

Excellence in Teaching Sessions Minutes

April 28th – 8 attending

Goal of the meeting: Find a way to promote excellence in teaching throughout the division while building trust amongst all levels of employees and reenergizing those who may have become apathetic.

Art Dept uses the mentor program to exchange ideas and discuss problems. Peer review program has also been effective. In particular the Art Dept used outside professionals to evaluate faculty artwork providing unbiased reviews and valuable feedback that faculty accepted. Students depend on quality teachers and peer evaluations help determine areas for improvement while also providing positive feedback.

Teachers must be compassionate and have a great passion to be excellent teachers. “My students are my teachers” they allow you to grow. Students open teachers’ minds. Quiet students can be reached and normally they are listening more than the teacher believes. Many teachers are constantly amazed by students.

How do you deal with problem students?

“Kill them with kindness.”

Engage the student by providing them with a special job or provide extra attention.

Encourage the student to perform.

Encourage the other students to provide positive peer pressure by self regulating the disturbances. Many teachers experience the spring break syndrome where students have “checked out” before and after spring break. Teachers will modify teaching curriculum to accommodate this regular occurrence.

Most teachers hold the students accountable for meeting deadlines and attending class with sign in sheets and roll calls.

Teachers lead by example by providing clear expectations for the students and showing up for class on time prepared to teach. If the class is falling behind many teachers will adjust deadlines based on a group consensus.

Do you see differences between current students and past students?

Self entitled generation

Do not know life without internet, cell phones and other technologies

Over stimulated

Different goals

Many teachers use a variety of teaching techniques to engage all students

Some teachers see no differences

Student Retention

Rewards as opposed to punishment keep them coming back.

Being able to show the student that the coursework is preparing them for the future.

Active class participation.

If a student misses classes do you contact them?

Some call, but most email the student. If the student's problems will affect the course many encourage student to leave ACC to deal with issues and return later when their lives have stabilized.

Different approaches to provide excellent teaching:

Start off tough with zero points to allow students to watch their grades progress based on performance
Check in with other instructors. Networking to understand different approaches
Go to student events
Encourage students
Create a personal connection
Name games or mirroring to break the ice

April 30th – 7 attending

Why do you think the students rated you as an excellent instructor?

Teaching what I'm passionate about. I love what I do! The students leave the class with a complete portfolio allowing them to feel positive about the class and they're dedication to it. Getting students interested using games to break up the monotony. Being flexible and over prepared for class.
Using blackboard to communicate. Students love it.
Tweaking syllabus each semester based on previous experience.
Develop individual relationships with students. Provide a supportive role model and try to understand student problems.
Committed to teaching. Use humor to break tension.
Parallel course work. Show connections between classes and "real" world.
Listen to students. Be empathetic.
Be approachable while maintaining high standards.
Keep lessons relatable to life.
Keep classes informal but professional. Majority of students are at ACC because they want to be.
Observing other teachers classes is a valuable tool. Inspires you to perform better and benefits the observer. Teaching is a creative process which requires collaboration with others.
"I'm selling you to you." Inform the students what they've learned.
Encourage them to get through the hard times.
Teachers are motivators and life-long learners.
Benefits of the course can be tangible and should be express to the students.

Do you see differences between current students and past students?

Students think globally.
Are still dealing with same issues as past students.
Students are not college ready.
Internet has empowered students.
Not learning to think.

May 1 – 6 attending

Why do you think the students rated you as an excellent instructor?

Ability to take complex roles and make it more understandable.
Create acronyms to assist recall.
Ability to anticipate when problems arise in the material and make it more understandable.
Get to the point.
Organize syllabus structure in keeping with the class level.

I love what I do and I'm excited about the subject matter.
Provide the tools to learn and keep learning.
Welcoming environment.
Empathize with students' anxiety about being unable to achieve goal.
Explain coursework on their level.
Daily agendas so expectations are clear.
Variety in coursework to include lecture and group work.
Keep them active.
Know their names.
Calling and emailing students who miss classes to reinforce that I do care. Some students will feel that they are letting you down by not attending class.

Additional Comments

Most use blackboard or discussion boards to reinforce curriculum.
Office hours before and after class to be available for all students.
Adjunct faculty feel isolated from other instructors in their departments.
Inform students of free services offered through ACC such as tutoring labs and counseling.
Students who want to learn keep teachers from burning out.

Do you see differences between current students and past students?

Past students had a better work ethic than students of today.
Less maturity
Feelings of entitlement
Not as well prepared in areas like time management, study skills, independence of learning
New students are better on average than past students. Academically they could be at UT, but financially ACC makes more sense.
Overwhelmed with balancing life, work and family
Do not understand grading. Unable to calculate own grade point average.
Students are used to having "things handed to them"

How do you deal with the problems?

Provide clear expectations for the students. Explain in terms that they understand.
Speak with student one on one concerning issues prior to the drop date.
Keep it positive and be ready with referrals if needed.
Remain flexible. _