CIS 610 Teaching Effectiveness
Fall 2021 Week 4

Agenda
- Guest: Eric Wills/peer teaching observation.
- We will talk about this more next week in the “assessing teaching” unit. (Julie Mueller from the UO Teaching Engagement Program will be our guest next week.)
- Also on the topic of assessing teaching: part of the weekly assignment this week is to respond to a midterm survey (posted on the class website assignments page). Please send your responses to Tamanna by Friday at 6 p.m. (note different due day/time and email destination). I will share these with the class next week.

Check in – what is happening/how to handle now/how to prevent

- How to handle busy office hours, especially online?
  - Move away from trying to see people 1 by 1 – go to a group format, where students can listen in, work with other students, and similar while they are waiting to talk with you.
  - This can be challenging in this covid-time. May need to be careful about code-sharing (breakout rooms?). But avoid leaving students in the waiting rooms for an indeterminate amount of time.
  - Monitor more than one place at once, e.g., start a discussion on the discussion board for people who are waiting.
  - Answer shared questions all at once; let students upvote questions and prioritize those.
  - Get reinforcements for consistently busy times; let the instructor know.
  - Consider scheduling some class help hours at not-popular times (e.g., mornings before 11 a.m.) and direct students who want closer attention to those times.

Topic 1 – Outside the classroom: office hours, discussion boards, email, cont’d.

Topic 2 – Assessing Learning – Classroom Assessment Techniques

Break

Topic 3 – Grading
Topic 1 – Outside the classroom: office hours, discussion boards, email, continued

RECALL:
Office hours/lab help hours is a continuation of classroom approach:
Focus on problem-solving rather than answers: observe, short explanations, questions, examples, ... just like explaining clearly in the classroom.

Class discussion boards:
• can be helpful
• this shared cyberspace needs to be managed carefully
• no fully anonymous posting (students do appreciate being able to be anonymous to other students, if possible)
• students can help respond (great!), but responses need to be reviewed for correctness and understanding; try to affirm some part of the original answer when posting a correction

Email:
• is there a class policy, e.g., redirect to discussion board, instructor? (Ask!)
• always be professional; think of the email as public (which it is); always use your .sig
• let students know communication preferences (class and your own, if needed).
• “Please see me during office hours.”
• sensitive issues should not be handled electronically!
**Topic 2 – Assessing Learning**

Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)

- CATS are an informal, in-class way of assessing student learning
- usually *formative* (*v.* *summative* assessments, *such as* exams)

→ *help keep the focus on student learning*

Find CAT examples in TT ch. 32 (2d ed.) and at the UO TEP website, for example:

- **Minute paper** – most significant point, what questions do you still have
- **Reaction cards*** – make a comment at some point during class
- **Polling/clickers** (have questions prepared)
- **Think – pair – share** (have questions prepared)
- **Write an exam question/example** on the material that was just covered

*CATs are of a piece with other teaching techniques we’ve discussed, e.g., 10 ways to get participation (in the classroom) and office hours approaches (observe, ask questions) – all provide quick checks of student learning.*

**Reaction cards from class today:**

- **monitoring discussion boards**
- **I liked the show points earned not points removed point.**
- **The thought of another TA about how to get students to attend office hours was helpful.**
- **I liked the idea of CAT. It might help students open up about their doubts and also let the TA figure out where students are struggling.**
- **Make notes while grading is another useful tip.**
- **I like the idea [of rubrics].**
- **Grades rarely need to change if you are consistent.**
- **How to assess learning as I am teaching – do I need to change my teaching style on the fly?**
- **Being reasonably efficient. The biggest constraint is time for homework, learning, everything.**
- **Creating a consistent rubric is hard. Making time to communicate said rubric to students and/or GE’s is hard.**
**Topic 3 – Grading (may need to wait until next week or finish up next week)**

**Advice from former 610 students:**
Grading takes longer than the amount of time to you are planning to spend.

I wish someone had explained efficient, proper methods for grading to me. It would have saved a lot of time and energy.

**Text ch. 43, for example**

- grading criteria (hand it out with the assignment)
- policies on extra credit
- policies on late assignments

Be aware of these and implement them consistently.

If they are not available, suggest them!

**Notes on Grading**

- Important to students
- Provides useful individual and group feedback for the instructor
- Should (Walker)
  - (a) Be consistent/fair
  - (b) Give good feedback
  - (c) Reinforce class goals
  - (d) Reasonably efficient

So take some time with it – without getting bogged down.

Don’t put it off – you may have questions and issues you need to talk about with other graders and/or primary instructor.

Keep in mind that grading time also includes time spent talking with students after assignments have been returned.
0th Pass: preparing

- Create a grading rubric/checklist (ideally, available to students with the assignment)
- Quick check the rubric by scanning some assignments
- Adjust the rubric as needed

1st Pass: someone else? This is the time-intensive one.

- Grade one problem at a time (across all of the submissions)
- Don’t look at names (if possible)
- “Shuffle submissions” at the end of each problem (if possible)
- Make feedback as helpful as possible – sometimes “please see me”
- Encourage / coach
- Take a break
- Keep notes on changes to the rubric, common difficulties, special situations, etc.

2d pass: review

- Look for common errors
- Throw away bad questions

Canvas makes first some of the 1st pass hard to do. But they are still important to keep in mind, e.g., if splitting the work with someone else split by questions rather than student names, start and stop at different places in the alphabet or at least go backwards sometimes.
After the assignments are returned:

- Be prepared for/have policies:
  - Students appealing grades
  - Late work
  - Extra credit

- Talk to students who have questions or are upset (but you should rarely need to change a grade)

- Keep records for one year

Other tips:

- Be timely (1 day to 1 week)
- Post solutions (gives students feedback while you grade)
- Grade only a sample
- Show points earned, not points taken away (+4, not -1)
- Hide the assignment on Canvas until grading is complete for all students
- Prepare assignments that are easier to grade when possible

- Academic dishonesty: “All teachers at the UO have a legal responsibility to handle suspected cases of academic dishonesty... inform the course supervisor... contact the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards...”
EXAMPLE – think (5) – group – share (5) (then share out) (10)

Assignment:

Write a procedure that counts down from an input number of seconds until blastoff. At each time interval, print the remaining time. When there is no remaining time, print “Blast off!”. For example,

```python
>>> countdown(5)
5
4
3
2
1
Blast off!
```

Student Submission:

```python
def cd(x):
    while x>=0:
        print(x)
        print(“Goodbye!”)
```

Rubric:

-- code works / implements project specification (5 pts.)
-- code is written using good programming style (5 pts.)