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Teaching that Works

Managing the Classroom and Engaging Learners

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Dr. Michael Barber
Assistant Director

Agenda

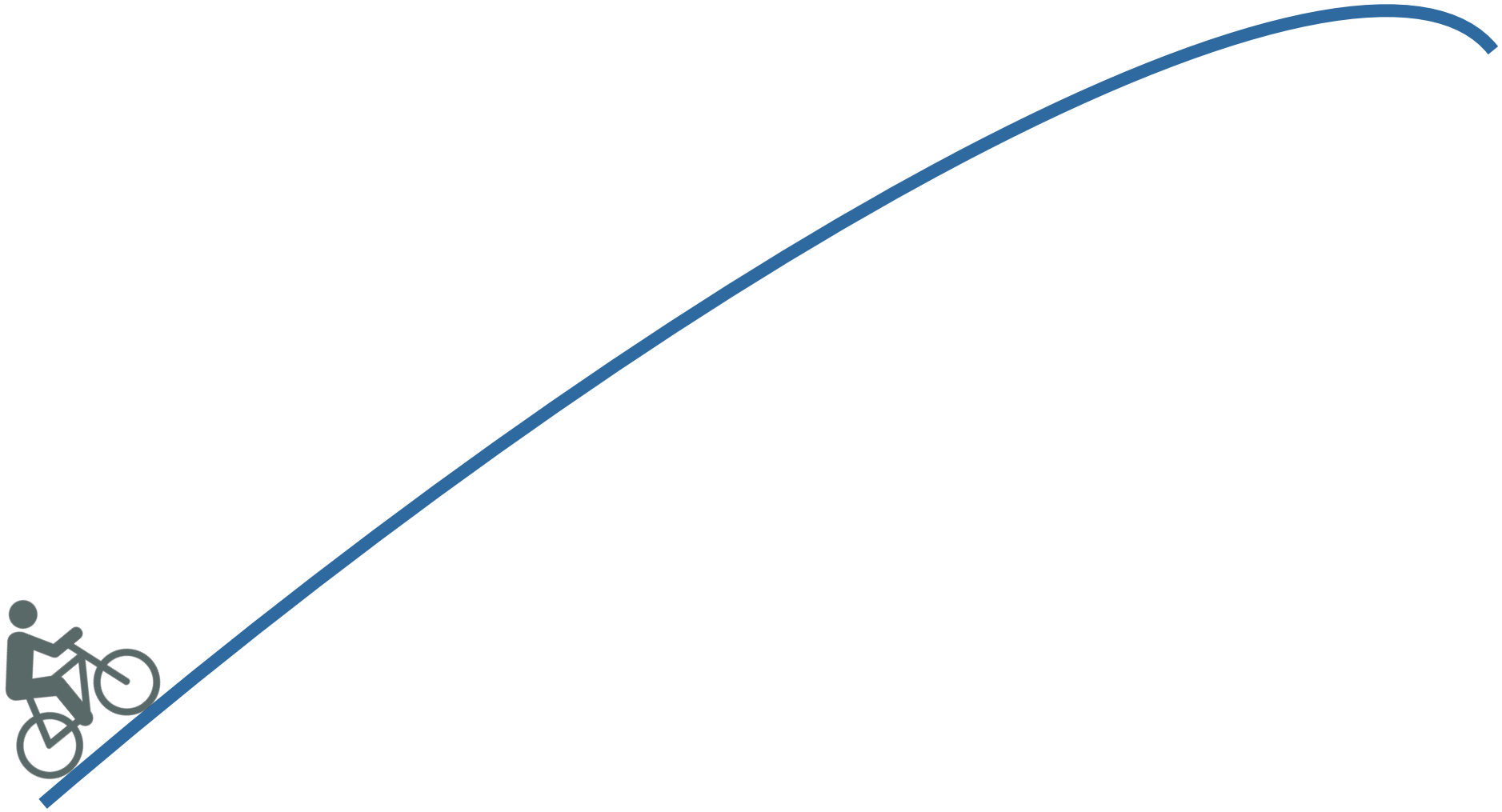
- Planning Class Sessions
- Questions that Improve Learning
- Managing the Classroom
- Increasing Student Engagement
- Teaching with Confidence

