURE*–based styles of presenting**
  - PowerPoints
- **There are differentiated presentation styles, such as:**
  - SMALL GROUP
  - LARGE GROUP
  - STUDENT-LED DISCUSSION
- **Giving Quizzes before the class**
  - See what your students already know
  - This will help you see what areas maybe you should focus on



# Preparing & Presenting

- **Ask yourself the question, “*What am I trying to accomplish?*”**
  - *What do you want the students to learn*
    - *What are the main concepts*
- **Keep your audience in mind and their ability levels:**
  - Undergraduates and their rankings: freshman vs. senior
  - Graduate vs Undergraduate Students
  - Masters vs PhD students



# Keeping Your Lecture Focused

**For example, build your lecture around major points**

- *Give students a “roadmap” of your lecture to follow, so they know what it is leading to.*
  - *Outline on the board what will happen during class before class starts*
- *Limit your main points to five or fewer*
  - *ensure you’re covering as much as you need to in the time allotted*



# Keeping Your Lecture Focused

## Keep in mind: structure and clarity

- The way you organize your lecture depends on your topic:
  - *You can base your lecture on points/ sub-points*
  - *Use examples or arguments to build your lecture*
  - *Explain the important terms (and)*
  - *Repeat information if necessary*



# Other Presentation Methods

## Small & Large Group Discussion

- Low-risk setting for brainstorming and discussion topics, tasks, assignments, and/or concepts
- Work collectively to apply skills and concepts
- May facilitate understanding and comprehension
- Groups/group leaders then contribute to a larger-group discussion with instructor contribution and feedback

## Student-led Discussion

- Divide lecture topics into small groups
- **Have Students prepare a presentation**
  - Video/visual handout or display to accompany lecture
  - Creative demonstration of concept through play, skit, or other creative means
  - Prepare/facilitate discussion question for before and/or after lecture
- Promotes understanding, comprehension, and accountability

# Using PowerPoints

- **General formatting and style tips for Power Points:**
  - Don't fill the slides with text; white space is good for the brain!
  - Watch your font size! No smaller than 16/18!
- **Make PowerPoints available on-line (blackboard) for students or bring copies to class**



# Differentiating Your Materials

- **Video/visuals**
  - *Prezi, Power Point, Google Slides, etc.*
  - *Remember: provide outlines of slides for easier note-taking!*
- **Use video platforms like YouTube or TEDTalks**
- **Kanopy – like netflix**
- **Use Swank – free videos**
  - <https://libguides.library.kent.edu/videos>



# Differentiating Your Materials

**If you are teaching higher-level courses:**

- **Get them physically involved with their learning**
  - *Create or use models together*
  - *Create timelines, graphs, posters, pamphlets, or other 3D objects etc.*
- **Have students give presentations as demonstrations of their understanding/application of course content**



# Assessments of Learning

- **Differentiate your assessments, too!**
  - *Vary your kinds of test questions*
- **Give quizzes periodically on lecture objectives.**
  - *You want to be able to assess if they are getting it*
- **Avoid lengthy in-class exams.**
  - *Work through the test yourself (remember you may finish more quickly than your students)*
- **Working with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)**
  - <https://www.kent.edu/sas>



# How to interact and engage with your students?



# Ice Breaker: 5-Minute Discussion

- **With the person(s) next to you, introduce yourselves and discuss the following questions:**
  - Why are you attending this session?
  - Do you have any teaching experience?
  - If so, what would you like to work on in your teaching practice?
  - If you have never taught before, what are you most concerned about?



# Engaging with Students

- **Work on building your “community” from the first day**
  - Use creative ice breakers, games, and other activities to facilitate early interaction.
  - *Encourage this community building throughout the semester by using group-based activities and projects, creative games, etc.*



- Take the initiative to learn their names, their interests, and their concerns.
- *Link new material to students' prior knowledge, such as common experiences or previous coursework.*
- **Be aware of what you are communicating, both verbally and non-verbally.**

# Tips for Effective Communication

- **Watch your tone, speed, and projection**
  - *Try for a relaxed, conversational tone; maintain eye contact.*
- **Use open and expressive body language**
  - Be “happy” to ‘make’ “happy”; confidence is key!



