Improving and assessing teaching using evidence-based criteria

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**What we will accomplish**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Be able to use evidence-based, best practices of quality teaching</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify evidence-based, best practices of quality teaching</td>
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<td>Develop implementation examples</td>
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<td>Discuss pro’s &amp; con’s of common methods of evaluating teaching</td>
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<td>Student end of course evaluations</td>
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<td>Peer observations</td>
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<td>Explain why best practices should drive assessment of teaching</td>
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<td>Identify objective assessments using best practices</td>
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<td>Use assessment based on best practices</td>
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Suskie summarized massive literature on fostering learning and promoting student success with two themes:

- **student engagement in the learning process**
- **faculty and students sharing responsibility for learning**
Substitute leader for teacher

The quality of a leader is reflected in the standards they set for themselves.

Ray Kroc
Evidence-based decision making

Since you use evidence-based decision making in your professional practice, why not also in your teaching?
How to Use Evidence-Based Decision-Making in Your teaching?

Teach based upon educational literature in your own discipline

Teach based upon educational literature in higher education

Collect your own data about teaching and learning effectiveness
Essential evidence-based best practices of effective teaching

- Plan to promote student learning
- Ensure successful learning experiences
- Provide feedback to students
- Provide students reflection opportunities
- Assess students consistently
- Command of subject matter
Small group activity

Each group will consider two evidence-based practices of effective teaching (listed at the bottom of page 2).

Develop implementation examples for these practices

Describe:

roles of faculty, students

types of learning environments will this will work

possible challenges to using these examples
Evidence-based teaching practices have the potential to increase learning for all students

• but existing assessment of teaching offers little pressure to employ evidence-based approaches

• Faculty, like students, attend to what they are evaluated on
What are faculty evaluated on regarding their teaching?

• How much do we assess if faculty foster student engagement in their learning?

• How well do we assess if faculty share responsibility for learning with students?

• How much do we assess on these nine evidence-based, best teaching practices?
How are evaluations used: Teaching evaluations are very high stakes for faculty

- Untenable data?
- Inconsistent data?
- Inconsistent with evidence-based practice?
- Inaccurate data?

Are we making decisions based on:
Maki: Assessing teaching quality should become an integral aspect of the teaching process. How do we evaluate teaching now?

How are evaluations used?

How is it done?

Validity, reliability of data

Who is evaluating?

What is being evaluated?
How are evaluations used?

- **Formative assessments** for the purpose of improvement
- **Summative evaluations** used to make decisions such as promotion and tenure
What is being evaluated?

True or False?

Do students who learned a great deal rate their instructors as effective teachers on end-of-course evaluations?
What is being evaluated?

- What the teacher does e.g. teaching styles, characteristics of instructor
- Intended outcomes- student learning
Evaluation of teaching

What the teacher does e.g. teaching characteristics

- Commonly done
- Disconnect between recommended practices and how evaluated

How well does teacher foster learning, student success?

- Not commonly done, hard to do
- Aligns recommended practices and how evaluated
Validity, reliability of data

Student end of course evaluations

- Bias (like instructor’s physical attractiveness, or gender or race) accounts for much of the results
- Can students accurately determine our command of the subject?
- Students like faculty who
  - they can relate to, care about them
  - give them good grades

Nilson, 2012, Weiman, 2015
Are students customers? They rate us as if they were.

Your customer doesn’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.

*Damon Richards*
• Sample is far too limited
• Generally are positive, pointing out good traits
• May identify small things that can be changed
• Usually do not offer concrete suggestions for change

Weimer, 2010
Concerns with current teaching assessment practices

System currently used to evaluate teaching mostly uses

Student evaluations | Limited peer observations

Implications

Teachers try to satisfy students | Does not foster teaching improvements

Need for better methods to evaluate teaching

Consistent with evidence-based teaching practices
How does this relate to teaching?

Quality in a service or product is not what you put into it. It is what the customer gets out of it.

*Peter Drucker*
So what should we do and how can we do it?
3 principles of good assessment define how to assess teaching:

- **Use explicit, objective and uniform criteria**
  - Should be linked to stated purpose

- **Triangulate data from a variety of sources**
  - Multiple sources of data about teaching quality exist

- **Tie into evidence-based literature and data**
  - Best teaching practices should drive assessment tools
How can we evaluate teaching using these three principles of good assessment?
Model of evaluation of effective teaching

Rubrics for assessing effective teaching
Hierarchical Assessment of Teaching Model: 5 levels

1. Not using productive teaching practices

2. Summarize what others have said without reflecting critically

3. Reflecting on data from many sources

4. Use evidence-based literature or own data

5. Rigorous study of teaching
Critical reflection = better teaching
Sources of information

Four lenses to obtain information about your teaching

• Yourself
• Your students
• Your peers/ your chair
• The literature on teaching in higher education or in your discipline
Examples of multiple sources of data for your critical review and reflection:
see handout page 3

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<tr>
<th>Source of Perceptive</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Self</td>
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<td>Literature</td>
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Personal contextualization with sharing

- Select 3-5 sources of information from each of the first three columns listed on the handout that you currently have or could access easily that can provide insights into how effective your teaching is.
- Reflect on how you can use this information to offer insights into how you are teaching.
- Imagine how you can improve your teaching using this data.
- How can you use this data in evaluating teaching?
Tie assessments to evidence-based literature or your own data: Very powerful assessments

Teach based upon educational literature in your own discipline

Teach based upon educational literature in higher education
See last column

Collect your own data about teaching and learning effectiveness
From model to self-assessment rubrics

5 levels on model = criteria levels on self-assessment rubrics
✓ Essential aspects of online teaching → each separate aspect is assessed on separate rubric page
  • Full set of rubrics given in Blumberg, 2014

✓ Rubrics format like a multiple choice item—see p 4 of handout
Individually rate your own teaching on the rubric page provided- page 4

• Consider multiple sources -Refer to handout page 2 Sources for Documentation of Quality of Teaching for All Teaching Contexts to support your self-assessment
• Document your rationale
  • Write a rationale for your rating
  • Provide evidence to support your teaching

• Any questions as you rate yourself?
• How can insights you gained about your teaching promote renewal?
Using rubrics, evaluation of teaching model fosters evidence-based effective teaching

- Am I teaching effectively?
- Consider essential aspects of teaching
- Use rubrics to evaluate teaching
- Use evidence-based decision making
- Put what learned into action
How can we do a better job of having quality teaching drive assessment of teaching?

*Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day-in and day-out.*

~Robert Collier