Planning Class Sessions

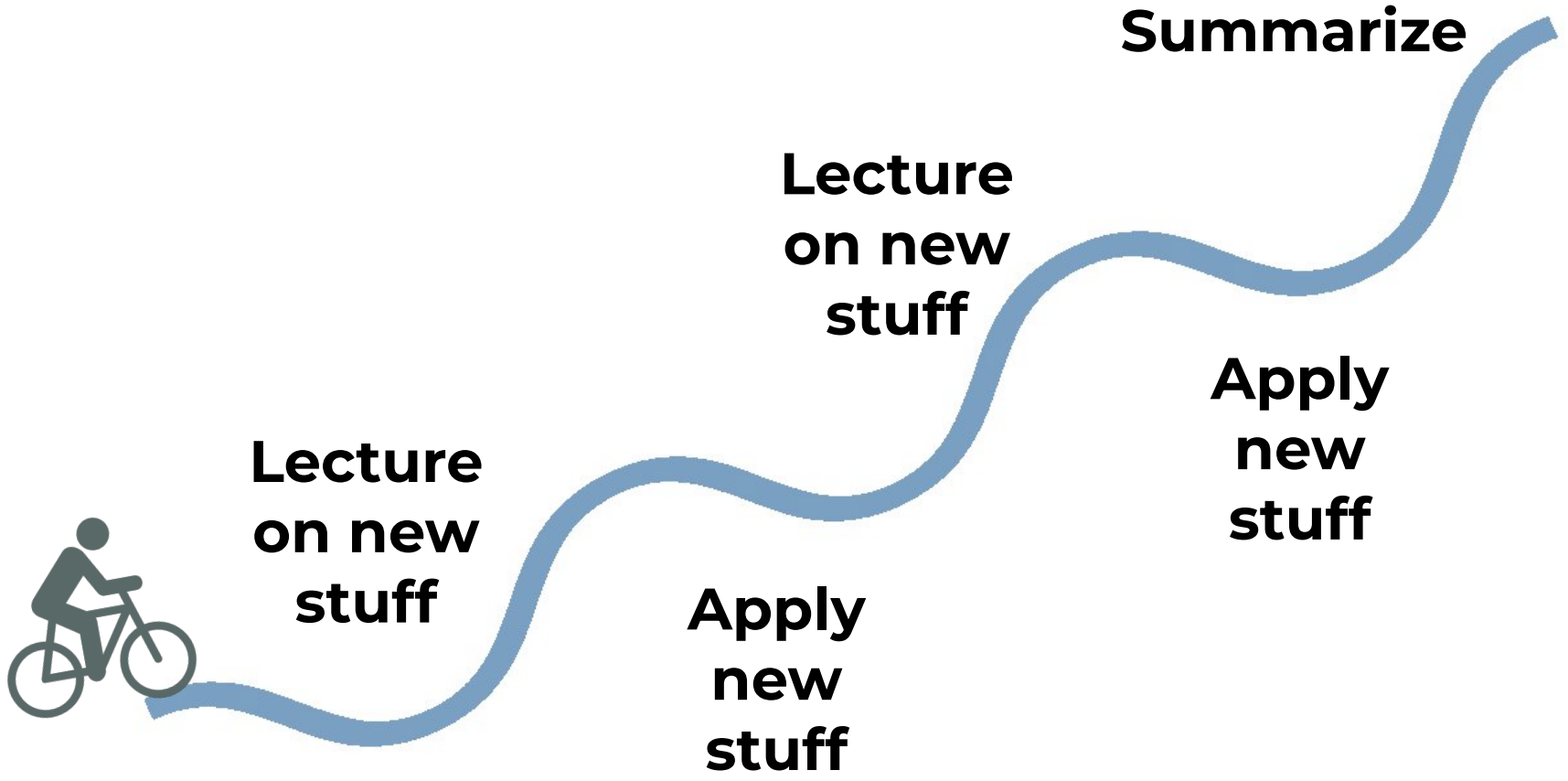
Important Components

- Clear learning objectives
- Opening activities that focus attention
- Logical flow and pacing
- Opportunities to participate and apply
- Closing activities that reinforce learning