# Tips for Effective Communication

- **Pay attention to your language use itself**
  - *Avoid using obscure language*
  - *Provide “snap shot definitions” for specialized language use*
  - *Don’t assume students “know” – ask for volunteers to define/explain, and then hedge their definitions appropriately*
  - *Be aware of cultural boundaries and “gaps” in American-based references, clichés, or common expressions*



# Tips for Effective Communication

- **When asking if there are any questions, don't simply ask "Any questions?"**
  - Try to rephrase it as: *"What parts of this are still a little unclear or confusing for you?"* or *"What do I need to explain again?"* or *"What are you wondering about that I haven't yet addressed?"*
  - Make sure you understand the student's question before launching into a long explanation. Restate the question and let the student clarify, if necessary.



# Tips for Effective Communication

- **Finally, if you don't know the answer to a question, don't bluff.**
  - *You can let the student know that the question goes well beyond what you can address in lecture*
  - *Volunteer to find the answer and report back*
  - *Ask the student to investigate and report back to the class*
  - *Or, consider trying to work out an answer with the students*



# Provide Opportunities for Feedback

- **Conduct midterm teaching evaluations or simply ask the students for suggestions and comments at the midpoint of the quarter.**
- **Office hours: come out from behind the desk, keep candy on hand, and consider requiring every student to come in once early in the semester.**



# Provide Opportunities for Feedback

- **Check for understanding and comprehension**
  - *Use the “minute paper” or other assessment techniques. Ask students to respond in one or two sentences to the following questions: What stood out as most important in today’s lecture? What are you confused about?*



# Time Management

- **Balance your time both as a graduate student and as an instructor**
- **Always prioritize your research even if you are teaching**
- **Always remember to talk/email your advisor and/or mentor at least once every month**



- **If you are teaching a large class, remember to use resources like microphones, clickers, and blackboard**
- **Always remember to balance your personal and professional time**
- **Practice self-care**



# Final Thoughts

- Show *enthusiasm* for the topic and information. Remember, you are *modeling your discipline*.
- *Respect* them as not only your students, but also as *individuals*. Take an interest in them. Care about them.



- **Confront your hidden bias's about students.**
  - *It can be easy to assume a student is just "lazy," "unmotivated," or "disinterested".*
- **Avoid "locker-room" talk.**
- **Lose the ego and be human.**



## Other Relevant Breakout Sessions

- **Contact Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) for further resources**
  
- **Other helpful sessions might include:**
  - **First Time TA**
    - 12:30- 1:10p or 1:20-2:00p in KSC 315
  - **Grading and Syllabus**
    - 12:30-1:10p and 2:10-2:50p in KSC 314
  - **Blackboard Design and Blackboard Grading**
    - 1:20-2:00p and 3:00-3:40p in KSC 315
    - 2:10-2:50p and 3:50-4:30p in KSC 315





Graduate Student  
Orientation

# Questions?

**Feel free to contact us:**

**Jennifer Mani (jmani@kent.edu)**

**Preya Bhattacharya (pbhatta1@kent.edu)**



# References

- **Differentiated learning.** (n.d.) Wikipedia, Wikipedia, retrieved from [https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Differentiated\\_instruction](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Differentiated_instruction). (Offers a good introduction to the concept and provides a great beginning list of resources and references for more information about concepts and strategies.)
- <http://ctl.yale.edu/teaching/ideas-teaching/preparing-lecture>
- <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/checklist-effective-lecturing/lecturing-guidelines>
- <http://www4.ncsu.edu/unity/lockers/users/f/felder/public/Columns/Wankat.html>
- <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu//cft/guides-sub-pages/lecturing/>
- <https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/first-day-of-class/>
- <https://teachingcommons.stanford.edu/resources/teaching-resources/teaching-strategies/checklist-effective-lecturing/lecturing-guidelines>