50 minute lecture



50 minute lecture

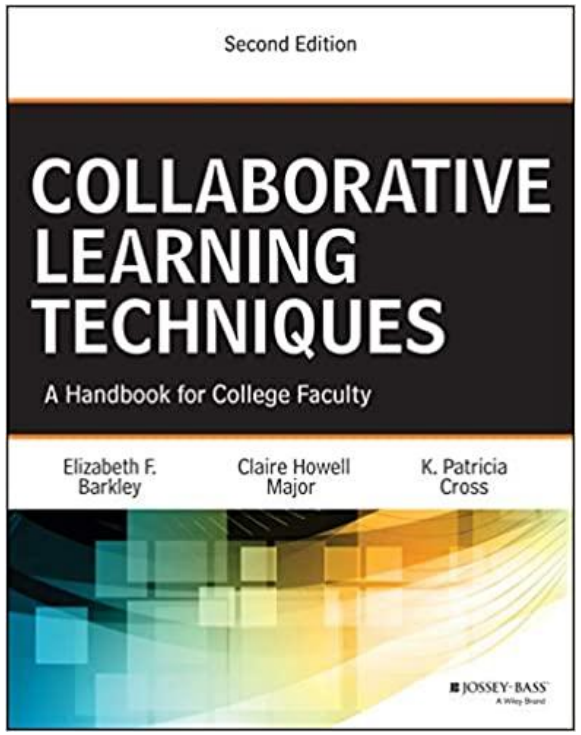


Shift in Questions

What am I going to *say* in class?

What can students *do* in class to discover this concept?

Engaging Activities



Interactive Techniques

Adapted in part from:

Angelo, Thomas/K. Patricia Cross, *Classroom Assessment Techniques*. 2nd Edition. Jossey-Bass: San Francisco, 1993.
Morrison-Shetlar, Alison/Mary Marwitz, *Teaching Creatively: Ideas in Action*. Outernet: Eden Prairie, 2001.
McGlynn, Angela, *Successful Beginnings for College Teaching*. Atwood: Madison, 2001.
Silberman, Mel. *Active Learning: 101 Strategies to Teach Any Subject*. Allyn and Bacon: Boston, 1996.
VanGundy, Arthur. *101 Activities for Teaching Creativity and Problem Solving*. Pfeiffer: San Francisco, 2005.
Watkins, Ryan. *75 e-Learning Activities: Making Online Learning Interactive*. San Francisco: Pfeiffer, 2005.

These techniques have multiple benefits: the instructor can easily and quickly assess if students have really mastered the material (and plan to dedicate more time to it, if necessary), and the process of measuring student understanding in many cases is also practice for the material—often students do not actually learn the material until asked to make use of it in assessments such as these. Finally, the very nature of these assessments drives interactivity and brings several benefits. Students are revived from their passivity of merely listening to a lecture and instead become attentive and engaged, two prerequisites for effective learning. These techniques are often perceived as "fun", yet they are frequently more effective than lectures at enabling student learning.

Not all techniques listed here will have universal appeal, with factors such as your teaching style and personality influencing which choices may be right for you.

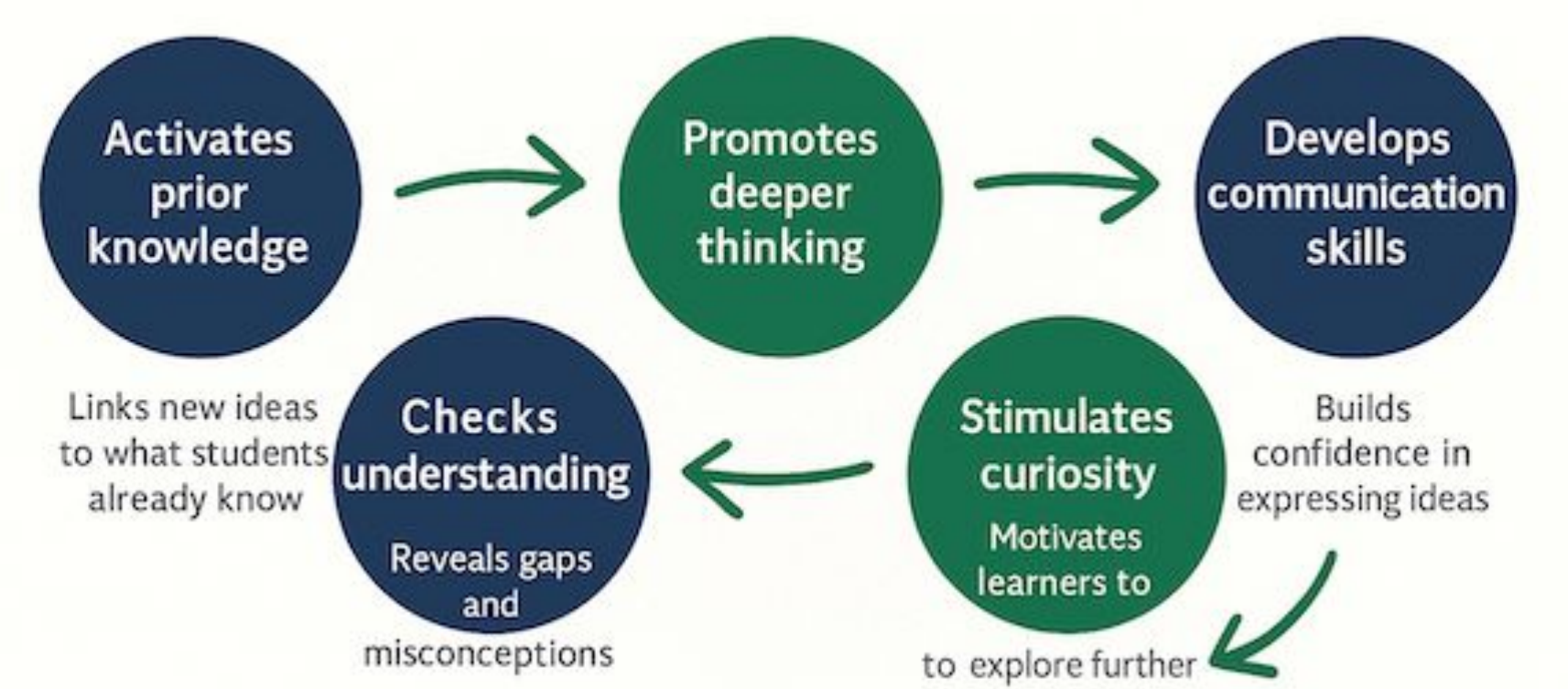
Your Turn

- Clear learning objective
- Opening activity that focuses attention
- Brief lecture topic
- Opportunity to participate and apply
- Closing activity

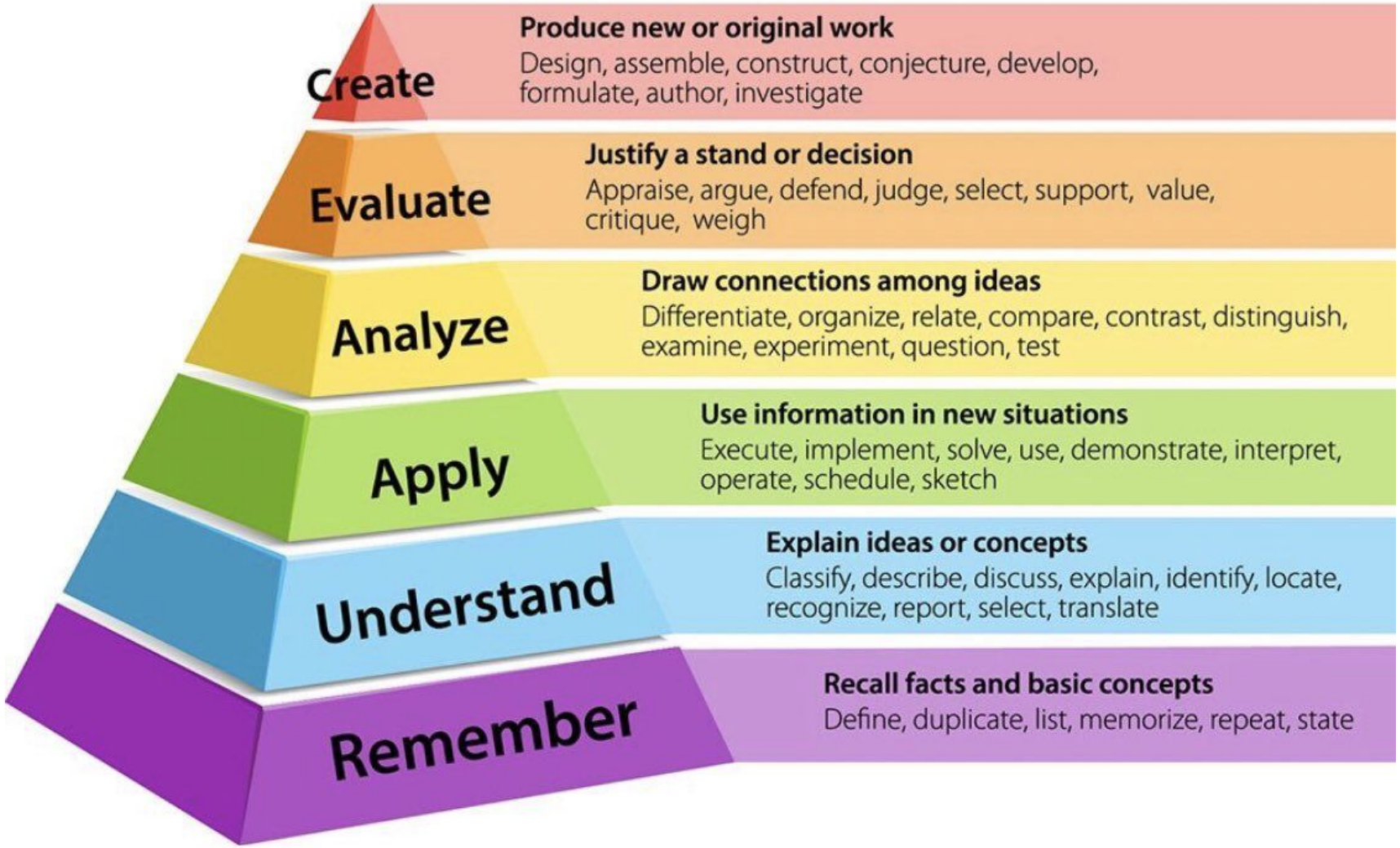
Questions that Improve Learning

Lawyers vs. Psychologists

Purposes of Questions



Bloom's Taxonomy



Wait Time

- Assumptions about silence
- Wait time improves responses and participation
- Normalize silence by setting time to think
- Wait before answers and after responses

Your Turn

- Transform this closed question - "What year did World War II end?" - into an open-ended question that promotes critical thinking
- Add a probing follow-up to this question - "How does climate change affect ecosystems?" - that pushes students to justify their reasoning
- Design a Think-Pair-Share sequence for this topic - "The use of artificial intelligence in higher ed"

Managing the Classroom

Padlet

What are common disruptions or distractions you have seen in a higher education class?

Honorable Mention

- Late arrivals/early departures
- Technology distractions
- Unequal participation
- Student disengagement

Warm Demander

Balancing high expectations and support helps to build strong relationships and trust, motivating students to put forth their best efforts and fostering a positive and productive learning environment.

Managing Disruption

- Communicate rules and procedures from day one with student input
- Learn names and interests
- Establish presence (verbal/nonverbal)
- Be consistent in enforcing expectations to build trust and respect
- Choose your battles

Your Turn

Scenario - A student consistently dominates class discussions, preventing others from contributing, while several students never speak up

- What are the underlying needs of dominant and quiet students in this situation?
- What techniques from today's workshop could address both participation patterns while maintaining a respectful environment?
- How would you communicate with both types of students? What class structures would create more equitable participation?

Increasing Student Engagement

Student's Role in Learning

PASSIVE

Teacher believes that teaching is "telling"; student seen as a blank slate to be written on

ACTIVE

Teacher invites students to discover knowledge; student seen as a participant in the learning process

Student's Role in Learning

Higher Order Thinking

SURFACE PROCESSING

Listening to a lecture
Highlighting or underlining text
Transcribing notes

Making associations
Discovering patterns
Solving a problem

DEEP PROCESSING

Scenario

Imagine that you have been asked to make a presentation about why instructors should use active learning techniques. What compelling research finding would you use in your presentation?

Principles of Engagement

- Varied Response Formats (Discussions, written reflections, digital polling, and visual responses)
- Brave Spaces (Co-create ground rules with students, model respectful disagreement, and remind learners about intellectual risk-taking)
- Strategic Grouping (Use intentional partner and small group configurations that build confidence, prevent social isolation, and ensure contribution from all members)

Active Learning Strategies

Your Turn

- Think of an engaging instructor from your experience in higher education. What strategies did that person use?
- What active learning strategies best align with your content or discipline?

Teaching with Confidence

Reflective Pause

- Which of today's four learning objectives (questioning, planning, management, participation) feels most urgent for you?
- What is one specific strategy you will implement in your next teaching opportunity?
- What resources or mentorship will you seek going forward?
- How will you continue developing your teaching skills beyond this workshop?

CTE Resources

- Passport to Great Teaching
- Teaching Excellence Academy
- CIRTL Certificates

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email: mebarber@ufl.edu